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## **(Colo)-Lock A Winner In His Broncos Debut**

By: John Axtell Posted at: 12/01/2019 09:20 PM

By **ARNIE STAPLETON** AP Pro Football Writer

DENVER (AP) - Brandon McManus' 53-yard field goal as time expired, set up by a long interference call, capped a furious final 14 seconds and gave the Broncos a 23-20 victory over the Los Angeles Chargers.

Rookie quarterback Drew Lock's debut win for Denver came a month after Brandon Allen beat Cleveland. It made the Broncos the first team in league history to have two quarterbacks start and win their NFL debuts in the same season.

The winner by McManus, who stormed off the field just before halftime when coach Vic Fangio changed his mind about letting him attempt a record 65-yard field goal, was set up by a 38-yard pass interference call on Chargers cornerback Casey Hayward Jr.

Diontae Spencer returned the kickoff 26 yards to the Denver 28 after the Chargers tied the game at 20 on Michael Badgley's 46-yard field goal with 14 seconds remaining. With 9 seconds left, Lock threw deep down the right sideline to Sutton, who caught his two first-quarter touchdown passes.

Sutton collided with Hayward and the yellow flag came out. The Chargers argued vehemently about the defensive pass interference, giving the Broncos the ball at the Chargers 35-yard line with 3 seconds remaining.

The Chargers (4-8) continued jawing with both the Broncos (4-8) and the officiating crew as the Broncos ran onto the field following McManus' field goal.

Philip Rivers overcame an early interception, his eighth in three games, and a 17-3 deficit with touchdown throws of 30 yards to Austin Ekeler and 36 yards to Keenan Allen. Rivers completed a 38-yard pass to Mike Williams on fourth-and-11 in the closing minutes to get the Chargers in range for the tying field goal.

Badgley missed a 55-yarder off the left upright with 9 minutes remaining after Derek Wolfe's second sack of Rivers - his career-best seventh of the season - pushed the Chargers back 5 yards

McManus then made a 52-yarder with 4:26 remaining to break a 17-17 tie.

With a second left in the first half, McManus trotted out for an attempt at an NFL record length of a field goal with not a hint of wind. But he was summoned back to the sideline after the Chargers sent return man Desmond King II deep in case the kick was short. McManus was furious, ripping off his helmet and slamming it to the ground.

After a delay penalty, Lock didn't even try a Hail Mary, instead throwing a 33-yard pass over the middle to Sutton, who was tackled at the 20.

When they came out after halftime, McManus lined up at the exact spot and made a practice kick through the uprights in the north end zone.

Lock quickly provided a spark to Denver's discordant offense and sent the crowd abuzz despite nearly 20,000

empty seats. After misfiring his first pass and going three-and-out on Denver's opening drive, Luck threw a pair of TD passes to Sutton for a 14-0 lead.

Sutton's first was a diving, one-handed 26-yard grab, and his second, a 5-yard reception, was set up by rookie defensive end Dre'Mont Jones' interception at the Chargers 18.

Josey Jewell gave Luck his second short field when he smothered Troymaine Pope's muffed punt at the Los Angeles 21 in the second quarter. McManus made it 17-3.

## INJURIES

Broncos: RG Ron Leary left with a concussion in the fourth quarter. ... Wolfe went out after injuring an elbow with 2:22 remaining. ... Von Miller's 95-game starting streak was snapped when he was deactivated with a left knee injury.

## UP NEXT

Chargers: visit the Jacksonville Jaguars on Dec. 8.

Broncos: visit the Houston Texans on Dec. 8.

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