

Texas Outlasts No. 13 Illinois in OT

Jordan Hamilton scores 25 points as Longhorns stay unbeaten

[box score](#)

NEW YORK (AP) - Texas' two young frontcourt players had impressive numbers Thursday night. When it came to overtime, though, the senior man up front made sure the Longhorns took the lead for good.

Sophomore Jordan Hamilton had 25 points on 9-for-17 shooting and freshman Tristan Thompson had 20 points on 8-of-11 shooting, four assists and five blocks for Texas in the semifinals of the 2K Sports Classic. Senior Gary Johnson had 16 points, four and an assist in the Longhorns' 8-0 run to start the overtime of their 90-84 victory over No. 13 Illinois. All three of them had seven rebounds.

"They were terrific, those guys have done a good job for us," Texas coach Rick Barnes said of Hamilton and Thompson. "You don't understand how hard (Illinois' Demetri) McCamey is to guard and we went after him all night long. ... There's little subtle games that went on in the game that won't show up in the stat sheet that were huge."

Like Johnson's two free throws, rebound basket and pass out of the post that meant six of the eight points to start the deciding five minutes.

"It was a great team win," Barnes said. "We had a lot of good things happen tonight with a lot of players. ... Overall, I thought we really showed some toughness and we got it done against an outstanding basketball team."

Now Texas (3-0) gets to play another one.

The Longhorns will face No. 5 Pittsburgh in Friday night's championship game of the tournament that benefits Coaches vs. Cancer. The Panthers advanced with a 79-70 victory over Maryland at Madison Square Garden.

"Watching Pitt, I think they're an outstanding team, they're strong, their guard play is tremendous, they feel right at home in this building, they're a physical team, they shoot the ball," Barnes said before taking a breath. "Again, you're not ranked No. 5 in the nation without a lot of pieces."

McCamey had 22 points to lead Illinois (3-1), which shot 38.4 percent from the field (28 for 73), including going 10 for 29 from 3-point range. Texas was just 3 for 12 from beyond the arc but the Longhorns were 25 of 44 from the free throw line while the Illini were 18 of 28.

"The difference in the game really is the first five minutes of the game, first five minutes of the second half, and the overtime," Illinois coach Bruce Weber said. "We depend on too many 3s, we've got to get to the basket more."

Cory Joseph hit a jumper with 24.6 seconds to play to give Texas a 75-73 lead. It was the Longhorns' first field goal since the 7:55 mark. They were able to stay close and even take a brief lead late by going 8 for 10 from the free throw line over the last eight minutes of regulation.

"It was a great shot, and they came down and made another great play, and we went to overtime," Hamilton said of Joseph's jumper. "It was a great shot."

Jereme Richmond scored on a drive with 11.2 seconds left to tie it at 75 and Joseph missed a jumper at the regulation buzzer.

The extra five minutes went all Texas' way at the start as the Longhorns took advantage of a turnover and two missed shots by the Illini.

Illinois got to 87-84 with 1:06 left on a 3-pointer by Bill Cole but the Longhorns made two of four free throws over the final 39 seconds to stay in front.

"They took it to us, they out-toughed us, and fought us for balls, and to me that and playing smart were the two differences in the game," Weber said. "We had our chances, we had free throws. After all is said and done,

they bumped us, they probably outplayed us, and after all that, we still had our chances and could have easily won the game."

Texas started the second half the same way it did the overtime. The Longhorns broke from a 45-all tie with a 9-0 run with Johnson scoring six of the points. Illinois missed its first eight shots of the second half. The Illini were able to get back in the game with a 7-0 run that was capped by a 3-pointer by D.J. Richardson with 12:22 to play.

Thompson, a smooth left-handed shooter, was impressive with his blocks, even one when he came across from the weak side to bat away a shot by Paul.

"There's no ceiling to it, he continues to get better each and every night he goes out," Barnes said of Thompson. "He does some really good things on each end of the court. I've said before, his greatest talent is he can just go forever."

Thompson, a native of Canada, played at St. Benedict's Prep in New Jersey as a junior in high school before transferring to Findlay Prep in Nevada for his senior year,

"Every time coming back to the tri-state area feels like a secondary home for me," he said. "I'm just happy to get the win tonight."