

## Late Surge Not Enough, Buckeyes Fall To South Carolina

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**TAMPA, Fla. (AP)** - With the score tied and no time left, South Carolina kicker Daniel Weaver knew his 42-yard field goal attempt wasn't his best effort. So he put his faith in the wind.

The kick barely cleared the crossbar, allowing No. 14 South Carolina to avoid a big embarrassment with a 31-28 victory over No. 22 Ohio State in the Outback Bowl on Tuesday.

"I don't know what would've happened if that sucker didn't go through," South Carolina coach Lou Holtz said.

But the kick did, and the Gamecocks (9-3) had their second straight Outback win over Ohio State.

"I knew it wasn't my greatest kick ever, but I was hoping the wind might take it," Weaver said. "I was lucky enough to make it."

Steve Bellisari, playing for the first time since his November arrest and suspension on drunken driving charges, led Ohio State from a 28-0 deficit to tie the score. But he was intercepted by Sheldon Brown, whose return to Ohio State's 29 with 23 seconds left set up Weaver's first game-winning kick.

Four plays and two Ohio State timeouts after the interception, Weaver delivered.

"I just give Ohio State a lot of credit to be down by 28 and never give up," Holtz said.

Phil Petty, the game's MVP, threw for 227 yards and two touchdowns, and Andrew Pinnock scored twice for South Carolina.

But none of that mattered when Bellisari finally got the Buckeyes (7-5) going.

He ran for a 2-yard score to close the third quarter, then hit Darrell Sanders with a 16-yard TD pass with 10:18 to go that cut the lead in half.

"We were at the lowest we've been all year when we were down 28-0," Bellisari said. "The team really pulled together and we showed some real heart and grit right there."

Bellisari, who was 21-of-35 for 320 yards, then drove Ohio State to the South Carolina 18 but lost the snap. South Carolina linebacker Jermiah Garrison recovered.

On the next play, Derek Watson fumbled right back to Ohio State's Mike Doss. Three plays later, Jonathan Wells' 1-yard run made it 28-21 with 5:02 to go.

Ohio State got the ball back on its 11 with 3:56 to play and Bellisari was magnificent. He went 6-of-6 for 86 yards, tying the game on Sanders' 9-yard catch.

Cie Grant gave the Buckeyes a chance for victory at the end, intercepting Petty with 1:12 left. A celebration penalty backed them up to their 18, but no one at Raymond James Stadium was doubting Bellisari.

However, the long pass was picked off by Brown, whose twisting, cutback 37-yard return gave the Gamecocks hope.

The pass "was my call," Ohio State coach Jim Tressel said. "And it was the wrong call, I guess."

Weaver waited out the timeouts, reared back and kicked the dying ball through.

Only two years ago, South Carolina was 0-11 in Holtz's first season. Since then, the Gamecocks are 17-7 and won consecutive bowl games for the first time in 108 seasons.

Ohio State, off its first win at Michigan in 14 years and talking of revenge against the Gamecocks, dropped to 0-4 at the Outback. South Carolina beat the Buckeyes 24-7 a year ago.

Much of the credit for South Carolina's turnaround goes to Petty, an unspectacular yet efficient senior who has started the past three years.

Petty had throws of 9 yards to Watson and 13 to Brian Scott that set up South Carolina's first score, a 1-yarder by the beefy, 250-pound Pinnock.

On the Gamecocks' next drive, Petty passed to Scott for 30 yards and Pinnock for 9, ending things with Scott's 7-yard grab over freshman safety Dustin Fox to lead 14-0 at the half.

Petty started the third quarter with a 50-yard TD throw to Andrea Gause. Pinnock's 10-yard run made it 28-0 before the fun began.

Ohio State started strongly, forcing three first-quarter punts, including a bowl record 70-yarder by Tyeler Dean that beat Syracuse's Cooper Gardiner's 63-yard kick in 1989.

But after Bellisari hit Sanders on a 17-yard pass that was Ohio State's longest play at the time, defensive end George Gause stripped the ball to start the Gamecocks' first touchdown drive.