

# HILL COUNTRY NEWS

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## **Texans come out flat in loss to Jaguars**

HOUSTON — For all the hype and emotion J.J. Watt built up inside NRG Stadium before kickoff, it didn't take long for all the air to be let out of the building.

The Texans allowed 10 sacks, switched quarterbacks at halftime, had four players leave the game with concussions, and scored their fewest points since Week 3 last season in a one-sided 29-7 loss to the Jacksonville Jaguars Sunday afternoon.

"Terrible. No other way to put it," Watt said. "Terrible. So, there's only one way to go from here and that's up. Can't play much worse. We didn't perform the way we wanted to for ourselves, for anybody."

With his effort to raise money for those affected by Hurricane Harvey up to \$31 million and counting, Watt entered the field to a massive roar from the crowd while holding a Texas State flag.

Playing for the first time in the regular season after missing 13 games last year with back surgery, the star defensive end left the game early in the second quarter and finished with just one tackle.

"Just wasn't a good day," Texans head coach Bill O'Brien said. "We have to do a better job coaching. It was a bad day. That starts with me. The players played hard and there were glimpses of some decent plays, but clearly, it was a bad day. A long way to go."

Starting quarterback Tom Savage finished 7-of-13 for 62 yards and was sacked five times in the first half. Deshaun Watson went 12-of-23 for 102 yards and a touchdown, a 4-yard pass to DeAndre Hopkins, who finished with a team-best 55 yards.

Jaguars rookie running back Leonard Fournette ran for 100 yards and a touchdown and caught three passes for 24 yards in his NFL debut. Quarterback Blake Bortles completed 11 passes for 125 yards and one touchdown.

Jacksonville has a winning record for the first time since Week 1 of 2011.

The injury bug hit a team already struggling to find depth, especially at wide receiver and tight end. Bruce Ellington, C.J. Fiedorowicz, Ryan Griffin, and Brian Cushing were all diagnosed with concussions, while guard Jeff Allen left the game with an ankle injury.

"Obviously, you never want to be replaced," Savage said. "That's not a good feeling, but it's called a team sports and I'll be here for this team. I've been here for four years, I've seen it happen. I've seen how this works and it just is what it is."

Jason Myers kicked a pair of field goals in the first half to open the scoring for Jacksonville in the first half and Fournette scored with a one-yard plunge up the middle late in the second quarter.

After getting booed on the final two drives of the half, Savage fumbled with under a minute left in the half and Dante Fowler scooped and scored for the Jaguars.

Watson gave the team and the stadium a much-needed spark when he took the field in the second half and was helped by three Jacksonville penalties en route to his first touchdown pass to Hopkins. The catch tied Hopkins for 3rd on Houston's all-time receiving touchdowns list with 24.

But any momentum the Texans had was quickly squashed by the Jaguars when they went 75 yards in 10 plays and scored on the very next drive. Myers kicked his third field goal of the game late in the fourth quarter.

Houston plays its next two games on the road, heading to Cincinnati to face off with the Bengals Thursday at 7:25 p.m. on a short week and then going to New England to meet up with the Patriots in Week 3.

As for who will get the starting nod is still in question.

"Right now we're just trying to figure it out," O'Brien said. "The decision to go with Deshaun, it had more to do with could we find a spark. I'll think about it a long time tonight and try to continue to work on Cincinnati and see what the best approach is versus them."