

# Sports

BOISE STATE FOOTBALL VS. UTAH STATE

## Broncos debut with win on The Blue

By Jason Chatraw  
Associated Press

BOISE — No fans were on hand to witness Boise State's 42-13 season-opening win over Utah State on Saturday evening, but if they had been, they would have felt like they had seen this game before.

Hank Bachmeier threw for 268 yards and three touchdowns and George Holani rushed for 100 yards and had a pair of scores to power the Broncos to another dominating performance against the Aggies.

Boise State won its home opener for the 11th straight time and hasn't dropped a conference opener since 1999.

Utah State continued its abysmal record against the Broncos, losing for the 17th time in the last 18 matchups.

Despite the game taking place in an empty stadium with less atmosphere than a spring game, Boise State brought plenty of intensity on defense and sprinkled in its trademark pizzazz on offense.

"The opportunity to compete and go out and just play another opponent was exciting," Boise State coach Bryan Harsin said. "We were just trying to keep it as normal as we could without fans and



Darin Oswald / Idaho Statesman-TNS

Boise State quarterback Hank Bachmeier (19) dives into the end zone for a touchdown in the second quarter against Utah State on Saturday at Albertsons Stadium in Boise.

all that energy. That was a challenge and I think our guys handled that really well. We were prepared mentally to play and we had a fast start in the first half."

By every metric, Boise State started fast, beginning with the defense.

The Broncos held Utah State to 45 yards in the first half, keeping Utah State quarterback Jason Shelley under constant duress.

Meanwhile, Bachmeier shined in his return after an injury-mired 2019 season. He

utilized his full complement of receivers, completing passes to eight different players. Khalil Shakir led the corps with seven receptions and a pair of touchdowns, including a 52-yard scoring strike.

"We had our moments, but we allowed the big plays to take place," Utah State coach Gary Anderson said. "And that's what a good quarterback does. (Bachmeier) took the check downs when they were there and some of those turned into big plays. He played like a savvy seasoned veteran."

After falling behind 28-0 at halftime, Utah State tried to scratch its way back into the game. The Aggies cut the lead to 28-7 on a 1-yard TD run by Jaylen Warren late in the third quarter before capitalizing on a botched Boise State punt. Utah State recovered a loose ball that was punted into the back of a Bronco kick protector on the Boise State 21 and scored six plays later.

But Boise State flexed its offensive muscles and put the game away by scoring on its next two possessions.

NFL ROUNDUP

## Steelers hold off Titans, 27-24, to stay undefeated

The Associated Press

Ben Roethlisberger threw two touchdown passes to Diontae Johnson, and the Pittsburgh Steelers remained perfect by holding off Tennessee for a 27-24 victory Sunday in a game originally postponed when the Titans came down with the NFL's first COVID-19 outbreak of the season.

In a matchup of the AFC's two remaining undefeated teams, the Titans rallied from 17 down. They failed to complete the comeback when Stephen Gostkowski, who made a 51-yarder earlier, missed from 45 yards wide right with 14 seconds left. That sent the Steelers running around the field in celebration and the Titans (5-1) stunned.

The Steelers improved to 6-0 for their best start since 1978, when Pittsburgh won its first seven on the way to the Super Bowl. This was just the fifth time undefeated teams had met in Week 7 or later, and the winner of the previous four all made the Super Bowl.

Benny Snell Jr. added a 1-yard TD run and Ray-Ray McCloud set up a touchdown with a 57-yard punt return.

Pittsburgh outgained Tennessee 362-292 and held the NFL's second-best scoring offense under 31 points for the first time since the opening week of the season.

But the Titans had won four of their first five by rallying in the final two minutes of regulation or overtime, and they scored 17 straight to pull within 27-24.

Ryan Tannehill hit A.J. Brown on a short pass that the receiver took to the end zone for a 73-yard TD. Jayon Brown picked off a batted pass, setting up Gostkowski's field goal. Derrick Henry capped a 12-play drive with a 1-yard TD with 10:13 left.

The Titans had their final chance after Amani Hooker intercepted Roethlisberger in the back of the end zone with 2:35 left. It was Roethlisberger's third of the game, which Tennessee turned into only a field goal.

See Roundup / Page 7A

## Indiana upsets No. 8 Penn State with 2-point conversion

By Michael Marot  
AP Sports Writer

BLOOMINGTON, Ind. — Indiana coach Tom Allen had grown weary of close calls in big games.

On Saturday, Allen went for it — and Michael Penix Jr. made those gambles pay off the Big Ten rivals'

first game of the delayed season,

After leading the Hoosiers on a touchdown drive in the final minute of regulation and scoring on a 2-point conversion to force overtime, Penix hooked up with Whop Philyor for a 9-yard TD pass in overtime and dove into the pylon

for the decisive 2-point conversion to give Indiana a 36-35 victory over No. 8 Penn State — its first win over a Top 10 team in more than 33 years.

"We'd been close so many times, and I was tired of being close," Allen said. "We liked the call and stayed

with the call (after Penn State called timeout) and stayed with the call. We felt like we had our three players involved in the play and one of those was going to get the ball or Michael was going to keep it. It felt like the right thing to do."

Indiana snapped the longest

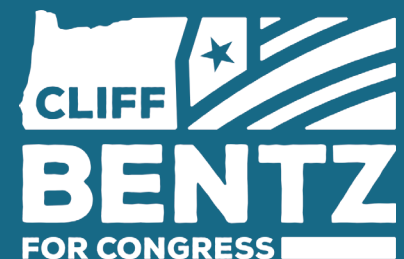
streak of consecutive losses to Top 10 foes at 42, a skid that dated to a 31-10 victory at Ohio State on Oct. 10, 1987 — a game the late Earle Bruce dubbed as the darkest day in Buckeyes history.

See Upset / Page 8A



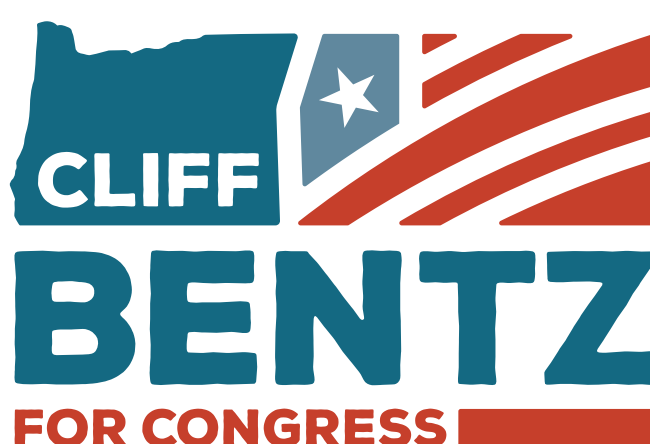
# Cliff Bentz

for Congress



RANCHER. FARMER. BUSINESSMAN.

CLIFFBENTZ.COM



Paid For By Cliff Bentz For Congress