

# Iowa batters USC in Holiday Bowl

Texas A&M holds off Oklahoma St 24-21; North Carolina pummels Temple in Military Bowl

**SAN DIEGO, Dec 28, (AP):** Ihmir Smith-Marsette scored on a 6-yard run, a 98-yard kickoff return and a 12-yard reception - all in the second quarter - in No. 19 Iowa's 49-24 victory over No. 22 Southern California in the Holiday Bowl on Friday night.

Senior Nate Stanley threw two touchdown passes and the Hawkeyes (10-3) won their fourth straight game for their sixth 10-win season in coach Kirk Ferentz's 21 years.

USC freshman quarterback Kedon Slovis, who threw two touchdown passes, was knocked out of the game with an apparent arm injury early in the third quarter. The Trojans (8-5) had their three-game winning streak snapped. They fell apart after Slovis left.

Smith-Marsette helped the Hawkeyes to a 28-17 halftime lead.

Smith-Marsette scored on a 6-yard sweep for a 14-7 lead. After USC tied it on Slovis' 16-yard pass to Vavae Malepeai,

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Smith-Marsette returned the kickoff 98 yards to give the Hawkeyes the lead for good.

Smith-Marsette, a junior wide receiver, also had a 95-yard kickoff return for a score in the regular-season finale, a 27-24 victory over Nebraska.

Stanley found Smith-Marsette on a 12-yard scoring pass on Iowa's next possession for a 28-14 lead.

## Texas Bowl

**Texas A&M 24, Oklahoma State 21**

Kellen Mond ran for a career-high 117 yards and threw a touchdown pass as Texas A&M scored 24 straight points to overcome an early deficit and beat Oklahoma State in the Texas Bowl.

Mond ran 67 yards to give the Aggies (8-5) a 21-14 lead early in the fourth quarter. Mond cut to the right to avoid a couple of defenders and outran everyone else. Tre Sterling had a shot to tackle him around the 25, but Mond ran away from his diving attempt.

The Cowboys (8-5) went for it on fourth-and-1 from the Texas A&M 34 on their next possession, but Spencer Sanders was stopped for no gain.

The Aggies added a 24-yard field goal to make it 24-14 with about three minutes to go.

Oklahoma State cut the lead to three on a touchdown reception by Braydon Johnson with about a minute left. The Cowboys attempted an onside kick, but A&M recovered it to secure the victory.

Chuba Hubbard, who finished the regular season as the nation's leading rusher, ran for 158 yards, and Johnson had 124 yards receiving and two touchdowns for the Cowboys.

Hubbard finished the season with 2,094 yards rushing to become the second player in school history to reach 2,000, joining Barry Sanders, who did it in 1988 when he won the Heisman Trophy.

## Cheeze-It Bowl

Kadin Remsberg ran for 178 yards and stretched to the pylon for a 3-yard touchdown late in the fourth quarter, lifting No. 24 Air Force over Washington State in the Cheeze-It Bowl.

The Falcons (11-2) had their triple option working to near perfection, grinding out 371 yards rushing while setting a Cheeze-It Bowl time of possession record of 43:24.

Donald Hammond III scored two touchdowns and Remsberg had his fourth-down TD confirmed by review to help the Falcons close the season on an eight-game winning streak.

Anthony Gordon, the FBS passing leader, kept the Cougars within reach, throwing for 351 yards and three touchdowns. He hit Brandon Arconado on a 13-yard TD early in the fourth quarter to pull Washington State (6-7) within 24-21, but the Cougars had no answer for Air Force's triple-option attack.

## Pinstripe Bowl

**Michigan State 27, Wake Forest 21**



Eastern Michigan quarterback Mike Glass III (9) runs during the first half of the Quick Lane Bowl NCAA college football game against Pittsburgh, Dec 26, in Detroit. (AP)

Brian Lewerke threw for 320 yards and a touchdown and ran for a score in Michigan State's victory over Wake Forest in the Pinstripe Bowl at Yankee Stadium.

Lewerke threw a 10-yard pass to wide receiver Cody White in the third quarter to put the Spartans (7-6) ahead 27-21 and they survived down the stretch to give embattled coach Mark Dantonio his sixth bowl victory.

Wake Forest (8-5) missed a chance to win nine games for just the third time in program history.

Michigan State tried to give away the game twice in the fourth, the first time on Lewerke's shovel pass to tight end Trenton Gillison inside the 10 that was stripped and recovered by linebacker Ja'Cquez Williams at the 6.

The Deamon Deacons failed to score on the drive, and handed Michigan State another chance to seal the victory.

Again, the Spartans couldn't put it away when Matt Coghlin was wide left on a 28-yard field goal attempt with 3:03 left Wake Forest's last chance ended on an incomplete pass on its own 16.

Lewerke passed Connor Cook (9,403) to become Michigan State's career leader in total offense and was the bowl MVP. White finished with 97 yards receiving, and Elijah Collins had 96 yards rushing.

Jamie Newman did all his damage for the Demon Deacons in the first half, throwing three touchdown passes for a 21-20 halftime lead.

## Military Bowl

**North Carolina 55, Temple 13**

Freshman Sam Howell threw for 294 yards and three touchdowns and caught a scoring pass in North Carolina's victory over Temple in the Military Bowl.

Howell completed 25 of 34 passes and ran for 53 yards on three carries to help the Tar Heels (7-6) to their first bowl victory since 2013.

Temple (8-5) has gone to a bowl five years in a row - and lost four of them.

