

Week Nine: Winning Ugly | Allan Besselink

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Yes, a win is a win is a win. But this win was ugly. One week ago I was raving at having witnessed the best 30 minutes of football I'd seen by anyone all year. Today, I experienced what was the worst 30 minutes of football I'd seen by the Longhorns all season. Actually, we might want to stretch that number out to about 45 minutes, if you take into account all of the minutes that the defense stunk up the joint. The sign of a championship team is their ability to come through in the crunch, to fight through adversity, to win games when they just can't seem to get it together. If that is the case, then the Longhorns are truly championship material. As long as today is the low point of the season - at least for the defense. Yes, they beat Oklahoma State 28 - 24. Yes, they will probably emerge from this weekend as the number one team in the country. And yes, a win is still a win - making the Longhorns 8 - 0. But today was a true test for the Horns, and the defense simply didn't show up. They seemed to be out-of-touch and one step behind on every play. They were arm tackling, head tackling, but not wrap-up-the-body-and-put-the-guy-on-the-turf tackling. They were listless, slow, without the fire we'd seen in past games. They failed to make any adjustments at halftime, and may have even come out looking worse after the break. The Horns were soundly thrashed on many levels. The running game never came out of the locker room today either. In all reality, it hasn't made much of an appearance all year. Fortunately, we have Colt McCoy throwing for 391 yards on 38 completions out of 45 attempts. Yes, it was another Heisman-calibre performance that was required to survive the day. Even in championship seasons, the defense is going to have a down day. I still expect that somewhere along the line, Colt McCoy is going to have a bad game (heaven forbid he looks like a mere mortal for a game!). Let's hope we find a running game before that happens. But it's not going to get any easier any time soon with the Big 12 South being so competitive. I hope the defense decides to make the trip to Lubbock next week, because the Red Raiders will be putting the ball in the air a lot more than OSU. And with any luck, today was just "one of those days" that all championship teams face sometime during their golden season. ♦