

UM to face Towson; Husson seeks title

BY PETE WARNER
BDN STAFF

The University of Maine football team hopes its up-and-down season will take another upturn on Saturday when it returns home for a Colonial Athletic Association game against Towson.

Towson Tigers COLLEGE (5-3) at Maine FOOTBALL Black Bears (3-5), 7 p.m., Alford Stadium, Orono: The Bears will have to find some ways to get creative on offense, not only coming off a 13-3 loss at Villanova, but facing a Tigers defense that has been stingy of late.

Towson shut out Delaware 19-0 last Saturday and ranks third in

CAA total defense (308.4 yards per game), including third against the run (121.6 ypg).

"Their defense plays very well together and they've been probably as opportunistic a defense as I've seen in a long time," said UMaine head coach Jack Cosgrove.

"They held [Delaware] to 112 total yards and six first downs. That's a big, physical rushing football team that they just clearly dominated on defense," he added.

Leading the way are linebacker Eric Handy and safety Donnell Lewis (47 tackles each) and LB Jordan Mynatt (41 tackles, 8 tackles for a loss).

The Black Bears will try to get clicking, presumably with sopho-

more Drew Belcher (50-for-81 passing, 544 yards, 3 touchdowns; 40.5 ypg rushing) directing the offense for a second straight week. He was solid in helping UMaine move the ball against Villanova, but threw a costly interception and also fumbled once.

The Bears will need wide receivers Micah Wright (41 receptions, 521 yds., 3 TDs) and Jordan Dunn (40-426-1) to make some big plays, while tailback Nigel Beckford (98 carries, 318 yds., 4 TDs) must provide a complement to Belcher in the run attack.

However, UMaine ranks ninth in CAA scoring (19.1 ppg) and is seventh in total offense (317.4 ypg).

The Bears need a defense headed by linebacker Randy Samuels (60 tackles, 2 interceptions) and end

Trevor Bates (39 tackles, 5 sacks) to stand up strong, especially with tackle Pat Ricard questionable with a right ankle injury.

Towson's top weapons are QB Connor Frazier (128-for-213, 1,463 yds., 7 TDs), WR Jacquille Veii (33 rec, 368 yds.) and powerhouse tailback Darius Victor (79.4 ypg, 10 TDs).

Husson Eagles (6-1) at Norwich Cadets (5-3), 1 p.m., Sabine Field, Norwich, Vermont: This contest will serve as the championship game of the Eastern Collegiate Athletic Conference, as both teams take 5-0 league records into the game. The winner earns the ECFC's automatic bid to the NCAA Division III Football Championship.

Defending champion Husson con-

tinues to impress on both sides of the ball. Coach Gabby Price's Eagles rank fifth in Division III total defense (206.1 ypg) and have allowed only 15.3 ppg. Linebacker Ellis Throckmorton (50 tackles) leads the unit.

The versatile offense features tailback John Smith (151.1 ypg, 14 TDs), QB Joe Seccareccia (95-for-160 passing, 1,278 yds., 19 TDs) and wideout Deon Wiggins (23 rec., 375 yds., 8 TDs).

Maine Maritime Academy Mariners (2-5) at Salve Regina Seahawks (6-1), noon, Gaudet Field, Newport, Rhode Island: The Mariners look to build on a 21-20 win over Curry against the Seahawks, who are still in contention to win the New England Football Conference crown.



DAVID KOHL | USA TODAY

Cincinnati Bengals quarterback Andy Dalton (left) looks to throw against the Cleveland Browns during the first quarter Thursday night at Paul Brown Stadium in Cincinnati, Ohio. The Bengals won 31-10.

Eifert

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England's Tom Brady on the NFL leader board.

On Thursday night, Dalton completed passes to eight different receivers against an injury-depleted Browns secondary.

Eifert had five catches for 53 yards and three scores on Thursday giving him 37 receptions for 434 yards and nine touchdowns this season.

"He's just got such a great

feel and understands how to get open, use leverages, come out of breaks and different things," Dalton said. "That's what's so big. He scored touchdowns on three different types of plays. He's a big body that can go up and make tough catches. There's not much he can't do."

Right now, there's not much the Bengals aren't doing right.

Cincinnati has opened up a four-game lead in the AFC North and after a short week to prepare for Cleveland, now has some time off be-

fore facing the Houston Texans in another prime-time game on Monday, Nov. 16.

