

College Football Playoffs

Dawgs run wild, beat Sooners 54-48 in Rose Bowl

By **RALPH D. RUSSO**
Associated Press

PASADENA, Calif. — After ending the first overtime Rose Bowl, one of the greatest Granddaddies of Them All, Sony Michel was swarmed by Georgia teammates as he broke down in tears.

The senior tailback had gone from possible goat to all-time hero for Georgia, sending the Bulldogs to the national championship game with a one last burst in a game full of them.

Michel raced 27 yards for a touchdown in the second overtime to give No. 3 Georgia a 54-48 victory against No. 2 Oklahoma in the College Football Playoff semifinal Monday night.

Michel, who had a fumble in the fourth quarter returned for a go-ahead Oklahoma touchdown, ran for 181 yards and three scores for the Bulldogs (13-1), but none bigger than the last one.

“I made plays. I gave up plays. My team just had faith in me,” said Michel, who did all that damage on just 11 carries and got a hug from former Bulldogs great tailback Garrison Hearst after scoring the winning TD. “That’s what this team is all about. They showed true character today.”

In the final game of his great career, Oklahoma’s Baker Mayfield threw for 287

yards and two touchdowns, and caught a touchdown pass that gave the Sooners a 17-point lead with 6 seconds left in the first half.

But the Heisman Trophy winner could not get the Sooners (12-2) into the end zone in the first overtime when a touchdown would have ended the game.

“It’s tough to describe right now,” Oklahoma coach Lincoln Riley said of the loss. “It’s a hell of a college football game. You know, an epic Rose Bowl game.”

The Bulldogs will play either Alabama or Clemson on Jan. 8 for the national championship at Mercedes-Benz Stadium in Atlanta, about 70 miles from their campus. After Georgia made its first trip to the Rose Bowl since 1943 a rousing, heart-stopping success, the Bulldogs will play for their first national title since 1980.

“We got to get back to work. It’s not done,” Michel said. “Now we got to finish. Let’s just finish this season off right.”

The 104th Rose Bowl was also the highest-scoring, surpassing last year’s 52-49 USC victory against Penn State. There was a lot more on the line in this one, the first CFP game to go to overtime as well.

After an offside penalty on Georgia gave Oklahoma a first down on third-and-five in the second OT possession, the Sooners stalled again and



Curtis Compton/Atlanta Journal-Constitution via AP
Georgia players celebrate with Sony Michel after Michel’s touchdown in overtime in the Rose Bowl NCAA college football game against Oklahoma on Monday in Pasadena, Calif. Georgia won 54-48.

Austin Seibert came out for a 27-yard field goal. Leaping through the line, Lorenzo Carter got his outstretched hand on the kick and the ball fluttered down short of the uprights.

Any score would have ended it for the Bulldogs, and on the second play Michel slipped one tackle and was home free. The Bulldogs sprinted off the sideline and toward the corner of the end zone to mob Michel. Confetti rained down. Meanwhile, Mayfield stood motionless on the sideline for several seconds, bent over with his hands on his knees and head down. Mayfield battled the flu-like symptoms the week leading into the game, but he

played just fine. “I can’t believe it’s over. It’s been a wild ride,” said Mayfield with a hoarse voice before he started to cry.

Michel and his roommate and running mate Nick Chubb were awesome for Georgia. Chubb ran for 145 yards and two touchdowns, including a 2-yarder on a direct snap with 55 seconds left in regulation to tie it. The Sooners had taken a 45-38 lead when Steven Parker returned Michel’s fumble for a TD with 6:52 left in the fourth.

“I told him that he had to keep running and trying to hit the corner,” Chubb said. “We had a long game and after the fumble, we went down and



AP Photo/Mark J. Terrill
Georgia head coach Kirby Smart holds the trophy after his team beat Oklahoma 54-48 in overtime in the Rose Bowl NCAA college football game Monday in Pasadena, Calif.

he made up for it with that run to win the game.”

Both teams settled for field goals in the first overtime. First, Georgia’s Rodrigo Blankenship hit from 38 to make it 48-45.

Then it was Mayfield’s turn. A touchdown would have sent the Sooners to

Atlanta, but on a third-and-2 from the 17 Georgia All-America linebacker Roquan Smith nailed Jordan Smallwood a yard short of the first down.

Seibert kicked a 33-yarder and the Bulldogs and Sooners played on, but not for much longer.

