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LONGHORNS FOOTBALL

# Texas thrashes Rice

## Longhorns empty bench in easy win

By [Suzanne Halliburton](#)  
AMERICAN STATESMAN STAFF

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Finally, Texas put together the type of game everyone — from the players to the coaches to the fans — had been craving since the season started.

The Longhorns were expected to dominate Rice — and they did, 58-14 on Saturday night in front of 84,751 fans at Royal-Memorial Stadium. But it was the first time this season that seventh-ranked Texas (4-0) had blown out an opponent early and then maintained that intensity until the sound of the final gun.



Ricardo B. Brazziell  
AMERICAN-STATESMAN

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Texas receiver Limas Sweed comes down in front of members of the Longhorn band after scoring one of his two touchdowns on Saturday night. Sweed hauled in scoring passes of 52 and 24 yards from Colt McCoy, who added a third TD pass. The Horns finished with 560 offensive yards.



Jay Janner  
AMERICAN-STATESMAN

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Running back Jamaal Charles, left, celebrates a second-quarter touchdown run with quarterback Colt McCoy. Charles scored three TDs on the night.

The winless Owls didn't score until 18 seconds remained in the first half. By that time, the Longhorns owned a 41-0 lead. Rice got on the scoreboard again with 6:26 remaining in the game. By then, Texas had cleared its bench for the first time this season.

"I'm pleased with the game. We won it in a fashion that we needed to do it," said Texas coach Mack Brown.

The blowout came at the end of the non-conference schedule, with the Longhorns set to begin Big 12 play at home next Saturday against Kansas State.

Offensively, Texas gained 560 yards, the most since the Longhorns amassed 617 against Kansas in 2005. Defensively, Texas owned the line of scrimmage, totaling 16 tackles for a loss, including five sacks. Rice netted a negative 11 yards on 30 rushing attempts. It was only the fifth time since 1990 the Longhorn defense has kept an offense under zero rushing yards.

"We came out and played collectively as a team," said Duane Akina, the Longhorns defensive co-coordinator. "We really put together a dominating game."

Quarterback Colt McCoy was the offensive star. By the time McCoy took a seat on the bench one series into the third quarter, he had completed 20 of his 29 passes for 333 yards and three touchdowns. In just more than 30 minutes of play, he came within 16 yards of his career high.

The game plan was decidedly different from a week ago, when McCoy and his receivers pecked their way downfield in a 35-32 road victory against Central Florida. McCoy had a school-record 32 completions against the Knights, but those completions averaged only eight yards.

Saturday night, the average zoomed to 16.6, as McCoy looked deep against a blitzing Rice defense. His favorite target was split end Limas Sweed, who enjoyed single coverage for the first time since the season opener.

Sweed caught five passes for a career-high 139 yards. He and McCoy combined for touchdown passes of 52 and 24 yards. Sweed would have scored a third, but he stepped out of bounds at the 2, forcing him to settle for a 48-yard reception.

"I felt like we executed really well," McCoy said. "Our defense gave us really good field position and gave us a lot of opportunities to convert on a short field."

"We wanted to come out here, execute and make as few mistakes as possible and take advantage of what they gave us. I felt like overall, we did that."

There were few Longhorn mistakes. Tailback Jamaal Charles fumbled on the second play of the game for the team's only turnover. Texas

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Ralph Barrera  
AMERICAN-STATESMAN

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Texas' Vondrell McGee had a good second half of action breaking a long run that setup his first touchdown of his career. Rice's Andrew Sendejo finally brings him down with a diving tackle.

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was flagged for just three penalties totaling 35 yards.

Brown even had the luxury of using every player who was suited out to play.

Freshman quarterback John Chiles, to the crowd's delight, made his college debut, coming in for one snap in the first quarter, with McCoy moving to slot receiver. Chiles then took over full-time in the third quarter, leading the Longhorns on two scoring drives.

Chiles was 0 for 2 in passing, but his running ability lived up to the recruiting hype that made him one of the most coveted athletes in the country. He carried nine times for 72 yards. He and redshirt freshman Vondrell McGee took Texas on an 80-yard, eight-play drive in the third quarter, with all of it coming on the ground.

McGee was the game's leading rusher with 80 yards on eight carries and a touchdown. Charles saw his string of 100-yard games stopped at three but scored three touchdowns, equaling his career high. He gained 72 yards on 14 carries.

Defensively, Texas forced Rice into a one-dimensional game. Sixteen of the Owls' 68 snaps resulted in negative yardage. Texas defensive end Lamarr Houston had four of the tackles for loss, all in the first half.

Rice's first positive rushing play of the game came on the second play of the second quarter. Owls quarterback Chase Clement completed 18 of 32 passes for 220 yards. Longhorn safety Marcus Griffin and linebacker Rod Muckelroy each notched interceptions.

"It's back to work on Sunday. We'll watch this film and get it out of the way," said Texas defensive tackle Derek Lokey. "But it feels good. We can take a lot of pride in this."

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