"It's good because the guys get some time again. They get a chance to lick their wounds a little bit, and get themselves back, feeling better and healthy," said head coach Marvin Lewis. "We were able to survive tonight pretty well, so we'll be back at full strength, and that's a good thing."

With the division seemingly in hand, Cincinnati can focus on positioning itself for the playoffs where it hasn't won a game in 25 years.

As far as where he ranks in the hierarchy of NFL tight ends, Eifert said he'll let the media determine that.

"It doesn't matter," he said. "For me, it's about how I can be the best tight end to help this team win. I can't control how many balls I get thrown or anything like that, but I can put myself in the best position by studying the opponent, understanding our game plan and being able to be moved around the field to help us win games and make it hard on opponents."

Contenders won't settle for lateral moves

BY CHRIS DUFRESNE
LOS ANGELES TIMES

LOS ANGELES — Saturday can't possibly top Saturday past on the insanity meter, unless a team **COLLEGE FOOTBALL** uses nine laterals to win on a game-ending touchdown that should not have counted.

There was also a chaotic goal-line finish at Minnesota; Temple putting up a tough fight against Notre Dame in Philadelphia; plus a scary Halloween-night finish for Stanford at Washington State.

Yet, for all the moving moments, the big needle didn't budge. There were no casualties among the top playoff contenders.

That's about to change, with a triple-header guaranteed to shake up this week's loosely assembled leaderboard.

Six teams in the top 15 of the first College Football Playoff ranking square off in a midday-to-midnight dust-up. Four of the six teams are undefeated and another, Alabama, might as well be, based on the love it received from the selection committee.

The panel, obviously im-

bued by the spirit of a Chesterfield-smoking man in a houndstooth hat, overlooked a home loss against Mississippi that left many Alabama fans in tears. The Crimson Tide also received a pass for lethargic home wins against Tennessee and Arkansas teams that are a collective 8-8.

The selection committee colated all this evidence and anointed Alabama No. 4. And the thanks it received?

Alabama Coach Nick Saban went on a rant against a system that would have the gall to think his team was good.

"I don't even know why we have it," Saban said of the CFP ranking. "The only real reason we have it is (for) folks like you to talk about it. That's all it is."

A look at Saturday's show-downs (with CFP rankings):

No. 16 Florida State (7-1) at No. 1 Clemson (8-0): Clemson Coach Dabo Swinney is already on the defensive in advance of a game doubters wonder if his team can win. Florida State has won three straight in a series that typically has major national implications.

Clemson blew a huge opportunity last year when it couldn't beat Florida State when the Seminoles were

without quarterback Jameis Winston, who was suspended for shouting obscenities from a lunch-area table top.

"The last thing I'm worried about is any anti-Clemson faction," Swinney said this week.

A lot of people think Clemson is the real deal this year, but even that didn't satisfy Swinney.

"We've been a highly ranked team for a long time," he said. "It's not like we just got in the rankings."

No. 8 Texas Christian (8-0) at No. 14 Oklahoma State (8-0): The selection committee clearly is not yet impressed by the Big 12 Conference's leaders and had its suspicions reinforced Thursday when undefeated Baylor struggled to a 31-24 win at Kansas State.

TCU has the unstoppable combination of quarterback Trevone Boykin and receiver Josh Doctson. Oklahoma State is still a mystery as it tries to repeat its 2011 run to playoff contention.

The 2011 Cowboys were ultimately foiled by horrific defense and a double-overtime loss at Iowa State. Brandon Weeden, that team's quarterback, told The Daily Oklaho-

man this week, "I'm not joking when I say I still lose sleep over that game."

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Olympic and world decathlon champion Thompson told Talksport Radio. "This to my mind is a 10 or 11 on the Lance Armstrong scale. This is much worse than what Sepp Blatter has been doing."

"Obviously, this has not happened on Seb Coe's watch. But he needs to have a root and branch reform...maybe he needs to make a stand and say what he's going to do about it."

Coe

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meters champion pledged that the newly created IAAF ethics Commission would make them the "outstanding Olympic federation in the field of integrity."

While he cannot be held accountable for the actions of his predecessor and his son — who has left his IAAF role while under investiga-

Kizer in a rush to climb steep learning curve

BY PAUL SKRBINA
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

The test was the pass. DeShone Kizer passed the test.

Again. His legs? Those were the extra credit few expected.

Notre Dame's redshirt freshman quarterback didn't pass the ball with flying colors last weekend **NOTRE DAME FOOTBALL**

during a 24-20, hold-your-breath victory against Temple at Lincoln Financial Field.

