



# POSTGAME NOTES

GAME 12 • MISSISSIPPI STATE (5-7, 3-5 SEC) VS OLE MISS (5-7, 2-6 SEC) • NOV. 26, 2016 • VAUGHT HEMMINGWAY STADIUM

## TEAM NOTABLES

- With the 55-20 victory, MSU improved to 44-63-6 all-time against the Rebels, including a 5-3 mark under head coach Dan Mullen.
- MSU improved to 12-23-3 in Oxford, including a 2-2 mark under Mullen.
- This is MSU's first victory in Oxford since picking up a 31-23 win on Nov. 27, 2010 in coach Dan Mullen's second season.
- The 35 point margin of victory is the fourth largest by the Bulldogs in the history of the Egg bowl, and the largest in the modern era (36, 1916). This is the largest-ever margin of victory for MSU in Oxford (previous high 1998, 22 point margin)
- MSU's 55 points are the most the Bulldogs have scored in the storied Egg Bowl rivalry in the modern era (65, 1915).
- The Bulldog's 457 rushing yards are the third most the Bulldogs have ever amassed in a single game, the most since rushing for 466 against Tulane in 1994.
- MSU's 55 points are the most Ole Miss has allowed since 1915.

## PLAYER NOTABLES

- With 258 rushing yards today, Nick Fitzgerald became just the fifth signal caller in SEC history to surpass 1,000 yards on the ground in a single season. His 1,243 yards this season are the third most by a quarterback in SEC history.
- Fitzgerald broke the single-game rushing record by an MSU player at any position, shattering the previous record held by Anthony Dixon (252, Oct. 31, 2009 at Kentucky). He also shattered his own record for most rushing yards by a QB in school history.
- Aeris Williams two rushing touchdowns set a new career high. He also went over the century mark in yards for the second time in four games. His 191 yards set a new career high, besting his previous high of 140 against No. 4 Texas A&M on Nov. 5.
- Cedric Jiles game-icing pick-six in the fourth quarter was the first interception of his career.
- Jamal Peters grabbed the second interception of his career in the end zone early in the second quarter.
- For the second time in four games, MSU's quarterback / running back duo of Nick Fitzgerald and Aeris Williams each went over the century mark on the ground, with Fitzgerald rushing for over 200 yards for the first time in his career.
- With his seventh 100-yard rushing performance of the season, Nick Fitzgerald has now shattered the previous MSU record of five for a single season. The record was previously held by Don Smith (1986).
- In his final regular season game as a Bulldog Fred Ross grabbed a critical touchdown reception on fourth down late in the third quarter. The reception extended his streak to 34-consecutive games with a catch.
- Ross also continues to climb the charts of MSU's record books. The senior now owns 22 career touchdown receptions, moving him into a tie for second place in MSU history with De'Runnya Wilson. In total, Ross owns four MSU school receiving records (consecutive games with a catch, 34; 100-yard receiving games, 10; receptions 195; and receiving yards, 2,484.)



## REBEL FOOTBALL

**Ole Miss Athletics Media Relations** | 908 All-American Drive | University, MS 38677 | 662-915-7522  
**Web:** OleMissSports.com, OleMissFB.com | **Facebook:** Facebook.com/OleMissSports, Facebook.com/OleMissFootball  
**Twitter:** @OleMissSports, @OleMissFB, @RebelGameday, @CoachHughFreeze

# POSTGAME NOTES

## MISSISSIPPI STATE 55, OLE MISS 20 - 11/26/16

### SERIES INFORMATION

- This was the 113th meeting between the two teams ... The Rebels now lead 63-44-6 all-time, dating back to 1901.
- This was the 89th Battle of the Golden Egg, with Ole Miss leading 57-27-5 since the teams starting playing for the trophy in 1927.
- Mississippi State snapped the Rebels' two-game win streak.
- This is the second straight year the road team has won after the home team won every year from 2011-14.

