

Burrow leads Bengals past Commanders 31-17

ASSOCIATED PRESS

LANDOVER, Md. — In a matchup of LSU Heisman Trophy-winning quarterbacks, Jayden Daniels rushed for a 14-yard touchdown in his lone possession, while Joe Burrow directed two touchdown drives in the Cincinnati Bengals’ 31-17 win over the Washington Commanders on Monday night.

Burrow played three possessions, completing 9 of 14 passes for 62 yards. The 2020 Heisman winner found wide receiver Charlie Jones for a 4-yard touchdown reception on his final toss. Running back Chase Brown’s 1-yard touchdown on fourth-and-goal capped a 58-yard drive on the opening possession at Northwest Stadium.

The Bengals (1-1) planned on using their starters longer in preseason games to hopefully avoid a string of poor regular-season starts. Over two games with Burrow at quarterback, Cincinnati scored touchdowns on four of five possessions.

“Those are just incredibly valuable reps that usually you work out those kinks in the first couple of weeks in the regular season, and we’ve worked them out the last two weeks,” Burrow said.

Head coach Zac Taylor had his share of nitpicks, as all coaches do, but said he likes "where this offense and this team is at right now at this point.”

In Daniels’ likely only preseason appearance, Washington (0-2) drove 74 yards on four plays to tie the score 7-7. Following runs of 19 and 40 yards by Deebo

Samuel and Chris Rodriguez, respectively, Daniels evaded pass rushers and suspect tackling for a 14-yard dash up the middle. The reigning Offensive Rookie of the Year and 2023 Heisman recipient did not attempt a pass, nor a slide on the touchdown despite running into traffic.

“I’m playing football. I know everybody puts an emphasis on the preseason, but it’s a game to me,” Daniels said.

Washington head coach Dan Quinn would prefer his star quarterback to choose caution at times in those spots, “but it is part of his game. It’s what makes him a special player.”

Considering the Commanders played without three offensive line starters, two starting receivers, and tight end Zach Ertz, limiting Daniels’ exposure to hits and a slick field courtesy of pre-game rain was probably the proper call. Terry McLaurin, a 2024 second-team All-Pro wide receiver, remains a non-participant amid a contract dispute.

Rookie running back Jacory Crosby-Merritt raced for a 27-yard touchdown on Washington’s second possession and finished with 46 yards on 11 carries. The seventh-round pick became a training camp sensation for the Commanders, and his scoring scamper won’t dampen any enthusiasm. Rodriguez increased his chances for a rotation spot by rushing for a team-high 62 yards on six carries.

Matt Gay’s 27-yard field goal accounted for Washington’s second-half scoring. Cincinnati kicker Evan McPherson drilled a 54-yard

field goal with 3:06 remaining.

RECEIVING NOTICE

Bengals roster hopeful Mitchell Tinsley made two impressive touchdown catches — both from quarterback Jake Browning — in a span of 20 seconds late in the first half. Following linebacker Barrett Carter’s interception, the wide receiver’s leaping, toe-tapping reception with 14 seconds remaining gave Cincinnati a 28-14 halftime lead.

ROBINSON REMOVED

Commanders RB Brian Robinson did not dress for Monday’s game, nor was he at Northwest Stadium amid recent reports of Washington seeking to trade the four-year veteran. Quinn said that he and general manager Adam Peters informed Robinson of their decision to sit him out on Sunday afternoon. Quinn declined to share Robinson’s reaction. “News like that is not always that easy,” the coach said.

Robinson rushed for 799 yards and eight touchdowns last season, but the emergence of Crosby-Merritt has the Commanders reconsidering their backfield options.

INJURIES

Bengals: 2023 first-round pick Myles Murphy remains sidelined. Head coach Zac Taylor recently said the defensive end was a “week-ish” away from returning. Cincinnati is thin off the edge with 2024 NFL sack leader Trey Hendrickson out while seeking a contract extension.

Commanders: Rookie cornerback Trey Amos was held out of the game after

experiencing hamstringing tightness following Saturday’s practice. The second-round pick warmed up pre-game, but the staff decided to keep him out.

UP NEXT

Bengals: Wrap up the preseason Saturday against Indianapolis.

Commanders: Play their exhibition finale Saturday against Baltimore.

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The General Fund tax levied in fiscal year 2025 was 65.2 cents on real property and 65.2 cents on personal property and produced revenue of \$55,618,618.44. The proposed General Fund tax rate of 65.2 cents on real property and 65.2 cents on personal property is expected to produce \$ 62,430,568 Of this amount \$7,693,488.85 is from new and personal property. The compensating tax rate for 2026 is 60.4 cents on real property and 65.2 cents on personal property and is expected to produce \$58,273,003.61.

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