Twice in the second quarter — long before he found Philadelphia native Will Fuller for the winning 17-yard touchdown pass with 2 minutes, 9 seconds left — Kizer was intercepted inside the Temple 10-yard line. The first, by Praise Martin-Oguike at the 6, was turned around for a 94-yard touchdown drive that gave the Owls a 10-7 lead.

"Completely unacceptable," said Kizer, who will lead the fifth-ranked Irish on Saturday at Pittsburgh. "That game should never (have been) in the position it was at the end. If I don't throw those two picks in the first half, we don't have to engineer anything. But ... we came out victorious."

Thanks to that pass to Fuller, the second winner Kizer has thrown to him late in a game. The first came with 12 seconds to play at Virginia.

In a thin backfield full of backups, thanks to injuries, Kizer has proved he's got legs and he knows how to use them. With running back C.J. Prosise stunted to 25 yards on 14 carries by the Owls, the 6-foot-4, 230-pound Kizer ran with flying colors — 143 yards to be exact, including two touchdowns.

He fell a passing yard short of becoming the first Notre Dame quarterback to throw for 300 and run for 100 in the same game.

In his sixth start since taking over for the injured Malik Zaire, Kizer also did something eclipsed by just one Notre Dame quarterback — he raced 79 yards for a score, receiving a key block from receiver Chris Brown. That's a long way to go for a player who said he has a long way to go, a guy whose running ability was questioned from the start.

Football

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Sunday against the New Orleans Saints.

Titans interim coach Mike Mularkey announced after Friday's practice that Mariota will return although the rookie is officially listed as probable. Mariota missed the last two games with a sprained MCL in his left knee.

"He's going to play," Mularkey said of Mariota. "I think each day he has gotten better. To be on the turf (for Friday's practice) here, which is the same turf he's going to be on Sunday, it was good to see him move around like he did."

Mariota will wear a brace to protect his knee.

"You can't simulate game speed, but that will show up on Sunday when the adrenaline gets flowing," Mularkey said.

The sprint surprised even the sprinter, who was "100 percent" certain it would end long before it met the end zone. He shocked his teammates too.

"I got up, I'm looking and I'm like, 'Is he ... gonna ... go all the way?'" said Prosise, who became the starter in Week 2 after Tarean Folston went down in the opener. "I'm celebrating halfway, like, 'Yeah, yeah, you got it.' I was happy to see him get in that end zone. He showed people he's got some speed."

And he did it on a field where one of his idols, former Eagles and Mount Carmel quarterback Donovan McNabb, used to roam.

Kizer thinks of McNabb as his first quarterback coach, saying he learned how to grip the ball thanks to YouTube videos he watched with his father, Derek Kizer, who was a fan of another Eagles quarterback, Randall Cunningham.

"If it wasn't for Donovan McNabb, I probably wouldn't even be a quarterback," Kizer said. "My dad was a basketball player growing up, didn't know much about football. We would throw in YouTube clips, and he would try to teach me off of what Donovan was doing."

Kizer will continue on his steep learning curve in another NFL stadium in Pennsylvania when the Irish (7-1) face the Panthers (6-2) at Heinz Field.

Kizer said when he committed to the Irish, he wasn't thinking in terms of giving an arm and his legs. That began to change before Everett Golson transferred and Zaire was injured.

"I never really prepared myself to be the true dual-threat style of guy as I was evaluating Notre Dame," Kizer said. "I was evaluating the Tommy Rees era, where he was a little under center, got in the shotgun here and there. Thought that would be the style of offense I would run if I was the quarterback here."

These days, Kizer said he's willing to carry more of the carries load if that's what it takes. He's second on the team behind Prosise with 318 yards and five touchdowns on 72 keepers.

Mariota injured his knee in Week 6 on Oct. 18 on an illegal low hit against the Miami Dolphins. The Titans not only lost both of the games without Mariota but did very little offensively. Zach Mettenberger struggled in Mariota's place, extending the Titans' losing streak to six games. Tennessee lost to the Atlanta Falcons and Houston Texans and managed just 13 points in those two games combined.

Wide receiver Kendall Wright will not play in Sunday's game because of a sprained MCL in his left knee. He suffered the injury last Sunday in the 20-6 loss to the Houston Texans. Wright has 28 receptions for 343 yards and three touchdowns this season.

The Titans also will be without cornerback Blidi Wreh-Wilson because of a hamstring injury. Cornerback Jason McCourty (groin) is listed as questionable.