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Two snaps then bench for Macias

By Vic Feuerherd
Assistant sports editor

MINNEAPOLIS — It didn't take Barry Alvarez very long Saturday to remove the rookie and turn to the veteran in the University of Wisconsin's 19-16 college football victory over Minnesota at the Metrodome.

The Badgers coach watched freshman quarterback Jay Macias mishandle his first snap and then throw an interception on his second play. That preceded the Gophers' 12-play, 5-minute drive which ended well for the Badgers when Rafael Robinson intercepted a Marquel Fleetwood pass.

Combine the two and it made Alvarez's decision easy to switch to quarterback Tony Lowery.

"The way the game started, there was no reason to wait any longer," Alvarez said of his quick hook of his starter ever since the Iowa game five games ago. "I was worried with the way Minnesota moved the ball the first time that they might wear our (defense) out."

The move paid off in the first half. Lowery led the Badgers on three scoring marches for a 16-0 lead midway through the second quarter.

He threw a 14-yard scoring pass to wide receiver Aaron Brown to cap a 64-yard drive; ran 5 yards for a score to finish a 19-yard drive set up by a recovery of a fumbled punt; and directed a 53-yard march that resulted in a 37-yard field goal by Rich Thompson.

"I almost started him," Alvarez said of Lowery. "But I didn't think that would be fair to Jay.

"Jay's played well in the first half of games, but not for four quarters. We needed one full game out of the quarterback position."

Though Alvarez got something out of Lowery in the first half, he got little out of the UW offense in the second half. The Badgers, who tallied eight first downs and 162 total yards in the first half, managed only two first downs and 46 total yards in the second.

Lowery, however, thought he played well enough to merit consideration to be the starter next Saturday against Northwestern. It will be Lowery's final game.

"That would be nice," Lowery said of starting. "But whatever the decision, I have to live with it. But the things that happened today, no one can take away from me."

■ **Vincent out:** Cornerback Troy Vincent, the Badgers' most explosive player this season, sat out the game because of an ankle sprain suffered in last week's loss to Michigan State.

Senior cornerback Eddie Fletcher replaced Vincent as the punt returner and returned four kicks for 46 yards, including a 29-yarder.

Freshman Lee DeRamus replaced Vincent on kickoff returns, and returned one kick 50 yards to help set up Thompson's 42-yard field goal that provided the margin of victory.

Alvarez said he expected Vincent to be able to return to practice this week.

■ **If at first you don't succeed . . .:** Thompson made the most of a second chance on a field-goal try that proved to be the difference.

Thompson missed badly on a 47-yard try with about 10 minutes left in the game. However, Gophers back Kenneth Sebree ran into him, allowing Thompson another try from 42 yards. This time he was successful.

"It would be nice that every time I miss that I have someone come in and sweep me to give me another chance at it," Thompson said. "But it doesn't work that way. I just had to make the second one."

UW FOOTBALL NOTES

HOW THEY SCORED

First quarter

Badgers: Touchdown — Aaron Brown caught a 14-yard pass from Tony Lowery with 2 minutes, 37 seconds left. Point after touchdown — Rich Thompson's kick went wide left. Drive — 10 plays, 64 yards, 4:44 elapsed time. Key play — Lowery's 20-yard pass to Brown. **Wisconsin 6, Minnesota 0.**

Second quarter

Badgers: Field goal — Thompson kicked a 37-yarder with 11:50 left. Drive — 10 plays, 53 yards, 4:20. Key plays — Michael London's 32-yard run on a reverse; Lowery's 11-yard pass to Brown on a third-and-9 at the Minnesota 35. **Wisconsin 9, Minnesota 0.**

Badgers: TD — Lowery ran 5 yards with 5:11 left. PAT — Thompson, kick. Drive — Five plays, 19 yards, 2:41. Key play — Jeff Messerger recovered Lewis Garrison's fumble of a UW punt at the Minnesota 19. **Wisconsin 16, Minnesota 0.**

Gophers: TD — Paul Hopewell caught a 35-yard pass from Marquel Fleetwood with :01 left. PAT — No good because of a bad snap. Drive — Six plays, 59 yards, :54. Key play — Fleetwood's 21-yard pass to Daryn White to the UW 26-yard line. **Wisconsin 16, Minnesota 6.**

Third quarter

Gophers: TD — Hopewell caught a 15-yard pass from Fleetwood with 5:30 left. PAT — Mike Chalberg, kick. Drive — 12 plays, 95 yards, 5:30. Key plays — Fleetwood's six of 10 and 19 yards; Antonio Carter's six carries for 38 yards. **Wisconsin 16, Minnesota 13.**

Fourth quarter

Gophers: FG — Chalberg kicked a 32-yarder with 11:41 left. Drive — 14 plays, 76 yards, 6:23. Key plays — Fleetwood's passes of 17 yards to Carter and 12 yards to Hopewell. **Wisconsin 16, Minnesota 16.**

