



MISSISSIPPI STATE FOOTBALL POSTGAME NOTES

Mississippi State vs. Southern Miss

September 7, 2019 | Davis Wade Stadium | Starkville, Miss.

Team Notes

- MSU's game captains were QB **Tommy Stevens**, P/H **Kody Schexnayder**, S **Brian Cole II**, LB **Erroll Thompson** and 73 **Darryl Williams**.
- MSU won the toss and elected to defer to its option. Southern Miss received the opening kickoff.
- Today's attendance was 55,143.
- MSU started 2-0 for the third straight season.
- State improved to **15-14-1** in the all-time series with Southern Miss and has won each of the last four matchups
 - The Bulldogs bettered their record against USM in Starkville to **10-6-1**.
- Bulldogs making their first career starts (1 – 1 offense): LG **Tommy Champion**
- State extended its streak of consecutive wins against non-conference teams during the regular season to 11.
- State earned its **44th** win since the start of the 2014 season. Heading into today's game, MSU's 43 wins during that span ranked fourth in the SEC.

Offense

- QB **Tommy Stevens** improved to 2-0 as a starter, including his first at home inside Davis Wade Stadium.
- For the second straight game, **Stevens** connected with WR **Osirus Mitchell** for a TD on MSU's opening drive (31 yards last week vs. Louisiana, 28 yards today).
- MSU scored first and improved to 8-3 under **Joe Moorhead** when doing so.
- **Stevens** went 7-of-7 passing for 84 yards and a TD in the first quarter, and on the next play threw an 11-yard TD strike to WR **Stephen Guidry**.
- **Stevens** connected on his first nine passing attempts (105 yards, two TDs) with a 244.2 passer rating before an incomplection late in the second quarter.
 - It was the longest streak for a Bulldog QB to start the game since **Dak Prescott** completed his first 12 passing attempts against Arkansas in 2015.
- **Stevens** has thrown at least one TD pass to three different receivers so far this season.
- **Stevens** left the game late in the second quarter with an injury and did not return.
- Freshman QB **Garrett Shrader** took over at signal caller with 2:37 to go in the second quarter.
 - **Shrader** finished the game 7-of-11 passing with 71 yards.
- RB **Kylin Hill** scored a touchdown on a 3-yard run in the third quarter. **Hill** has found the end zone at least once rushing or receiving in each of the last four games, dating back to last season.
- **Hill** crossed the 100-yard rushing mark in the third quarter for his fifth career 100-yard rushing game.
- **Hill** finished with 123 yards on 14 attempts (8.8 ypc) and 1 TD.
- With 123 yards today, **Hill** joined former RB Vick Ballard as the only MSU players with 100+ rushing yards in each of the first two games of a season since the 1999 season. Ballard had 166 vs. Memphis and 135 vs. Auburn to start the 2011 season. **Hill** had 197 last Saturday in the season opener.
- **Hill's** 100-yard rushing game snapped Southern Miss' streak of 15 consecutive games without allowing a 100-yard rusher. USM was one of four schools that didn't allow a 100-yard rusher in 2018.
- **Hill** racked up five 15+ yard plays from scrimmage (1 receiving, 4 rushing) highlighted by a pair of 22-yard runs.
- **Hill's** 320 yards this season are the second most by an SEC running back through two games since 2010.
- RB **Nick Gibson** added his second rushing touchdown and fourth of his career on a 13-yard rush during the second quarter. He finished with 31 yards on five carries.



- RB **Lee Witherspoon** rushed for his first career touchdown, a 22-yard run, in the fourth quarter. He finished with 40 yards on seven carries.
- MSU led 21-0 at halftime and improved to 9-1 under **Moorhead** when leading at halftime.
- WR **Stephen Guidry** became the third MSU wide receiver with a receiving touchdown this season.
 - **Guidry** hauled in an 11-yard TD reception from **Stevens** in the second quarter.
- MSU scored an opening drive touchdown in each of its first two games of the season. The last time the Bulldogs accomplished the feat was in 2014 against Southern Miss and UAB.
- MSU had 10 different Bulldogs catch at least one pass after having nine players secure a reception in the opener.
- MSU rushed for 200+ yards for the **27th** time since 2016 and is **22-5** in those games.
 - The Bulldogs have topped 200 yards on the ground in **10** of their last **15** games.

