



BEARS DROP ROAD CONTEST TO JETS

The Bears struggled on both sides of the ball Sunday throughout a lopsided 31-10 loss to the Jets at MetLife Stadium.

Backup quarterback Trevor Siemian led the Bears offense in place of the injured Justin Fields despite hurting his oblique during pregame warmups. While third-string QB Nathan Peterman was announced as the starter about 45 minutes before kickoff, Siemian ended up taking the field on the Bears' first offensive series.

Siemian told reporters postgame he wanted to play through the injury since he wasn't limited and "could do everything I needed to do."

"Just throwing, something wasn't right, flared up on me," Siemian said of his pregame injury, "and then got back in the locker room, figured something wasn't right again, but gave it a go. That was that."

Siemian led the Bears offense on back-to-back scoring drives to open the game, including a 4-yard touchdown pass to receiver Byron Pringle. But the unit was held scoreless for the remainder of the contest. "The first half was competitive; we were in it," Eberflus said. "I thought our offense did a good job driving the ball a couple times versus a very good defense. We had a three-and-out, we did a nice job, then they drove the ball, but missed the field goal. So I thought we were very competitive there.

"And the second half, just wasn't good enough. We didn't tackle well enough on defense, didn't play good enough third-down defense. Obviously we had a bunch of three or four-and-outs on offense."



The Bears defense allowed four touchdowns and 466 total yards in the game. Jets quarterback Mike White completed 22 of 28 pass attempts for 315 yards and three touchdowns. Receiver Garrett Wilson was targeted eight times, catching five passes for 95 yards and two touchdowns. Siemian finished the game with 14 completions on 25 attempts for 179 yards, a touchdown and an interception. Running back David Montgomery totaled 79 rushing yards on 14

carries. Heading into Sunday's game, the Bears were without Fields (left shoulder) and rookie defensive backs Jaquan Brisker and Kyler Gordon—who both missed the contest with concussions—among others. They also lost several others to injuries during the game including safety Eddie Jackson (foot) and receiver Darnell Mooney (ankle).

When asked what the Bears offense lost when Mooney got injured in the third quarter, Siemian said, "speed, explosive plays, leadership."

"It stinks," Siemian said. "As a player, terrible, but if you've spent any time with Darnell, he's one of the best dudes in the locker room. So that's the part of the game that stinks, but he's a strong dude. But like I said, guys like that, when anybody gets hurt, but especially Darnell, it's tough to see."

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With their fifth straight loss, the Bears fell to 3-9. The Jets improved to 7-4 with the victory. The Jets opened the game with a 9-play, 75-yard scoring drive as White found Wilson open in the end zone for an 8-yard touchdown. White completed six of his seven pass attempts for 69 yards on the drive, finding Wilson three times. New York faced just one third down on the possession, which resulted in the TD. Kicker Cairo Santos put the Bears on the board with a 22-yard field goal to make it a 7-3 game with 5:59 remaining in the first quarter. On third-and-six at the Chicago 29, Siemian completed a short pass to running back David Montgomery, who shed a tackle and took it for a 26-yard gain to the Jets 45. Siemian then found running back Darrynton Evans over the middle with room to run, allowing for a 33-yard pickup to reach the New York 9, but the Bears' offense stalled in the red zone as Siemian's pass attempt to receiver Chase Claypool in the end zone on third-and-goal fell incomplete.

Siemian and Pringle connected for a 4-yard touchdown at the start of the second quarter, giving the Bears a 10-7 lead. After the Bears defense forced a three-and-out, Siemian came out firing, completing a 20-yard pass over the middle to Claypool on the first play of the drive. Three plays later on third-and-1, Siemian kept the drive going with a successful QB sneak. He then threw a deep ball to Claypool, who made a leaping grab along the sideline at the Jets 9 despite being interfered with by cornerback Sauce Gardner. Facing third-and-goal, Siemian then found Pringle in the back of the end zone as the receiver snagged the ball over the head of cornerback D.J. Reed.

"I mean, BP just running in the back of the end zone, made an awesome play," Siemian said on the touchdown throw to Pringle. "I mean, dude is tough as nails, he's athletic, big catch radius. So he made a great play on that, made another great tough catch at the end on a slant. But he's a fun player to play with for sure."