NFL

Seahawks spend New Year’s lamenting what went wrong

By **TIM BOOTH**
Associated Press

RENTON, Wash. — An unfamiliar situation played out inside the Seattle Seahawks headquarters on Monday with packing boxes being filled and memorabilia getting autographed far earlier than any season in recent memory.

For five straight seasons, the Seahawks didn’t just play in January. They won at least one playoff game in each of those seasons.

It made Monday’s site of clearing out lockers at the conclusion of the regular season jarring for those who became accustomed of only knowing playoff football during Seattle’s five straight years in the postseason.

“At the end of the day it’s just disappointing. I think

everybody is disappointed,” Seattle tight end Luke Willson said.

“The locker room we thought we had was pretty special. But it didn’t work out and I think everyone is at a loss for words.”

Only five Seattle players on the active roster from Sunday’s finale were around the previous time the Seahawks didn’t make the postseason in 2011. At that time, Seattle was an ascending franchise.

The tweaks and changes made by Pete Carroll and John Schneider were starting to take form by the end of the 2011 season, and the drafting of Russell Wilson and Bobby Wagner before the start of the 2012 season was a catalyst in Seattle’s rise to being a mainstay in the postseason.

So is this 9-7 season and missing the playoffs the start

of a backslide and the first step in a major rebuild?

“We want to obviously get better because the trend that we are on right now is not good,” Seattle wide receiver Doug Baldwin said.

Universally the Seahawks believe they’re not that far away from still being among the elite in the NFC. Three of their losses were by a combined eight points and in part were due to kicking woes from Blair Walsh, including his missed 48-yarder in the final minute on Sunday in the 26-24 loss to Arizona.

The 42-7 blowout loss to the division champion Rams was the only game Seattle lost by more than one possession.

Seattle also dealt with injuries to critical pieces unlike any season in the past, most notably Richard Sherman and Kam Chan-

cellor being lost for the season because of injuries suffered in Week 9.

“This just feels bad because we’re a quality team and we’ve got experienced guys, we’ve got tons of Pro Bowlers, a great franchise quarterback and so we don’t want to be in this position when you’re team is so talented,” said Seattle linebacker K.J. Wright, one of the few holdovers on that 2011 team.

“It feels much, much worse this time because in 2011 we had no business being in the playoffs.”

The occasional struggles on defense this season could be explained in part due to injuries. The offensive inefficiency — especially in the first half of games — was a puzzling issue that clouded Seattle all season.

Russell Wilson led the

NFL in touchdown passes with 34, including 19 in the fourth quarter, but in many games was awful in the first half. Wilson’s first-half passer rating was 78.1 — compared to 111.9 in the second half — and in 10 games this season Seattle scored seven or fewer points in the first half.

Much of the blame for the first-half problems has fallen on offensive coordinator Darrell Bevell. Baldwin launched into an impassioned defense of Bevell on Monday. While not dropping any names, Baldwin made clear the issues with Seattle’s offensive were not on the play caller.

“It’s not play calling. It’s not play calling. We go into a game knowing what the defense is going to give us, situations we’re going to be in. We don’t execute as a

team,” Baldwin said.

“Offensively that’s what we’ve seen time and time again is we do not execute the way that we should. That’s on us as players. You guys can blame (Bevell) as much as you want to. Truth is (Bevell) is not the problem. Yeah, (I) probably already said too much.”

Schneider and Carroll will be facing difficult choices moving forward because some of Seattle’s older stars are also among the more expensive on the roster. Seattle was open about possibly trading Sherman last offseason.

Earl Thomas will be going into the final year of his contract. Michael Bennett signed an extension before the end of last season, but is 32 and played most of this season with a foot injury.

