

Football Stuns Northwestern, 43-42

Falcons notch first win at a Big Ten facility since 1972.

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Audio: Postgame Interview w/Coach Meyer
Requires Real Player/Courtesy www.SportingNews.com

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EVANSTON, Ill. - Trailing by two touchdowns with 3:44 left, it appeared Bowling Green would go home with a good showing against a Big Ten opponent and nothing else.

That's not, however, how the Falcons were thinking.

"I don't ever give up," receiver Robert Redd said.

"Even when we were down two touchdowns, we made it happen," said quarterback Josh Harris, who led the improbable comeback.

Harris hit Redd with a 5-yard TD pass with 36 seconds left and Cole Magner ran for the game-winning 2-point conversion on a reverse Saturday as Bowling Green stunned Northwestern 43-42.

Bowling Green hadn't attempted a 2-point conversion all year. But Saturday there was never any doubt the Falcons would play for a win, not overtime.

"In the middle of the fourth quarter, we decided we would go for it," Falcons coach Urban Meyer said after the school's first win over a Big Ten foe since 1972.

Harris passed for 402 yards and three touchdowns, ran for two TDs - his 3-yarder with 2:30 left got Bowling Green to 42-35- and also caught a scoring pass.

Northwestern's Zak Kustok threw for three TD passes and ran for two other scores, but threw a last-second interception in his final home game as Northwestern fell to 4-6 and out of bowl contention.

Bowling Green, which last week clinched its first winning season since 1994, moved the ball all day against the Wildcats, who had given up 56 and 59 points the previous two weeks against Indiana and Iowa.

After Harris' TD run made it a seven-point game, Kustok recovered the onside kick and it looked as if Northwestern would be able to move for another score or run out the block.

But Ryan Wingrove recovered a fumble by Northwestern's Torri Stuckey at the Bowling Green 22 with 1:35 left.

The Falcons then moved 78 yards in nine plays as Harris completed six passes.

"When they started that drive, I can't lie and say I didn't think they were going to run out the clock, but I knew our defense would come up big," Harris said.

"The turnover was critical and then we went out and executed our two-minute drill just like we do every Wednesday in practice."

After a pass-interference call on Northwestern put the ball on the 5, Harris hit Redd to pull the Falcons within one.

Eschewing the tie, Bowling Green then ran a reverse and Magner easily beat the Northwestern defense to the corner for the two points and the victory as the Falcons sideline went wild.

"I had no idea, I didn't know if we could go for two," said Magner, who had the option to pass or run after taking the ball from Harris.

"If the defensive guy came after me, I was supposed to throw. Nobody came, so I ran it in."

Northwestern linebacker Kevin Bentley said the Wildcats initially thought Bowling Green would kick and had their kick-block unit on the field.

But when the Falcons went for two, the Wildcats couldn't get their proper personnel positioned in time.

"We didn't get our team back on quick enough," Bentley said.



Bowling Green's Josh Harris dives into the end zone to score a touchdown past Northwestern's Onaje Grimes in the fourth quarter.

Kustok's 80-yard pass to Kunle Patrick gave the Wildcats a 35-21 lead early in the fourth and Stuckey's 3-yard TD run made it 42-28 with 3:44 remaining.

Northwestern had scoring drives of 81 and 80 yards on its first two possessions, breaking to a 14-0 lead on Kustok's 1-yard TD run and his 29-yard scoring pass to Sam Simmons.

After missing a 19-yard field goal, the Falcons came back and scored when Harris hit David Bautista with a 20-yard TD pass near the end of the first quarter.

Kustok hit Witherspoon on a 16-yard TD pass in the second quarter to make it 21-7.

The Falcons moved 61 yards, using some razzle dazzle to get within 21-14 at the half when Harris handed the ball to Magner and then ran out in the flat and caught a 14-yard TD pass from Magner with 1:03 left.

Kustok finished with a school-record 532 yards total offense, completing 26 of 39 passes for 421 yards and carrying 29 times for 111.

"I would have rather had 100 yards and still won the game. It's been frustrating," Kustok said.

Bowling Green, which also has wins over Missouri and Temple this season, rolled up 618 yards - the second straight week Northwestern has allowed 600 yards.

Harris had 18 carries for 91 yards while completing 30 of 47 passes and finished with a school-record 493 yards total offense. Redd made 12 catches for 168 yards.