Badgers: FG — Thompson kicked a 42-yarder with 10:02 left. Drive — Three plays, 7 yards, 1:39. Key plays — Lee DeRamus returned the kickoff 50 yards to the Minnesota 47, where he was tackled by the facemask, adding 15 yards to the play; a running-into-the-kicker penalty which allowed Thompson another try after missing a 47-yard attempt. **Wisconsin 19, Minnesota 16.**

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

Wisconsin

RUSHING	Att.	Gain	Loss	Net	Avg.	TD	Long
London	1	33	0	33	33.0	0	33
Montgomery	8	29	1	28	3.5	0	7
T. Fletcher	11	28	1	27	2.5	0	7
Lowery	11	36	18	18	1.6	1	9
Burns	1	1	0	1	1.0	0	1
Macias	1	1	0	1	1.0	0	1
Shelton	1	1	0	1	1.0	0	1

PASSING	Att.	Cmp.	Int.	Yds.	TD	Long
Macias	1	0	1	0	0	0
Lowery	15	9	0	93	1	21

RECEIVING	No.	Yds.	TD	Long
A. Brown	4	74	1	64
Shelton	2	14	0	9
Burns	1	3	0	3
Bourne	1	1	0	1
Roan	1	1	0	1

PUNTING	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long
Vitt	3	133	37.3	44

RETURNS	Punt No.	Punt Yds.	Kickoff No.	Kickoff Yds.	Int. No.	Int. Yds.
E. Fletcher	4	46				
Robinson					1	46
Hoff					1	0
Hunter			1	28		
DeRamus			1	19		
Burns			1	0		

DEFENSIVE LEADERS
Tackles (solo-assists-total) — Cooper 4-5-9, Fowler 4-3-7, Nelson 4-2-7, Hoff 1-5-6, Lynch 3-3-6.
Sacks — None.
Fumble recoveries — Messenger 1.

Minnesota

RUSHING	Att.	Gain	Loss	Net	Avg.	TD	Long
A. Carter	31	136	2	134	4.4	2	30
Fleetwood	12	65	30	35	2.9	0	16
J. King	7	14	0	14	2.0	0	4
Richardson	2	10	0	10	5.0	0	4
McClintock	1	3	0	3	3.0	0	3
K. Smith	1	1	0	1	0.0	0	0
Kauffman	1	0	1	0	0.0	0	0

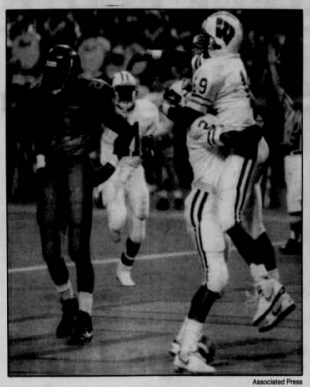
PASSING	Att.	Cmp.	Int.	Yds.	TD	Long
Fleetwood	27	12	2	213	1	35

RECEIVING	No.	Yds.	TD	Long
Hopewell	4	79	2	35
A. Carter	3	39	0	21
J. King	3	39	0	17
Bourne	1	21	0	21
Daryn White	1	21	0	21

PUNTING	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long
Kauffman	7	294	42.0	52

RETURNS	Punt No.	Punt Yds.	Kickoff No.	Kickoff Yds.	Int. No.	Int. Yds.
Goodman	1	3				
Hall	1	0				
Richardson			2	32		
Lewis			1	20		
Heath					1	4

DEFENSIVE LEADERS
Tackles (solo-assists-total) — Williams 4-3-7, Lumpkins 4-1-7, Brown 3-3-6, Collins 4-1-5, Hackbarth 3-3-6.
Sacks — Brown 1-8, Collins 1-8.
Fumble recoveries — None.



Associated Press

UW's Aaron Brown, right, jumps into the arms of Lee DeRamus after scoring on a 14-yard pass from Tony Lowery in the first quarter Saturday.

Victory is one Alvarez and Badgers will savor

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Tucker who provided the method.

"In theory, I'm not even in there," the sophomore from Cleveland said, noting that regular free safety Scott Nelson had left the game with an injury.

Tucker unleashed an end-zone hit with 10 seconds left that rattled the crowd of 36,133, knocked the ball loose from Gophers tight end Patt Evans and uncoiled a celebration that this team is unlikely to forget.

It was a final 20 seconds that seemed to last a lifetime. Minnesota used its final timeout with 20 seconds left to set up its third-and-goal play from the 6-yard line. The Badgers countered with a timeout after the Gophers.

Following an unsuccessful third-down pass to Evans and a delay-of-game penalty on the Gophers, the Badgers called their final timeout.

"I took the time to relax, to clear my mind, get myself controlled and get ready to make a play," Tucker said. "It was a chance to settle down, regroup and focus on what we'd have to do."

The Badgers needed the break. The Gophers had already put together two long scoring drives worth 10 points in the second half. If successful, this could have proved to be the most devastating drive in an already long season for the Badgers.