The Jets looked to tie the game up in the middle of the second quarter with a 36-yard field goal attempt, but holder Braden Mann fumbled the snap. The Bears took over at their own 18, but went three-and-out as Siemian was stopped on a third-and-1 quarterback keeper.

On the ensuing Jets possession, White threw a 54-yard touchdown pass over the middle to Wilson, just over the outstretched hands of linebacker Matt Adams, giving the Jets a 14-10 lead with 4:57 to play in the first half. Wilson caught the ball in front of Kindle Vildor, then juked the cornerback to move up the field. Jackson injured his foot shortly after White threw the ball, leaving an open lane for the receiver to reach the end zone.

New York increased its lead to 17-10 just before halftime as kicker Greg Zuerlein connected on a 57-yard field goal. White completed back-to-back 9-yard passes to receiver Corey Davis and running back Michael Carter to reach the Chicago 38. Defensive tackle Armon Watts then recorded the Bears' first sack of the day for a loss of seven yards, bringing up third-and-13. White found receiver Denzel Mims, but the Bears defense stopped him two yards short of the first-down marker, sending out the field goal unit.

White threw his third touchdown pass of the day, this time a 22-yard completion receiver Elijah Moore, putting the Jets up 24-10 with 6:35 to play. The Jets went 53 yards in six plays. On their only third-down attempt, White found Moore deep down the left side for the score.

A 32-yard touchdown run by running back Ty Johnson gave the Jets a 31-10 lead with 2:28 to play in the third quarter. White completed a deep ball to tight end Tyler Conklin for a 29-yard gain then threw a 14-yard pass to running back Zonovan Knight to reach the Chicago 32. On the next play, Johnson broke multiple tackles down the left side of the field to get free for the score.

With 8:09 to play, Zuerlein missed a 53-yard field goal attempt, allowing the Bears to take over at their own 35. While Siemian led the offense downfield, completing a 12-yard pass to receiver Dante Pettis then an 8-yard pass to Pringle to reach the New York 10, he was intercepted by linebacker C.J. Mosley at the 3-yard line on a pass intended for tight end Cole Kmet.



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BULLS FALL TO THUNDER IN OVERTIME 123-119 ON BLACK FRIDAY

There's a famous medical case involving a person with the pseudonym Sybil. It's a story about a woman who supposedly possessed multiple personalities, someone alleged to have literally separate identities who then acts in completely different ways despite being in the identical circumstances.

You know, like the Bulls, who Friday coming off their best back-to-back wins in perhaps years lost 123-119 in overtime to the youngest, least experienced and perhaps least-taken-seriously team in the NBA, the Oklahoma City Thunder. The shocking loss—certainly to those of us who



saw the wins over Boston and Milwaukee this week—left the dissociative Bulls with the same 8-11 record as the Thunder. And now Bulls losses to three of the least regarded teams in the NBA, the Thunder, Spurs and Magic. While defeating several of the most prominent title contenders, like the Celtics, Bucks, Nets and Heat. The Bulls also have lost to teams considered marginal playoff contenders, like the Pelicans and Wizards. While easily defeating an early season surprise team like the Pacers.

The Bulls returned home following Friday's game instead of straight to Salt Lake City for Monday's matchup with the Utah Jazz. Presumably not to see a therapist, however.

Nevertheless, this has been perhaps the most confusing and baffling Bulls season, albeit early heading to the quarter pole Monday, in many years with staggeringly impressive wins that opened the eyes of everyone around the NBA. And puzzling and disillusioning losses that have forced those watching most closely to close their eyes. None of it is fatal this early in the season. But there's certainly room for some examination to come out so intensely uncompetitive during a relaxing part of the schedule with multiple days off. Or being so inscrutably phlegmatic. The Bulls led by DeMar DeRozan, but not in one of his nights when he discarded the glasses and donned the cape, didn't shoot particularly well, 44 percent overall and 36 percent making a dozen threes.

However, the protean Thunder with an inventory of versatile, long armed and razor thin young athletes made just seven threes on 29 attempts. Surely the NBA formula for defeat. But the tornado alley kids thunderously brought down the lighting on the Bulls with a relentless driving game that often made the Bulls interior look like a subway station in rush hour. What, no more turnstiles? OK, I haven't ridden the El much lately. You got me.

