



## **LED BY TEXAS QB SAM EHLINGER, DEFENSE LONGHORNS KNOCK OFF GEORGIA 28-21 IN 85<sup>TH</sup> ALLSTATE SUGAR BOWL**

NEW ORLEANS – Tom Herman's Texas Renaissance Festival continued with a signature victory in the 85<sup>th</sup> annual Allstate Sugar Bowl. Led by sophomore quarterback Sam Ehlinger and a stingy defense, 15<sup>th</sup>-ranked Texas upset fifth-ranked Georgia, 28-21, before 71,449 fans Tuesday night (Jan. 1, 2019) in the Mercedes-Benz Superdome.

It capped a 10-4 season for the Longhorns in Herman's second year as head coach of a storied program that had fallen on difficult times before his arrival. Georgia, which lost to Alabama in the SEC Championship and just missed a second consecutive trip to the College Football Playoffs, finished 11-3.

"As far as our program, I think it means we're headed in the right direction," Herman said. "We had a bunch of seniors here who for two years bought into the way we did things. I can't thank them enough."

Ehlinger, a sophomore from Austin, Texas, Westlake High, was honored as the Miller-Digby Award winner, signifying the game's most outstanding player. Ehlinger rushed for 64 yards on 21 carries and three touchdowns while completing 19 of 27 passes for 169 yards.

"Longhorn Nation, we're back," Ehlinger shouted to the Texas fans who hung around for the postgame ceremony.

The Texas defense had a big hand as the Longhorns built a 28-7 lead early in the fourth quarter. The Bulldogs had only 76 yards rushing through the first three quarters of the game and 174 yards overall. For the game, Georgia, which averaged 251.6 yards rushing per game coming in, finished with 72 yards rushing and 284 overall.

"We knew we had to be the more physical team to win," Herman said. "Our No. 1 goal getting to New Orleans was to win the game. We felt like our defense was playing great."

Georgia rallied in the fourth quarter with two touchdowns, cutting the Longhorns' lead to 28-21 with 14 seconds left to play. But Texas recovered an onside kick then to preserve the victory.

Georgia coach Kirby Smart credited the physical play of Texas.

"(The Big 12) has the reputation of being an offensive league," Smart said. "But when they need to play physical, they play physical. Texas out-played us, out-competed us, out-physicaled us, out-coached us. Their quarterback managed the game well, made some big plays. Give Texas and Tom credit."

Ehlinger's stats didn't tell the whole story. It was the clutch plays in big situations that defined his night. And perhaps none was bigger than on Texas touchdown drive that spanned the third and fourth quarters. He led the Longhorns on a 14-play, 70-yard offensive that consumed 5:37.

He capped the drive with a 1-yard touchdown run on fourth-and-1 that, along with a successful two-point conversion pass, gave the Longhorns a 28-7 lead with 11:49 left to play. That all but sealed the victory.

Ehlinger accounted for 57 yards rushing and passing on the drive.

But it was his run for a first down facing third-and-10 at the Georgia 11 that was the marquee play. Georgia dug in on three straight plays at its 1, keeping Ehlinger out of the end zone on three straight running plays. But the fourth time was the charm for the 6-foot-3, 230-pound quarterback as he finally made it into the end zone.

The Bulldogs answered with a 67-yard, six-play touchdown drive. Georgia quarterback Jake Fromm passed 3 yards to receiver Mecole Hardman for the touchdown that cut Texas' lead to 28-14 with 10:25 left.

Texas took a 20-7 halftime lead thanks to two long drives and two crucial Georgia mistakes.

The Longhorns jumped to a 17-0 lead with 14:53 left in the second quarter when Ehlinger scrambled nine yards for a touchdown on a third-and-7 play. That capped a short 12-yard drive set up by a Bulldogs fumble. Georgia running back D'Andre Swift was separated from the ball by Longhorns defensive end Ta'Quon Graham at the Georgia 17 with nose tackle Gerald Wilbon recovering at the UGA 12.

Three plays later Ehlinger ran for the score.

But Georgia responded with its first touchdown drive of the night, a 12-play, 75-yard offensive. Fromm capped the drive with a 17-yard touchdown pass to running back Brian Herrien with 9:03 to play that cut the Longhorns' lead to 17-7. Fromm was impressive on the drive, completing four passes for 46 yards. That included a 12-yard pass to wide receiver Riley Ridley on third-and-11 at the Texas' 29 that kept alive the drive.

Texas responded with an 11-play, 62-yard drive that ended with a 30-yard field goal by freshman kicker Cameron Dicker with 4:37 left in the second quarter to give the Horns the 20-7 halftime lead.

The Bulldogs put together another lengthy drive on the ensuing possession but two plays thwarted the offensive. Facing second-and-10 at the Texas 31, Fromm dropped to throw and spotted receiver Jeremiah Holloman open on a slant route near the goal line. But Fromm's pass was a tad high for Holloman who couldn't haul it in.

Then on the next play and facing third-and-11, Fromm was sacked for a 9-yard loss by linebacker Anthony Wheeler back to the Texas 40, forcing the Bulldogs to punt right before the half.

Texas took the opening kickoff and marched 75 yards in 10 plays for a touchdown. Ehlinger capped the drive with a 2-yard scoring run to give the Longhorns a 7-0 lead with 10:35 left in the first quarter. Ehlinger rushed and passed for 64 yards.

Georgia set up Texas in good shape on the ensuing possession thanks to a special teams mistake. Bulldogs punter Jake Camarda appeared to have hit a 52-yard punt to the Texas 7. But video review showed Camarda had a knee on the ground when he fielded a low snap, giving Texas the ball at the Georgia 27.

Four plays later, Dicker booted a 37-yard field goal to stake Texas to a 10-0 lead with 6:05 to play.

Ehlinger passed for 90 yards on 10 of 13 completions and rushed for 27 yards and the two touchdowns in the first half.

The Longhorns defense held UGA to 118 yards and only 29 yards rushing in the first half.