"In the second half, they scored and came back," Tucker said. "But we knew we would win the game. There was no doubt in anybody's mind. That's how we played. We didn't go in the tank. We're not going to do that."

Or, as defensive tackle Carlos Fowler said of the Gophers' last-chance attempt at the victory: "We were going to make them bleed to get it."

Alvarez has maintained throughout the tough times this season that one characteristic of this team is its resiliency. That's why this victory was to be savored.

"These kids need to celebrate," Alvarez said. "They need to have some success. They need a reward for all their work."

But it wasn't just the players who were enjoying the fruits of this one.

"We're human, too," Alvarez said of himself and his coaching staff.

Badgers hold on

Continued from 1D

football game. Everyone needed a win."

The victory snapped the Badgers' six-game losing streak this season and allowed them to crawl out of sole possession of last place in the conference. UW (4-6 overall and 1-6 in the conference) shares last place with the Gophers (2-8, 1-6).

Tucker's hit provided other assorted benefits to the Badgers, including an end to a 19-game conference losing streak and an end to a 23-game road losing streak, 20 of which came in the Big Ten.

But those were almost incidental to Alvarez's postgame sigh of relief.

The relief came after Alvarez watched the Gophers score on the last play of the first half and then dominate the second half with scoring drives of 95 and 76 yards. There was little relief knowing the Gophers trailed, 19-16, when they were only 6 yards away from victory.

What followed was the most intriguing 20 seconds of the Badgers season.

On third down, a pass from Gophers quarterback Marquel Fleetwood to Evans over the middle went through the tight end's hands and then was missed by a diving Keswic Joiner behind Evans.

There was no hesitation on the Gophers part for fourth down. "You don't play to tie in that kind of game or in this kind of season," Minnesota Coach John Gutekunst said.

The Gophers called their final timeout to set up another play to Evans.

The Badgers answered with their own timeout. Somehow the Gophers then were caught with the wrong players on the field, forcing them to take a delay-of-game penalty, moving the ball back to the 11-yard line.

Gutekunst said it didn't make any difference. UW inside linebacker Brendan Lynch said it did. "All we had to think about was the pass," Lynch said.

When the Gophers got set at the line of scrimmage, UW called its final timeout.

"I wanted to see what lineup they had, but more important was that I wanted to give our kids a blow," Alvarez said, recalling that he didn't use the tactic in a last-minute loss to Iowa. "If we don't do that, maybe Tuck is two steps away."

The momentary R&R worked, but not without concern. Evans ran a similar pattern over the middle against a different UW defense.

"I saw the tight end clear and there was no linebacker under him," Alvarez said. "I knew the only way to get it out was for somebody to blow him up."

Enter Tucker, the demolition expert who had replaced injured free safety Scott Nelson near the end of the third quarter. "I saw (Evans) coming from the left; I saw the ball thrown, and I took a beeline toward him," the sophomore said. "I tried to run through his chin strap."

Not only did Tucker's hit cost the Gophers claim to the Paul Bunyan Ax, the symbol attached to the nation's longest consective rivalry, but Gutekunst may have seen his job go through Evans' hands.

It was a game in which both teams made plays. The Badgers used most of their plays in the first half on the way to a 16-0 lead late in the second quarter. The rest of the game — except for two plays — belonged to the Gophers.

The biggest of those two plays was Tucker's hit. But he never would have had the opportunity if the Gophers hadn't given the Badgers a second chance.

The Badgers took a 19-16 lead with 10:02 remaining when Rich Thompson converted a 42-yard field goal one play after badly missing a 47-yard try. Thompson was given that second chance when Kenneth Sebree ran into him while trying to block the kick.

Wisconsin's defense sparked the 16-6 halftime lead early, stopping Minnesota's first drive at the UW 5-yard line when Rafael Robinson stepped in front of receiver Paul Hopewell and picked off Fleetwood's pass and returned it 60 yards to the Minnesota 35. The Badgers blew the opportunity when freshman quarterback Jay Macias was picked off on the second play from scrimmage.

BADGERS REVIEW

■ **Score:** University of Wisconsin 19, Minnesota 16.

■ **Turning point:** Rich Thompson missed a 47-yard field goal with a little more than 10 minutes left in the game but was roughed on the play. On his second chance, Thompson nailed a 42-yarder which gave the Badgers their 19-16 lead.

■ **Star of the game:** Wisconsin free safety Melvin Tucker whose end-zone hit preserved the victory for the Badgers.

■ **Stat of the game:** The Gophers dominated offensively, picking up 29 first downs and 423 total yards, but two of their drives ended without points inside the UW 15-yard line.

■ **Quote of the game:** "This win is good for the younger kids and it's good for the seniors. We won't have to read about that (losing) string anymore. We got that monkey off our back." — UW Coach Barry Alvarez.

■ **Next week:** The Badgers (4-6 overall, 1-6 in the Big Ten Conference) close out the regular season at home against Northwestern (3-7, 2-5).

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