SCOREBOARD

Local slate	COLLEGE WOMEN’S BASKETBALL	BOYS BASKETBALL	GIRLS BASKETBALL	NHL	NBA	Women’s Basketball	Football																																																																																																																																																																																																										
PREP BOYS BASKETBALL Tuesday Dallas at Pendleton, 5:00 p.m. Pilot Rock at Riverside, 7:00 p.m. Kennewick (WA) at Umatilla, 7:00 p.m. Wednesday Hermiston at AC Davis (WA), 7:00 p.m. Thursday Grant Union at Weston-McEwen, 3:00 p.m. Nixyaawii at Echo, 7:00 p.m. Stanfield at Umatilla, 7:30 p.m. Friday Riverside at Nyssa, 6:30 p.m. Silvertown at Hermiston, 7:00 p.m. Joseph at Echo, 7:00 p.m. Imbler at Pilot Rock, 7:30 p.m. Heppner at Union, 7:30 p.m. Condon/Wheeler at Mitchell/Spray, 7:30 p.m. Lone at Dufur, 7:30 p.m. Powder Valley at Nixyaawii, 7:30 p.m. Griswold at Cove, 7:30 p.m. Saturday Baker at Mac-Hi, 4:30 p.m. Irrigon at Vale, 4:30 p.m. La Grande at Nyssa, 5:00 p.m. Union at Pilot Rock, 5:30 p.m. Elgin at Heppner, 5:30 p.m. Imbler at Weston-McEwen, 5:30 p.m. South Wasco County at Condon/Wheeler, 5:30 p.m. Powder Valley at Helix, 5:30 p.m.	EOU at Northwest, 7:30 p.m. COLLEGE WOMEN’S BASKETBALL Wednesday BMCC at Treasure Valley CC, Ontario, 6 p.m. Friday EOU at Evergreen, 5:30 p.m. Saturday BMCC vs. Big Bend CC, 2 p.m. EOU at Northwest, 5:30 p.m.	BOYS BASKETBALL Saturday Country Christian 53, Joseph 39 Echo 57, South Wasco County 36 Eddyville 57, Adrian 52 Ione 55, Griswold 43 Knappa 87, Naselle, Wash. 57 North Bend 56, Elmira 49 Oregon Episcopal 56, St. Mary’s 36 Regis 69, Perrydale 59 Triad School 54, North Douglas 46 Willamette 63, Tualatin 45 Cactus Jam Liberty 74, Maranatha, Calif. 68 Crescent Valley Tournament Central 54, Hermiston 48 Crescent Valley 71, Ashland 61 Damien Classic Central Catholic 63, San Marcos, Calif. 48 Seventh Place Milwaukie 70, Franklin 66 Evergreen Federal Bank Tournament Crater 82, North Valley 43 Marshfield 74, Scappoose 71 Phoenix 62, South Umpqua 36 Sutherlin 66, Hidden Valley 36 Kiwanis Holiday Tournament Harrisburg 39, Warrenton 24 La Pine 59, Oakridge 46 Toledo 38, Taft 31 Waldport 58, Nestucca 54 Les Schwab Holiday Oregon Hoopfest Bend 60, Pendleton 50 Grants Pass 78, Madras 67 Putnam 43, Ridgeview 40 Sherwood 59, Glencoe 22 Summit 71, Sandy 43 Summit JV 56, Culver 24 Les Schwab Invitational Consolation Bracket Seventh Place Barlow 51, Lakeridge 68 Fifth Place Jesuit 51, Oregon City 41 Third Place South Eugene 57, Clackamas 56 Championship West Salem 83, Lake Oswego 72 Seventh Place Ridgeview 65, Beaverton 61 Fifth Place Crespi, Calif. 85, West Linn 65 Third Place Jefferson PDX 79, Grant 74 Les Schwab Shootout Condon/Wheeler 81, Weston-McEwen 73 Tri-Cities Prep, Wash. 51, Enterprise 44 Willamina 60, Burns 33 Mckenzie Tournament Central Christian 61, Mohawk 44 Crow 44, Willamette Valley Christian 32 Elkton 65, McKenzie 61 Hosanna Christian 69, Triangle Lake 41 Neah Kah Nie Tournament Jefferson 53, Neah-Kah-Nie 51 Siletz Valley 61, Jewell 14 SAC Holiday Tournament Brookings-Harbor 67, Lakeview 48 Catlin Gabel 68, Kennedy 62	Coquille 67, East Linn Christian 30 Dayton 57, Western Menonite 54 De La Salle 53, Cascade Christian 40 Gold Beach 68, Gervais 40 Horizon Christian Tualatin 57, Salem Academy 44 Monroe 66, Creswell 60 Santiam 