And in an overtime in which the Bulls scored first and DeRozan scored all the Bulls points, the Thunder got the Bulls on an uncommonly unfathomable oops from DeRozan.

The Bulls were leading 119-118 on a pair of DeRozan free throws thanks to a Dort Default when Thunder guard Lu Dort grabbed the rim with a Shai Gilgeous-Alexander jumper going in for what should have been a 120-117 Thunder lead with 58.8 second left in that overtime. No basket.

Dort then fouled DeRozan, who put the Bulls ahead that one point at 119-118 and ready to steal away this one, Dort warts and all. The Bulls then played their best Fiserv Forum defense, closing off the irrepressible Gilgeous-Alexander, who passed to ski pole Aleksej Pokusevski, who passed right back to Gilgeous-Alexander, now with 3.9 seconds left on the shot clock and trailing the Bulls by one.

Gilgeous-Alexander began dribbling at the top of the floor, stepped inside the three-point line and stepped back with a second left. Basically facing the sideline with his shoulder toward the rim. DeRozan jumped to block the shot. What!

Gilgeous-Alexander did the DeMar and jumped up and forward as DeRozan landed on Gilgeous-Alexander for... three shots. The Bulls took a desperate challenge to no avail, and Gilgeous-Alexander made his 26th, 27th and 28th points for a 121-119 Thunder lead. You could hear the rumble.

"When I saw the shot clock down low, I knew I was going to shoot a step-back three," Gilgeous-Alexander told the Associated Press "I just tried to set him up. Felt like he was gonna jump and he fouled me."

BULLS FALL TO THUNDER IN OVERTIME 123-119 ON BLACK FRIDAY

With 27.1 seconds left in that first overtime, DeRozan took the ball and dribbled toward the front court against Dort. Could he have another Luguentz moment in him? Nah.

DeRozan has been the man for the Bulls, and so staying with the isolation play is not unique to these Bulls. But this wasn't the night for DeRozan a somewhat unsteady 12 of 27 for his 30 points while Zach LaVine despite 12 fourth quarter points to rally the Bulls into overtime was nine of 23 for his 27 points.

DeRozan took his time dribbling near midcourt with Dort hushed close to DeRozan's dort. With about 10 seconds left on the shot clock, Nikola Vučević came up to screen. But it was a soft, brush screen and Dort was able to go under and intercept DeRozan going right. DeRozan then went back left behind Vučević. But he ran into seven-foot Pokusevski with Dort closely in pursuit. DeRozan settled at the circle on the left wing for a pullup he often makes. Not this time. It went well long and Josh Giddey got to the ball and tipped it back to Gilgeous-Alexander, who was fouled for points 29 and 30 on free throws with 4.9 seconds left for a 123-119 Thunder lead. And game.

Vučević had 13 points and 13 rebounds, and you could second guess a few more shots for the Bulls center with the skeletal Pokusevski at center. Because then the Thunder after a 59-59 halftime tie started the second half without Pokusevski and no one more than 6-8 on the floor. But the Bulls decided to match down instead, replacing Andre Drummond in the second half with Derrick Jones Jr. Which looked like a clever move when Jones, who sat out the first three quarters, then converted two crucial three-point plays early in the fourth quarter with the Bulls fighting back from an 87-80 deficit after three quarters.



The Thunder then began to do those young, inexperienced things that usually cost these kinds of teams games down the stretch, some wild threes from Isaiah Joe, missing two point blank layups, three turnovers in a stretch of one score in eight late possessions that enabled the Bulls to take a 108-104 lead with 2:33 left after a pair of tough LaVine pullup threes in a 9-0 Bulls run. I could hear Chick Hearn saying for the Bulls, "in the refrigerator, door's closed, lights are out, eggs are cooling, butter's getting hard and the Jell-O is jiggling."

Except the Thunder wiggled out of this loss.

