

Sports

BOISE STATE FOOTBALL VERSUS COLORADO STATE

Broncos rebound from loss by kicking around the Rams

■ Boise State scores 3 touchdowns on blocked kicks in 52-21 rout Thursday night

BOISE (AP) — Avery Williams blocked two punts that were returned for touchdowns in the first half, Boise State had three special teams touchdowns off blocked kicks, and the Broncos routed Colorado State 52-21 on Thursday night.

Williams recovered his own blocked punt for a touchdown 52 seconds into the game. Late in the first half, Williams came off the edge and blocked his second punt, this one picked up by DJ Schramm and returned 20 yards for a TD that made it 42-7.

Williams was the Mountain West special teams player of the year a season ago. He has seven career special teams touchdowns, the first six coming on kickoff or punt returns, including an 88-yard kickoff return for a TD this season at Air Force.

“Special teams has always been my No. 1 thing,” Williams said. “So the fact that we can execute all of that and have it play out the way it did that’s really big for our program.”

“We needed to score, we need to start fast, we needed to create something on special teams.”

— **Bryan Harsin, Boise State head football coach**

Kekaula Kaniho also returned a blocked field goal 91 yards for a score late in the first quarter. It was the first time Boise State had multiple blocked kicks returned for touchdowns in a game since moving to the FBS in 1996.

“We needed to score, we needed to start fast, we needed to create something on special teams,” Boise State coach Bryan Harsin said.

The Broncos (3-1, 3-0 Mountain West) rebounded from last week’s 51-17 drubbing by No. 8 BYU, the worst home loss for Boise State since 1996.

Andrew Van Buren scored on a pair of 1-yard TD runs in the first half and Hank Bachmeier added a 5-yard TD pass to Riley Smith. Bachmeier returned after missing the

past two games and was 16 of 28 for 202 yards.

All the momentum from Colorado State’s victory over Wyoming last week evaporated with its 10th straight loss to the Broncos. Patrick O’Brien was 9-of-20 passing in the first half, including an interception, and was replaced by Todd Centeio.

Colorado State (1-2, 1-2) pulled to 42-21 early in the third quarter after scoring 14 points in 17 seconds. Centeio hit Trey McBride on a 21-yard TD pass. Williams fumbled the ensuing kickoff, and AJon Vivens rumbled 17 yards for a score.

But that was as close as the Rams would get. Boise State offensive lineman Nick Crabtree recovered teammate Khalil Shakir’s fumble just shy of the goal line and scored late in the third quarter to cap the scoring.

“A lot of guys scored tonight that we would not expect to score tonight. And I think that’s awesome,” Boise State linebacker Riley Whippey

said.

COVID CONCERNS

Boise State announced before kickoff that nine players were out due to positive COVID-19 tests, with another five out due to contact tracing.

“Hopefully moving forward we’re able to keep that more under control, because as a team you never want to lose guys,” Whippey said.

THE TAKEAWAY

• Colorado State: The Rams had plenty of special teams issues but their offense didn’t help. Colorado State had just 18 total yards over the first four drives and trailed 14-0 before getting a first down.

• Boise State: The Broncos have not lost consecutive games since 2016 and haven’t lost two straight at home since 2015.

UP NEXT

• Colorado State: Hosts UNLV on Nov. 21.
• Boise State: At Hawaii on Nov. 21.

Picking the NFL: week 10

Current Record: 73-38-1

Houston Texans (2-5) vs. Cleveland Browns (5-3)

After beating the Jaguars last week, the Texans head to Cleveland to face off against the well-rested Browns. Houston will compete but will fall short as its secondary struggles against Baker Mayfield, even with the absence of star wide receiver Odell Beckham Jr. The Browns will get their sixth victory, 30-14.

Washington Football Team (2-6) vs. Detroit Lions (3-5)

Both teams are really struggling midway through the season, but I’m more concerned about Washington, which lost for the second time to the Giants. The Lions are going to bounce back, and I expect a big game from quarterback Matthew Stafford in a 24-21 win.

Tampa Bay Buccaneers (6-3) vs. Carolina Panthers (3-6)

Let’s be frank, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers were embarrassed Sunday night against the Saints. Now they travel to Carolina to take on a Panthers team that went toe-to-toe against the Kansas City Chiefs, and proved how vital Christian McCaffrey is to their offense. Still, I expect the Bucs to rebound with a 38-21 win.

Philadelphia Eagles (3-4-1) vs. New York Giants (2-7)

This NFC East division is the oddest entity in the NFL. The Eagles lead the division with a record (3-4-1) that would put them at the bottom of any other division. The Giants won’t make it easy, as they are slowly becoming more competitive, but the Eagles will win, 17-10.

Jacksonville Jaguars (1-7) vs. Green Bay Packers (6-2)

After a big victory on the road in San Francisco, the Packers host the Jaguars at Lambeau Field. The Jaguars are going to be outmatched. Aaron Rodgers will overwhelm their defense, and Davante Adams is going to be the one mainly reaping the benefits. The Packers will win their seventh game, 42-20.

Buffalo Bills (7-2) vs. Arizona Cardinals (5-3)

After a big victory against the Seahawks at home, the Bills find themselves in a much warmer area of the country, taking on the Cardinals. Although their offense is exhilarating, the Cardinals continue to lose games against beatable opponents. The Bills aren’t slouches and are going to come into this game ready to get their eighth win of the season, and they will. I like their offense and their core of underrated receivers that Josh Allen can throw to. It is going to be high-scoring, but the Bills will squeak out the victory, 35-31.