39, Vale 25 Sheridan 64, Portland Christian 52 Sisters Tournament Baker 50, Gladstone 48, OT Henley 45, Sisters 40 Vince Dulcich Tournament Cascade 60, The Dalles 55 Heritage, Wash. 55, Astoria 44 Rainier 50, Redmond 46	NHL Monday’s Games N.Y. Rangers 3, Buffalo 2, OT Tuesday’s Games Boston at N.Y. Islanders, 4 p.m. Washington at Carolina, 4 p.m. Tampa Bay at Toronto, 4 p.m. Pittsburgh at Philadelphia, 4 p.m. San Jose at Montreal, 4:30 p.m. New Jersey at St. Louis, 5 p.m. Florida at Minnesota, 5 p.m. Columbus at Dallas, 5:30 p.m. Winnipeg at Colorado, 6 p.m. Los Angeles at Edmonton, 6:30 p.m. Nashville at Vegas, 7 p.m. Anaheim at Vancouver, 7 p.m. Wednesday’s Games Ottawa at Detroit, 4:30 p.m. Chicago at N.Y. Rangers, 5 p.m.	NBA Atlantic Division <table border="1"> <tr><th>W</th><th>L</th><th>Pct</th><th>GB</th></tr> <tr><td>Boston</td><td>30</td><td>10 .750</td><td>—</td></tr> <tr><td>Toronto</td><td>25</td><td>10 .714</td><td>2½</td></tr> <tr><td>New York</td><td>18</td><td>18 .500</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr><td>Philadelphia</td><td>17</td><td>19 .472</td><td>11</td></tr> <tr><td>Brooklyn</td><td>14</td><td>23 .378</td><td>14½</td></tr> </table> Southeast Division <table border="1"> <tr><th>W</th><th>L</th><th>Pct</th><th>GB</th></tr> <tr><td>Washington</td><td>21</td><td>16 .568</td><td>—</td></tr> <tr><td>Miami</td><td>19</td><td>17 .528</td><td>1½</td></tr> <tr><td>Charlotte</td><td>13</td><td>23 .361</td><td>7½</td></tr> <tr><td>Orlando</td><td>12</td><td>26 .316</td><td>9½</td></tr> <tr><td>Atlanta</td><td>10</td><td>26 .278</td><td>10½</td></tr> </table> Central Division <table border="1"> <tr><th>W</th><th>L</th><th>Pct</th><th>GB</th></tr> <tr><td>Cleveland</td><td>24</td><td>12 .667</td><td>—</td></tr> <tr><td>Detroit</td><td>20</td><td>15 .571</td><td>3½</td></tr> <tr><td>Milwaukee</td><td>19</td><td>16 .543</td><td>4½</td></tr> <tr><td>Indiana</td><td>19</td><td>18 .514</td><td>5½</td></tr> <tr><td>Chicago</td><td>13</td><td>24 .351</td><td>11½</td></tr> </table> WESTERN CONFERENCE Southwest Division <table border="1"> <tr><th>W</th><th>L</th><th>Pct</th><th>GB</th></tr> <tr><td>Houston</td><td>26</td><td>9 .743</td><td>—</td></tr> </table>	W	L	Pct	GB	Boston	30	10 .750	—	Toronto	25	10 .714	2½	New York	18	18 .500	10	Philadelphia	17	19 .472	11	Brooklyn	14	23 .378	14½	W	L	Pct	GB	Washington	21	16 .568	—	Miami	19	17 .528	1½	Charlotte	13	23 .361	7½	Orlando	12	26 .316	9½	Atlanta	10	26 .278	10½	W	L	Pct	GB	Cleveland	24	12 .667	—	Detroit	20	15 .571	3½	Milwaukee	19	16 .543	4½	Indiana	19	18 .514	5½	Chicago	13	24 .351	11½	W	L	Pct	GB	Houston	26	9 .743	—	<table border="1"> <tr><th>W</th><th>L</th><th>T</th><th>Pct</th><th>PF</th><th>PA</th></tr> <tr><td>y-Pittsburgh</td><td>13</td><td>3</td><td>0.813</td><td>406</td><td>308</td></tr> <tr><td>Baltimore</td><td>9</td><td>7</td><td>0.563</td><td>395</td><td>303</td></tr> <tr><td>Cincinnati</td><td>7</td><td>9</td><td>0.438</td><td>290</td><td>349</td></tr> <tr><td>Cleveland</td><td>0</td><td>16</td><td>0.000</td><td>234</td><td>410</td></tr> </table> West <table border="1"> <tr><th>W</th><th>L</th><th>T</th><th>Pct</th><th>PF</th><th>PA</th></tr> <tr><td>y-Kansas City</td><td>10</td><td>6</td><td>0.625</td><td>415</td><td>339</td></tr> <tr><td>L.A. 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