Howell threw two first-half touchdowns to stake the Tar Heels to a 20-6 lead.

They pulled in the third quarter, scoring two touchdowns in a 12-second span, the last on Storm Duck's 20-yard interception return.

Howell completed the third-quarter blitz by catching a 2-yard TD pass from wide receiver Rontavious Groves at the end of a razzle-dazzle reverse to make it 41-6.

Howell threw 38 touchdown passes this season, the most by a true freshman in FBS history.

## Win or lose, Atlanta will finish with a losing record for 2nd straight season

# Buccaneers, Falcons motivated to finish second

TAMPA, Florida, Dec 28, (AP) - The winner will finish second in the NFC South.

That's enough to keep the Tampa Bay Buccaneers (7-8) and Atlanta Falcons (6-9) motivated for the final game of a season in which neither team will finish with a winning record.

"For us 8-8, tastes a whole lot better than 7-9," coach Bruce Arians, completing his first season with the Bucs, said. "Any time you can spend the offseason remembering when you win, it's a lot different to come to work every day - as a player and a coach."

The Falcons, who've won five of seven following a 1-7 start, announced Friday that coach Dan Quinn and general manager Thomas Dimitroff would return. Owner Arthur Blank apparently determined a strong finish was enough to save their jobs.

"I don't worry about all of those other things as much as just trying to get the job done this week," Atlanta quarterback Matt Ryan said. "We know we are playing a good team, a team that is playing really well. Their second half of this season has been very similar to ours. They have been operating at a very high rate ... and that is what we are focused on."

The Bucs, also 5-2 over their past seven games, are a year removed from their fifth coaching change in a decade. They've already surpassed their victory total for each of the past two seasons, when they went 5-11.

Quinn took the Falcons to the

Super Bowl for the 2016 season, but hasn't come anywhere close to replicating that success. Win or lose Sunday, Atlanta will finish with a losing record for the second straight season.

Nevertheless, Arians is impressed with the way the Falcons have performed down the stretch.

"There's (an) accountability factor. They want to win for Dan. Dan's a heck of a coach, heck of a guy, so they're giving it everything they've

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got," the Bucs coach said. "Defensively I think they were simpler and playing faster the last time we played them. They've gotten a little more complicated and they're still playing fast."

Tampa Bay won a matchup between the division rivals 35-22 on Nov. 24. A Falcons win this time would leave both teams at 7-9, however, Atlanta would finish in second place because of a better record within the NFC South.

"It's for second place in the division," Tampa Bay quarterback Jameis Winston said of what it would mean to close on a positive note. "We're going to go out there and try our best to play good football because they've been playing really good football. ... 8-8 is better than 7-9 any day."

Falcons offensive coordinator Dirk Koetter, the Bucs' head coach



Tampa Bay Buccaneers running back Peyton Barber (25) hurdles a teammate on a run against the Houston Texans during the first half of an NFL football game, Dec 21, in Tampa, Fla. (AP)

for three years before getting fired last Dec. 30, is trying not to put too much emphasis on returning to Raymond James Stadium. Koetter went 19-29 at Tampa Bay and lost his job after consecutive 5-11 seasons.

"It's part of the business," Koetter said. "I'm sure it will be a little weird on game day, but as we stand here today you are just digging into the film and trying to figure out how to attack that defense because they are playing really, really good on defense right now."

Another former Tampa Bay head coach, Raheem Morris, has been on the Atlanta staff since Quinn's first season in 2015. Morris switched

from receivers coach to the secondary seven weeks ago and has helped spark a defensive turnaround in the second half of the season that has earned him the defensive coordinator job in 2020. Morris went 17-31 at Tampa Bay from 2009-11.

Tampa Bay sacked Ryan six times for minus-46 yards in Week 12, and it was a big day for the linebackers. Lavonte David, Devin White and Shaquill Barrett combined for 13 solo tackles, seven quarterback hits and three sacks for minus-27 yards.

Atlanta's offensive line can't afford another poor performance, though Ryan has been encouraged the last three weeks with the return of guard Chris Lindstrom, a first-round draft pick who missed 11 games with a broken foot. Lindstrom has helped stabilize the right side of the line, complementing fellow rookie tackle Kaleb McGary.

McGary struggled badly against White in the last matchup.

"I think for us the offensive line has had good continuity for the last couple of weeks," Ryan said. "We have got some different guys playing than we did the first time and it starts and ends there. We have to make sure we play well up front."

Seven-time Pro Bowl receiver Julio Jones has found ways to get better as a leader during Quinn's tenure, and Jones keeps racking up big numbers on the field. Last week he became the quickest NFL receiver to 12,000 career yards, reaching the mark in 125 games, and he's the first receiver to have five straight seasons of at least 1,400 yards and 80 catches.

"He's always been revered as a ballplayer on the team, but the leadership has just grown as he's grown, and I think that to me speaks a lot," Quinn said. "Not only does he impact the other players on the offense, but on the entire team. He's always pushing the guys and kind of giving a model of what it could look like. I think that part of his game, he's always been a fantastic player and teammate, but now leading is kind of the last bit of icing that I've seen, and it's very impressive."



North Carolina wide receiver Dazz Newsome (right) catches a touchdown pass from quarterback Sam Howell (not visible), as Temple linebacker Sam Franklin (4) and safety Ayrton Monroe (left) try to defend during the second half of the Military Bowl NCAA college football game, Dec 27, in Annapolis, Maryland. (AP)