Los Angeles Chargers (2-6) vs. Miami Dolphins (5-3)

The Miami Dolphins have been proving a lot



COREY KIRK

of doubters, including myself, wrong. Now we see two rookie quarterbacks face off in Justin Herbert and Tua Tagovailoa. This game is destined to be high-scoring, but I won’t make a mistake this week. The Dolphins are flashing signs of brilliance, and the Chargers are struggling to remain healthy. The Dolphins will win, 27-21.

Denver Broncos (3-5) vs. Las Vegas Raiders (5-3)

Although the Chargers tested them, the Las Vegas Raiders are still in contention in the AFC West. The Broncos aren’t completely unmatched, as Drew Lock has shown he is one of the most exciting young quarterbacks in the game. But the Raiders will win, 28-20.

Seattle Seahawks (6-2) vs. Los Angeles Rams (5-3)

In this NFC West matchup, we see the Seahawks remaining on the road to go up against the Rams and hoping to bounce back from a defensive struggle against the Bills, giving up 44 points. The Rams are rested, but I’m giving the edge to the Seahawks based on their offense. The Seahawks will secure their seventh win of the year, 24-17.

Cincinnati Bengals (2-5-1) vs. Pittsburgh Steelers (8-0)

Still the only undefeated team, the Steelers are hosting their divisional opponent. Though the Bengals got a big win against the Titans, I just don’t see them managing any momentum on either side of the ball. The Steelers will remain undefeated, 38-10.

Baltimore Ravens (6-2) vs. New England Patriots (3-5)

On Sunday Night Football we see the Ravens traveling to Gillette Stadium to take on the Patriots. Although they are coming off a victory against the Jets, the Patriots are bound to be overwhelmed against a much tougher opponent. The Ravens will win, 21-7.

Minnesota Vikings (3-5) vs. Chicago Bears (4-5)

On Monday night, we are seeing this NFC North matchup unfold as both teams have been on similar trajectories. Although the Bears started off strong, they are struggling to get a win in recent weeks.

The Vikings, on the other hand, have back-to-back wins under their belt. Although Dalvin Cook is the hottest running back in the game right now, I have to give the edge to Chicago.

Their defense is going to cool down Cook, and the Bears will win, 27-21.

Ivy League cancels all winter sports

By **Doug Feinberg**
AP Basketball Writer

The Ivy League became the first Division I conference this year to cancel all winter sports, including men’s and women’s basketball.

The decision Thursday came 13 days before the scheduled start of the college basketball season. The league had decided this past summer, when it canceled fall sports, not to allow any of its sports to start play before early December.

The news comes as the coronavirus cases are soaring across the U.S. Newly confirmed cases per day in the U.S. have rocketed more than 70% over 2 weeks.

COVID-19 surge wreaking havoc on college football

By **Ralph D. Russo**
AP College Football Writer

No. 3 Ohio State and No. 13 Wisconsin, the teams favored to play for the Big Ten championship, have already had a combined three games canceled because of COVID-19.

A spate of postponements in the Southeastern Conference has created the distinct possibility that neither No. 1 Alabama nor No. 6 Florida will play all its games.

And the most important Atlantic Coast Conference game of the season was played without the Heisman Trophy favorite, Clemson quarterback Trevor Lawrence, because he was recovering from the coronavirus.

As virus disruptions mount and the end of college football’s regular season draws closer, the possibility grows that conference championships, major awards and even College Football Playoff participants will be determined in large part by COVID-19.

“We’ve all accepted this is anything but a normal year,” ACC Commissioner John Swofford said.

Three more games were called off Thursday, including Pittsburgh at Georgia Tech in the ACC, raising the number of games involving Bowl Subdivision teams to be postponed or canceled since revised schedules were set in late August to 58 — including 21 in the past two weeks.

The total number of FBS games played so far is 310, meaning about 15% of the schedule through 10 weeks has been impacted. The number has increased recently in part because all FBS conferences are now playing, with the Pac-12 and Mid-American Conference returning last week, but it has also coincided with surging COVID-19 cases across the country.

In major college football, five postponed games have already been made up and another 25 have been rescheduled with the Dec. 19 end date a little more than a month away. As days come off the calendar and make-up dates become tougher to find, conferences will have to put more emphasis on the games that matter most.

Pushing back the playoff could provide more opportunity to complete the regular season. The semifinals are set for Jan. 1 at the Rose Bowl and Sugar Bowl and the championship game for Jan. 11 in Miami Gardens, Florida. But the idea of rescheduling the CFP does not seem to have traction among the conference commissioners who will ultimately make that call.

“At some point we have to have a finish line,” SEC Commissioner Greg Sankey said.

Delaying conference championship games a week would put them on Christmas weekend.

“So going farther into December, I don’t think is a workable option,” Big 12 Commissioner Bob Bowlsby said.

The Big 12 has had just one league game postponed: No. 14 Oklahoma State at Baylor was rescheduled for Dec. 12, the week before the Big 12 title game.

“I’m a long ways from declaring victory,” Bowlsby said. “We could at any time be right where the SEC is this week.”

The ACC, which started conference play earliest among Power Five conferences, has postponed five league games. One has already been made up and another will be Saturday when Louisville plays at Virginia. The other three, including No. 2 Notre Dame at Wake Forest, are slated for Dec. 12.

“You know, when you have 15 schools with 11 games and all 15 still have a chance to play 11 games, you have to feel good about it,” Swofford said. “But you also understand that can change and it can change in a hurry.”

Still, the ACC race has already been heavily impacted by the virus. No. 4 Clemson lost in double-overtime at Notre Dame without Lawrence, leaving the Fighting Irish well positioned to reach the ACC title game. If the Tigers can win a league championship rematch with the Irish, it could set up well for both to make the playoff.



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