### CAPTAINS

(All seniors): Fadol Brown (DE), Robert Conyers (OL), Evan Engram (TE), Issac Gross (DT)

### FIRST-TIME STARTERS (1)

Defense: Deontay Anderson (Rover)

### GENERAL NOTES

- Attendance at Vaught-Hemingway Stadium was 66,038, second-largest in stadium history.
- The season attendance of 454,368 in Oxford shattered the previous school record of 430,829 set in 2014.
- This is the first time in Freeze's five seasons that Ole Miss has not reached bowl eligibility.
- This was the most points given up in a game since allowing 66 to Texas in 2012.
- Seven true freshmen have now started a game this year, tied for most of any team in the country.
- The Rebels scored first for the 11th time in 12 games.
- After not trailing at the half in the first nine games of the year, Ole Miss has trailed at halftime in three straight games.
- The Rebels fall to 34-11 under Freeze when they score first.
- Ole Miss is now 2-20 under Freeze when its opponent scores 30 or more points.
- This was just the second loss of the Freeze era when Ole Miss rushed for 200+ yards ... The other was in the 53-52 OT loss to Arkansas last year ... The Rebels are now 22-2 in such games.
- The Rebels now own an all-time record of 660-511-35 (.562 winning percentage) and a 39-25 record under Freeze (.609 winning percentage).

### OFFENSIVE NOTES

- Ole Miss topped 500 total yards (528) for the fifth time this year.
- Nine different receivers caught a pass in the game.
- Shea Patterson made his third straight start to become the first true freshman QB to start three games in school history.
- Patterson was 27 of 48 for 320 with two TDs and two INTs, while rushing for 73 yards on 13 carries.
- Junior WR Damore'ea Stringfellow had six catches for a career-high 97 yards and two touchdowns, his second career game with multiple TDs (at Mississippi State last year).
- Senior RB Akeem Judd rushed 19 times for 107 yards, his fourth 100-yard rushing game of the season.
- Judd's 826 rushing yards on the year are 17th-most in a season in school history.

### DEFENSIVE NOTES

- Junior DE Marquis Haynes led all tacklers with a career-high nine stops, including his team-leading seventh sack of the year.
- Junior LB Tayler Polk added a career-high seven tackles.
- Senior DT Issac Gross made two tackles and recovered a fumble.

### SPECIAL TEAMS NOTES

- Junior K/P Gary Wunderlich made both of his field-goal attempts, from 24 and 38, and both PATs ... He finishes the year with 22 of 23 FGs made and 41 of 43 PATs for a total of 107 points ... The 22 FGs are second-most in a season and the 107 points are third-most in school history.
- In the career record books, Wunderlich is third with 47 FGs made, third with 124 PATs made and third with 265 points scored.
- Junior P Will Gleeson punted twice for a 52.0-yard average and also converted a first down on a fake punt, rushing for a 14-yard gain ... It was the Rebels' first successful fake punt since Gleeson did the same against Vanderbilt last year.

## **Mississippi State Head Coach Dan Mullen**

### *Opening Statement...*

"I am really proud of our kids, what they have been through, a lot of adversity. Whether it was losing games on the final play of the game or injuries throughout the course of the year that really set us back, the next guy really stood up. The kids stuck together. It shows someone's character right now. This team never gave in, never gave in throughout the course of the year and I am so proud of them. We sit here and winning this game is so huge, it is so huge. Changing a couple plays around and we ended up having a great season, don't change some and not as great and people can judge that, but what a successful season. There is a lot of people in that locker room that really learned that no matter what goes on, whether you have success or failure or whatever adversities you face, you can buckle up and go harder. You don't give in. You keep pushing yourself to be the best you can be. Yes, you are going to have to face success to be successful. I am proud of those kids and there is a lesson those guys have got to learn tonight. It was a great game. I think you can kind of see at half time that the team that was going to make more plays was going to win the game. Fortunately for us in the second half we we back and fourth and we made a couple plays that they didn't and that ended up being the difference in the game."

### *On the mindset going in...*

"I figured we could win since they have a new quarterback, but they give you some issues. They were going to move and twist and I think the fact that we were able to establish the run early got them out of what they were trying to do defensively. We had to keep kind of mixing up the looks and formation to run the ball out of to keep them on their toes."

### *On the Egg Bowl tradition...*

"This game is awesome. This is the eighth time I have played in this game. I am not going say it is the biggest and I am not going to say it is little. Every time you win it it is awesome and every time you lose it it is awful because it sticks with you. What an unbelievable feeling to come in and get that win and bring that trophy back to Starkville. I know this game means so much to all of the fans, everyone in Mississippi. I am so happy to get that win for the bulldog fans, they believed in us and people believed in what we try to do and what we try to build. We raised expectations here pretty high and I am just really excited to bring that trophy back."

