

Gamecocks, keyed by big plays, win battle of will against stubborn Wolverines

Written by Levi Johnson, Sports Editor
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TAMPA, Fla. - Michigan and South Carolina were engaged in a battle of will, accented by big plays in the 2013 Outback Bowl contested at Raymond James Stadium Tues. afternoon (Jan. 1).

And because of the timely play of All-America defensive end Jadeveon Clowney, who forced a fumble to stop a potential late fourth quarter game-icing drive by the Wolverines (8-5), coupled with reserve quarterback Dylan Thompson's 32 yard scoring toss to wide out Bruce Ellington that sealed the fray with :11 seconds remaining, the Gamecocks (11-2) left the field in this western Sunshine State city with a hardfought 33-28 win

Vying against a Wolverine team that competed almost toe-to-toe against them, in a fight on the gridiron that no team totally controlled, the Gamecocks came a way with a victory that they had to snatch from the jaws of defeat.

Holding on to an eight point (21-13) lead at the start of third quarter action, the Gamecocks had to rise to the challenge when the Wolverines took a one point lead (28-27), with 3:29 left to play.

At this point, Michigan appeared to be the squad that was in position to exit the aforementioned venue with a well-deserved come-from-behind triumph.

However, someone forgot to tell Clowney that his overall contributions wouldn't affect the play of the Wolverines with game saving results.

But when it was all on the line and he and mates were less than four minutes away from not realizing their second consecutive 11-game winning campaign, Clowney raised his play to another level on one down ; which was key to the Gamecocks coming back to win their sixth

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postseason outing in the history of a program that had its start early in the 19th century.

Favored by five at the outset, the Gamecocks, although struggling at times on both sides of the ball, were able to claim a win against a team that kept the heat on them for most of the day.

Ranked No.11 coming into the encounter opposite Michigan, South Carolina is expected to go into the off season with a ranking among the Top 10 teams in the country.