Gilgeous-Alexander, who creates space and gets off his mid-range like DeRozan but with more of an attacking dribble, got himself to the free throw line for a pair to get within two with 2:12 left in regulation. LaVine then missed a long three from the right wing. Dort then beat DeRozan around the left wing for a layup attempt that missed. But Patrick Williams, who'd played another sure defensive game with 11 points, six rebounds and two blocks, turned his back on his man, Kenrich Williams, to help even though Vučević was there. Williams darted in on a wide open lane to tip in the ball for a 108-108 tie with 1:38 left in regulation. Dort with his physical play had been disrupting DeRozan much of the game, so DeRozan on the next Bulls possession passed to

the game, so DeRozan on the next Bulls possession passed to Vučević for an open three that Vučević missed with 1:20 in regulation. Gilgeous-Alexander then got around Alex Caruso, who'd made several vital defensive plays and had 12 points. Gilgeous-Alexander put on the brakes for a foul line extended jumper to give the Thunder a 110-108 lead with 1:06 remaining in regulation. DeRozan in the mano-a-mano with Gilgeous-Alexander then tied it at 110 with 55.8 seconds left with an 18 footer on top. After which the Bulls collapsed on Gilgeous-Alexander.

DEMAR DEROZAN SCORED ALL OF CHICAGO'S 9 POINTS IN THE OVERTIME PERIOD.

BULLS FALL TO THUNDER IN OVERTIME 123-119 ON BLACK FRIDAY

He passed to Pokusevski, who got a wide open free throw line jumper that he missed with 35.8 seconds left, giving the Bulls yet another chance to win the game. DeRozan began walking the ball up for what last season we just knew was about to happen.

DeRozan dribbled out the clock near the free throw line with the floor spread, what they generally call in the NBA a one-four flat with the dribbler/shooter on top and four offensive players dragging the defense to the baseline. DeRozan dribbled right against Dort and spun back left to just above the right side of the free throw line. His shot missed and hot potatoed around. Vučević seemed to have it briefly, but then Dort scooped it away and the Thunder called time with 9.4 seconds left. The Bulls committed a foul, sending the Thunder to seven seconds.

Gilgeous-Alexander (that man again) got the inbounds pass against Caruso. DeRozan came up on his right side to help, so Gilgeous-Alexander went the other way blowing past Caruso and at Vučević. Gilgeous-Alexander let go down the lane a wide open floater with a second left...that missed.

Going to overtime. Another chance for the Bulls among the many.

There were 28 lead changes and ties in the game and 11 in the overtime.

DeRozan got that first score for a 112-110 Bulls lead after a Vučević offensive rebound, one of three to give the Bulls second chances in the overtime.

Oklahoma City tied it with free throws, Vučević sent a wide open undefended three in and out and the Thunder took the lead. Caruso blocked a Gilgeous-Alexander drive, but the Thunder's Williams then slipped away from the Bulls' Williams again for a follow layup and 114-112 Thunder lead.

DeRozan tied it on a drive at 114. But Josh Giddey with 10 points, 13 rebounds and nine assists after a brutal first three quarters cut right through the Bulls for a layup and 116-114 Oklahoma City lead.

It was the fate of the Bulls Friday with the poor shooting Thunder cutting up the Bulls for 68 inside points, relentlessly beating Bulls off the dribble to scores. It went on much of the game after one of the best Bulls starts this season, 19-7 in making their first eight field goal attempts. But perhaps Tryptophan induced, the Bulls found it difficult to counter those Thunder winds sweeping down the plains and driving lanes.

The Thunder's waving feet perhaps didn't smell sweet, but they certainly were making lazy circles around the Bulls. Oklahoma City led 32-30 after one quarter and recovered from an early second quarter 10-0 Bulls run behind LaVine and Vučević threes to tie at halftime. And then the Thunder scooted ahead in a 29 percent Bulls shooting third quarter. Setting up that gruesome, crucial overtime. Which didn't look too bad with DeRozan's three-point play with 1:58 left giving the Bulls a 117-116 lead.

But there was Giddey again leaving the Bulls not so giddy with yet another driving layup like the wind for a 118-117 Thunder lead. To which DeRozan replied, take that, drawing a foul and making two free throws for what would be the Bulls last lead, 119-118 with 50 seconds left.

And then DeRozan left his feet, and lost his head. And we were left to scratching ours. Who are these guys?



DEMAR DEROZAN AND ZACH LAVINE HAD 30 POINTS AND 27 POINTS, RESPECTIVELY, IN THE FRIDAY NIGHT LOSS TO OKLAHOMA CITY.



NIKOLA VUČEVIĆ HAD 13 POINTS AND 13 REBOUNDS IN THE LOSS TO OKLAHOMA CITY.



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