## **Mississippi State Student-Athletes**

### **#7 Nick Fitzgerald, QB**

#### *On the season...*

"Throughout the season, there were a lot of highs and lows. To end on something so high, a big-time Egg Bowl win, it's phenomenal to see where we started and where we ended up."

#### *On the ground game...*

"The offensive line was blocking their butts off. We were running extremely hard. It really goes to our offensive line. They played their butts off and really showed out. It's a phenomenal feeling. It's great when you're running and no one is around you, but do to it in a big-time game like this and in front of this crowd is surreal."

#### *On the Egg Bowl...*

"It still really hasn't settled in. I'm sure whenever it does I'll be jumping around with joy. "

### **#8 Fred Ross, WR**

#### *On the win...*

"Guys came out and executed all week in practice. We knew we were going to be able to come out here and have success and we got it done."

#### *On the growth of the team...*

"We grew a lot. We were a young team. A lot of guys had to step up. The sky is the limit for this team moving on. I'm glad to play with these guys."

#### *On Nick Fitzgerald and Aeris Williams...*

"They were was amazing. He did a good job of just controlling the game. He kept us up. (Aeris Williams) just hammered them all night. He did a good job of running the ball. I'm proud of those guys."

**Ole Miss Football Postgame Quotes**  
**Ole Miss vs. Mississippi State**  
**Vaught-Hemingway Stadium – Oxford, Miss.**  
**Nov. 26, 2016**

**Ole Miss Head Coach Hugh Freeze**

*Opening statement...*

"Unfortunately, it felt like it was going to be a score-fest. We just didn't keep up with the score. We had some chances to keep the game close and stay in it, to keep the motivation high and the energy high. We failed at it. Whether it was the pick in the end zone, which was critical, or the fourth down, or the first possession in the third quarter. We obviously couldn't stop them all night, so we had to score with them and we failed to do that. It stinks. It is disappointing. I hate it for our fans, University, seniors and for everyone involved in our program, and our supporters. It's not the way you want to end the season. I have been in five of these and I hate the feeling that I have in the two losses that we have had. We have a lot of work to do to get back to where we want to be, starting in the offseason and in spring ball for sure, but tonight was a disappointing night."

*On the impact of the failed fourth and one conversion...*

"I thought the energy in the whole place went down for sure. I thought there was good energy there in the second half in the stadium and on the sideline. But there was no question that was a crucial play."

*On Dave Wommack and finding a new defensive coordinator...*

"I am not that far along. I really believe that Dave deserved to finish without a lot of distraction. He has been in this business for 38 years and he has done some remarkable things. He has impacted young men and he is the type of guy you want in the profession. He cares about young men and has been very good at it for a long time. It is time for him to enjoy some time and then for me to figure out which direction to go next. First step, will be to get the guy you want to coordinate, and then we will go on from there."

*On Shea Patterson over the last three games...*

"I thought he competed well. Again, the mistakes he makes aren't physical as much as they are mental. He made a couple throws where if he had a do-over, he would make different throws, but it went a lot. It's just knowing situations. Most of it is going to come because he understands the game, but it would be hard to argue. He moved the ball effectively and I thought he had a lot of drops last week and some tonight that would make him play even better. So I am satisfied at this point. I think he is a good piece to build the future around offensively."

## Ole Miss Student-Athletes

### **#79, Javon Patterson, OL**

*On the loss...*

"It's just execution, not making first downs, not completing passes. We just have to keep fighting as a team."

*On the season...*

"It's very disappointing, because we set the expectations so high. You work with these guys all summer and all spring. It hurts, but we just have to come back to work."

*On the tough second half...*

"It's frustrating that we weren't scoring. We're used to going fast and getting things going, and when you get stopped it gets frustrating. We have to keep our poise and keep going."

*On looking forward...*

"The future is very bright. We have some guys who stepped in. Shea (Patterson), that was big for him stepping in. D.K. Metcalf, with him going down, he had flashes in the first few games that were very good. We have a lot of guys who are really going to help us in the future. We have to set the standards and get these guys going the right direction."

### **#10, Marquis Haynes, DE**

*On the game as a whole...*

"I am disappointed. We wanted to keep the egg here, that was our main focus. We were just trying to figure it out at the half time, but they came out harder. It is hard to keep your head up and focus on the positive, but it is hard when you lose the egg bowl, because it means so much to this program."

*On if he will return next year...*

"I have not made a decision on it yet."