

## Irish Down Boston College

Written by Sean Stires

Sunday, 11 November 2012 00:07

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CHESTNUT HILL, Mass. – Pretty is not a word to describe Notre Dame's 21-6 victory over Boston College Saturday night at Alumni Stadium. While the win could have been easier on the eyes, it was still a win and the Irish improved to 10-0 for the first time in nearly two decades with their fourth consecutive win over the Eagles.

The game started out looking like the Irish just might dominate, which they did for the game's first 30 minutes, and then they held on in a sluggish second half that saw them produce just 143 yards of offense.

Brian Kelly has been frustrated in recent weeks with Notre Dame's inability to score early touchdowns, but the Irish marched down field on their first possession and punched one into the end zone. The 13-play drive started at the Irish five and ended with Everett Golson going to his left and diving for the end zone on a two-yard run to make it 7-0 with 7:26 to play in the first quarter. The 95-yard drive was ND's longest of the season.

Boston College looked in good shape to answer the bell on its ensuing possession. The Eagles used a bevy of misdirection plays and screen passes to keep the Irish defense on its heels. They drove all the way to the Notre Dame five before settling for a Nate Freese 36-yard field goal to make it a 7-3 game just seconds into the second quarter.

Notre Dame drove to the BC 31 on its next possession, but a George Atkinson fumble on a strip

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and recovery by Steele Divitto halted the drive that began at the ND 16. BC punted though and the Irish took over at their own 13.

The Fighting Irish then proceeded to drive 87 yards in 16 plays for its second touchdown of the half. It culminated on Golson's seven-yard pass to Troy Niklas for the first touchdown reception of the former linebacker's career. It came with less than a minute to play in the half and put the Irish up 14-3.

ND had just three first half possessions and two of them ended in touchdowns. The Irish dominate Boston College in time of possession 18:06 to 11:54. They outrushed the Eagles 113-45 and had a total yardage advantage of 256-137. The Irish were also 8-of-8 on third down conversions in the half.

Riddick led the Irish with 54 rushing yards in the first half. Golson was not far behind at 36 yards. The Irish quarterback was also 10-for-13 for 134 passing yards. Tyler Eifert was his top target with four catches for 52 yards.

Boston College quarterback Chase Rettig was 8-for-15 passing for 92 yards. He hit running back David Dudeck for 35 yards on three catches. Rolandan Finch led the Eagles with 25 yards on three carries.

It didn't take much time for Notre Dame to move down field to start the second half after taking the kickoff to begin the final 30 minutes. The Irish went 65 yards in nine plays and 4:16 for its third touchdown in their first four possessions. Golson hit John Goodman, who was all alone in the left side of the end zone after Golson had rolled to his right, with an 18-yard strike to make it 21-3.

BC scored again with 13:44 remaining in the game when Freese hit a 45-yard field goal. The Eagle scoring drive covered 58 yards in 12 plays and took 4:56 off the clock to make it 21-6 Notre Dame.

Just when it looked like Notre Dame was about to finish off the Eagles, BC got its biggest break

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of the game. Theo Riddick fumbled on a run play on first and 10 after gaining 12 yards to give the Eagles the ball at the Irish 48. However, Boston College gave the ball back on downs seven plays later still trailing by 15 points with 9:38 remaining.

The teams traded possessions the rest of the way and the Fighting Irish secured their first 10-0 start since 1993.

Golson passed for 200 yards and two touchdowns on 16-for-24 passing on the night. Riddick cracked the century mark with 104 yards on 18 carries. The Irish had the ground advantage with 184 yards to BC's 53.

Rettig was 27-for-43 for 247 yards. He was sacked four times. Amidon ended his night with six catches for 84 yards, while Finch led the Eagles with 40 rushing yards on seven carries.

The Irish were 3-of-3 in their red zone scoring chances and converted 11-of-14 third downs on the night.