

RATTLERS LASSO DESPERADOS ON FINAL PLAY

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Rattlers Ticket Hotline: 602-514-TDTD.

DALLAS – The playoff-guaranteed Arizona Rattlers (5-6) took a huge step forward in holding up their end of the guarantee, defeating the #1-ranked Dallas Desperados (9-2), 55-54, on the game's final play.

The Rattlers snapped Dallas' 17-game regular season home winning streak, the second longest in AFL history, and handed the team only their second loss of the season, and third regular season loss in two seasons. The Desperados, who were ranked almost unanimously at the top of the Schutt Sports Power Poll this week, fall behind Philadelphia (10-2) in the Eastern Division standings.

"This week it was all about mindset; finish the ball-game," said Rattlers Head Coach Kevin Guy. "We set the tone early in the week. The players were starting to feel like they weren't getting any respect around the league. Everyone answered the phone this week. The coaches did a great job, and the players made plays."

WR TOD DEVOE snagged the game's final two catches (24 and 16 yards) as Arizona drove 45 yards in 18.3 seconds to claim victory. Devoe's final reception came with no time left on the clock. He finished the game with six receptions for 65 yards and two touchdowns.

The real star of the game, though, was **WR TRANDON HARVEY**, who won both the Offensive Player of the Game and Ironman of the Game awards. Harvey, who hauled in 12 passes for 145 yards and three touchdowns on offense also had the game's key play, one that swung the momentum the Rattlers way and set the tone for the rest of the game.

Down 14 to 7 with 1.7 seconds left on the clock, Dallas attempted a field goal from their own 20 yard line. Harvey returned the kick off the net all the way for a touchdown before Arizona converted a fake two point conversion to take the lead going into the locker room. Harvey has now returned a kick for a touchdown in four out of the last five games.

The last Rattler to win two game awards in the same contest was WR Chris Horn, who snagged them in a July 20th, 2002 match-up with the New Jersey Gladiators (now Cleveland).

Arizona's offense was paced by **QB JEFF SMOKER**, who turned in another solid outing, completing almost 65% of his passes for 350 yards and seven touchdowns. **WR SIAHA BURLEY** had almost as good a night as Harvey, notching 11 receptions for 140 yards and two scores.

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With this win, the Rattlers maintain their hold on second place in the Western Division, and jump up to third overall in the American Conference. They hold a one-game lead over Colorado and Los Angeles (both 4-7). If Arizona finishes third or fourth in the conference, they will win the right to host a home playoff game in the first round. If the Rattlers take the Western Division, where they currently sit one game behind San Jose, they will receive a bye in the first round and host a playoff game in the second round.

The team has proven to be cool under pressure this season, as it has gone undefeated in games decided by one point, with all of those wins coming on the road (at Utah, Tampa Bay and Dallas), and 4-1 in games decided by seven points or less.

The Rattlers come home next Saturday night to take on the Grand Rapids Rampage in a game that could prove to be very influential in the American Conference standings. Kickoff is slated for 7:00pm on Saturday, May 24.

GAME NOTES

After going without a defensive stop last week against San Jose, the Rattlers opened up the game with one, stopping the Desperados three times from inside Arizona's own two yard line...the Rattlers held the Desperados without an offensive touchdown for the first 24:19 of the game...the 14 points allowed by Arizona in the first half is the team's best since the 10 allowed against New York (3/22/08)...the 66 offensive yards notched by the Desperados in the first half is the lowest by a Rattlers opponent since 4/4/04 (62 vs. Grand Rapids)...Smoker threw his 82nd career touchdown pass tonight...Harvey moves into eighth place in Rattler history with 171 receptions...Harvey now ranks seventh in reception yards with 2,354...Arizona has now surpassed last season's win total with five wins in 11 games...the Rattlers have made good on six of seven two-point conversions on the season...Arizona is now 4-1 against the National Conference this season with wins against Dallas, New York, Georgia and Tampa Bay.

BOX SCORE

	1	2	3	4	F
Arizona Rattlers	0	15	13	27	55
Dallas Desperados	7	7	21	19	54

STATISTICAL LEADERS

Passing

Arizona – Jeff Smoker, 29/45 for 350 yards, 7 touchdowns, 1 interception

Dallas – Clint Dolezel, 14/25 for 256 yards, 5 touchdowns, 0 interceptions

Rushing

Arizona – Chris Robinson, 6 rushes for 28 yards

Dallas – Josh White, 4 rushes for 12 yards

Receiving

Arizona – Trandon Harvey, 12 receptions for 145 yards and 3 touchdowns

Dallas – Andrae Thurman, 4 receptions for 74 yards and 2 touchdowns

Defense

Arizona – Wendall Gaines, 1 tackle for a loss and 1 QB hurry

Dallas – Colston Weatherington, 5.5 tackles, 3 sacks, 2 forced fumbles

PLAYERS OF THE GAME

Offensive – WR Trandon Harvey, Arizona

Defensive – DE Colston Weatherington, Dallas

Ironman – WR Trandon Harvey, Arizona

The 2008 Arizona Rattlers have guaranteed their season ticket holders a trip to the playoffs. Season tickets, group tickets and premium single game tickets can be purchased by calling the Rattlers ticket hotline at 602-514-TDTD. Single game tickets are now on sale at the USAirways box office and all Ticketmaster locations. More information is available at www.azrattlers.com.

Catch all the action when the Los Angeles Avengers take on the Chicago Rush on Russell Athletic Arena Football Monday, May 19 at 5:00pm PT on ESPN2.



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