

KC Perfection : Chiefs Are 9-0

Sports

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Orchard Park, NY (SportsNetwork.com) - The Kansas City Chiefs' quest for a perfect season has remained intact. Sean Smith came up with a tide-turning 100-yard interception return touchdown of Jeff Tuel in the third quarter, and Tamba Hali took a fumble back 11 yards for a go-ahead score in the fourth as the Chiefs rallied past the banged-up Buffalo Bills, 23-13, at Ralph Wilson Stadium.



Ryan Succop kicked three critical field goals to help Kansas City (9-0) remain unbeaten despite being outgained by a 470-210 margin in total yards. Jamaal Charles added 90 yards on 17 carries in the victory.

Tuel, making his first NFL start with quarterbacks E.J. Manuel and Thad Lewis both out with injuries, hit fellow rookie Marquis Goodwin for a 59-yard touchdown in the opening quarter but struggled thereafter against the fierce Kansas City defense. The undrafted free agent finished with 229 yards on 18- of-39 passing and threw a pair of costly interceptions, none bigger than Smith's pick that tied the game at 10-10 after the Bills were on the verge of building a two-score lead.

"We never panic, not even for one second," said Chiefs safety Kendrick Lewis, who had the other interception of Tuel. "We always go in knowing that someone on our defense is going to make a play. That's how we believe in each other. No matter who it may be, someone will come up with a play."

C.J. Spiller returned from a sprained ankle to rack up 116 yards on 12 attempts for Buffalo (3-6), with Fred Jackson totaling 77 yards on 16 rushes in the loss.

The Bills owned a 10-3 edge at halftime and were threatening for more after Spiller ripped off a 61-yard run to the Kansas City 19 on the initial play from scrimmage of the third quarter. A pass interference call later created a 1st-and-goal situation from the one, but Jackson was stuffed on a pair of runs to bring about third down.

Tuel then misread the coverage while under pressure, and his floater landed right into the hands of Smith, who raced down the sideline for a 100-yard touchdown that sent the home crowd into a state of disbelief.

"It was like Christmas. You know, you go downstairs as a little kid and there's a big box right there. That's how I felt," said Smith of the play. "If [Tuel] threw it right to me, the main thing I just wanted to do was focus and catch the ball. Because I knew once I caught it that no one was catching me."

The Chiefs also stopped Buffalo on downs with the game still tied later in the third quarter to take over at their own 37-yard line. A 20-yard connection from quarterback Alex Smith to Anthony Fasano followed by Charles' 12-yard run put Kansas City in position for Succop's 41-yard field goal, giving the Chiefs their first lead of the day with 3:57 left in the period.

Buffalo responded with its best drive of the second half, a 12-play, 68-yard march highlighted by Spiller's 25-yard gain on a screen toss that set up Dan Carpenter's 30-yard kick that knotted the score entering the fourth quarter.

The Bills' next possession ended in disaster, however. T.J. Graham made a catch over the middle but had the ball knocked loose by Marcus Cooper, with Hali alertly scooping up the fumble deep in Buffalo territory and running in untouched with 12:47 to play.

"He made a good defensive play," said Graham of Cooper. "I had [the ball] tucked, but it could happen to anybody. We've got to come out and hold on to the ball and make plays for [the defense]."

Buffalo failed to mount a charge the rest of the way. Goodwin couldn't come down with a would-be 40-yard catch near midfield with around seven minutes remaining, and the Bills ultimately punted the ball away.

With Charles handling the bulk of the work, the Chiefs moved 32 yards in seven plays before Succop made it a 10-point spread by booting home a 39-yard field goal with 4:16 on the clock.

Tuel was able to get the Bills to the Kansas City 35 on the ensuing series, but overthrew Stevie Johnson on fourth down and the Chiefs ran out the clock.

Tuel was impressive early on, hitting on 5-of-7 passes for 112 yards over Buffalo's first two drives. The majority of that yardage came on a well- thrown deep ball that the lightning-fast Goodwin hauled in after blowing past the Kansas City secondary to give Buffalo a 7-0 advantage late in the first quarter.

The Bills' subsequent offensive trip didn't go as well for the young quarterback, whose throw sailed over the head of the 6-foot-7 Scott Chandler and was picked off by Kendrick Lewis at the Buffalo 41.

Alex Smith got the Chiefs into scoring range by evading a blitz and hitting Dwayne Bowe for a 6-yard gain on 3rd-and-4, though Kansas City wound up settling for Succop's 27-yard field goal when Bills defensive back Nickell Robey's big hit on a short catch by Dexter McCluster prevented another moving of the chains.

Tuel bounced back by leading a 14-play, 71-yard sequence that enabled Buffalo to extend the margin, getting help from a 29-yard burst from Spiller down to the Chiefs' 16. The Bills later had a 1st-and-goal from the six, but Kansas City held to force Carpenter's 26-yard field goal with 1:47 left in the half.