

Houston rallies past Birmingham, 22-20.

April 5, 2026, Houston, Texas - The Houston Gamblers' John Hoyland kicked his fifth field goal of the game as time ran out to beat the Birmingham Stallions 22 - 20.

The Gamblers dominated the game in almost every major category: time of possession 37 minutes to 22 minutes, total offensive yards 407 yards to 287 yards, points off turnovers 10 - 0. But with 0:02 to go in the game, they found themselves down 20 - 19. Despite the chilly wet Easter night conditions, John Hoyland calmly kicked a 50-yard field goal, with plenty of yards to spare, to give the Gamblers their first victory of the season before 7,744 fans, many of whom didn't show up.

Both teams move the ball well in the first quarter, but neither could get on the scoreboard. With 5:59 to go in the half, Hoyland kicked his first field goal, 32-yarder to put the Gamblers up 3-0. Hoyland added a 37-yard field goal with 1:15 to go in the half to increase the Gamblers lead to 6-0. However, the Stallions raced down the field and scored a touchdown on a 6-yard pass from Matt Corral to Jaydon Mickens to give Birmingham a 7-6 halftime lead.

Birmingham started strong in the third quarter, going up 14-6 as Corral threw his second touchdown, 12 yards to Deon Cain. Hoyland responded with his third field goal of the game, 26-yards to make the score 14-9 at the end of the third quarter, and a 24-yard field goal at the start of the fourth quarter to cut the Birmingham lead to 14-12.

The Gamblers took the lead, 19-14, with 7:02 to go in the game as Jalen White scored a touchdown on a 3-yard run.

The Stallions countered with a 1-yard touchdown run by Anthony McFarland Jr with 2:06 to go in the game, giving Birmingham a 20-19 lead.

Houston began their game winning drive on their 30-yard line. After losing 6 yards, they faced a fourth down and 16 from their 24-yard line. Quarterback Nolan Henderson found Armani Rogers for 29 yards and a first down. This was Rogers only reception of the game. Four plays and facing a fourth down and 6, Henderson's pass was incomplete, but defensive pass interference gave the Gamblers a first down on the Birmingham 38-yard line. After a 6-yard run to the 32-yard line, the Gamblers ran the clock down to 2 seconds, setting the stage for Hoyland's game winner from 50 yards.

"There's only 32 kicker jobs available in the NFL. The past several years or so, I've been watching these great kickers come through the UFL and have the platform to be able to display their talents just a little bit more. So I'm really grateful for the opportunity that this league has given me," Hoyland said.

Nolan Henderson, who replaced an injured Hunter Dekkers in the middle of the second quarter, completed 15 of 23 attempts for 186 yards. Jalen White rushed 26 times for 89 yards and a touchdown. Jontre Kirklin caught 5 passes for 85 yards.

“Most people see one play that win or loses a game, but there are multiple plays made during that whole game and a lot of people contributed and you know, that's what it's going to take for us to win. We just got to get better every week, you know, and we still got a lot to improve on,” Head Coach Kevin Sumlin said. “It's great to win on Easter Sunday. You may not have noticed, instead of the water bucket over the head, they poured Easter eggs over my head on tv.”

For the Stallions, Matt Corral completed 21 of 27 passes for 226 yards. He also threw for 2 touchdowns and had 2 interceptions. Justyn Ross caught 5 passes for 70 yards.

The Gamblers next game is Saturday April 11 at the DC Defenders.