Defense

- S **Brian Cole** recorded sack for a 7-yard loss in the second quarter. It was **Cole's** second career sack and first since Sept. 8, 2018 at Kansas State.
 - **Cole** led MSU's defense in the first half with six tackles, including a career-high 2.0 for loss.
 - **Cole** finished the game with a team-high seven tackles, 2.5 tackles for loss and a sack.
- DE **Marquiss Spencer** forced a fumble in the second quarter on third down, his second straight game with a forced fumble
- **Spencer's** second quarter forced fumble extended MSU's streak of consecutive games with a takeaway to 18.
- S **C.J. Morgan** recorded his third career interception, while CB **Martin Emerson** notched his first career pick during the fourth quarter.
- MSU's defense held its opponent without a first half touchdown for the ninth time in 15 games under DC **Bob Shoop**. The Bulldogs pitched their first opening half shutout since the Texas A&M game in 2017.
- MSU held Southern Miss to just two conversions on nine third down attempts in the game.
- MSU extended its streak of consecutive games with at least one sack to 24.
- Dating back to the 2017 TaxSlayer Bowl, MSU has not allowed an opponent to score 30+ points. State is the only team in the FBS with zero 30+ point games allowed during that stretch.
- MSU did not allow a rushing touchdown today, extending its streak of consecutive quarters without allowing a rushing touchdown at Davis Wade Stadium to 14.
- State forced an interception for the second straight game. It's the second straight season the Bulldogs have had at least one pickoff in each of the first two games.

Special Teams

- P **Tucker Day's** first two punts went 42 and 59 yards, respectively, and both were downed inside the 10. Last week, Day pinned both of his punts at the opponent's 1-yard line.
 - On the season, Day has punted six times for 279 yards with a 46.5 average and four punts inside the 10.
- K **Jace Christmann** made a 30-yard attempt early in the fourth quarter. He later missed a 43-yard try.

Southern Miss Postgame Notes
Southern Miss 15, Mississippi State 38
Sept. 7, 2019

General

- * Today's Attendance – 55,143
- * Captains – 15 Jack Abraham, 25 Tyler Barnes, 55 Demarrio Smith.
- * Mississippi State won the toss and deferred. Southern Miss received the kick from North the end zone.
- * Mississippi State now holds an all-time record of 15-14-1 against Southern Miss. Prior to today's game, the last meeting between Southern Miss and Mississippi State occurred on September 5, 2015 at M.M. Roberts Stadium.

Offensive Notes

- * Kevin Perkins recorded the longest rush of his Southern Miss career when he turned in a 26-yard rush in the third quarter. He finished with a team-high 51 yards rushing.
- * Jaylond Adams caught a 28-yard pass from Jack Abraham for a touchdown with 4:42 remaining in the third quarter. The touchdown marked his first receiving touchdown of the 2019 season and the fourth receiving touchdown of his Southern Miss career.
- * After completing the 28 yard touchdown pass to Adams, Abraham has now thrown a touchdown pass in 10 of the 11 games that he has played in during his time at Southern Miss.
- * Including today's game against Mississippi State, Southern Miss has thrown for at least 100 yards in 89 consecutive games. Abraham also threw for 200 yards for the ninth time of his career with 234 yards.
- * Jordan Mitchell recorded the longest receiving touchdown of his Southern Miss career after hauling in a 65-yard touchdown pass from Jack Abraham with 6:31 remaining in the fourth quarter.
- * Perkins recorded the first reception of his Southern Miss career after catching a three-yard pass from Abraham in the third quarter.
- * De'Michael Harris earned a start at the running back position for the first time in his Southern Miss career. Harris logged a single game career-high of 49 rushing yards on six attempts.
- * Darius Mayberry saw action for the first time during the 2019 season. Mayberry ended the game with a total of 12 rushing yards on four attempts.
- * Adams recorded the first rushing attempts and rushing yards of his Southern Miss career. Adams logged two rushing yards on two attempts.
- * Abraham posted the ninth 200+-yard passing game of his Southern Miss career in just 11 games played.

Defensive Notes

- * Ty Williams recorded back-to-back sacks during Mississippi State's fourth drive of the game (second quarter). Williams' two sacks mark a career-high for him for sacks in a single game during his Southern Miss career.
- * The Southern Miss defense surrendered a 100+ yard rushing performance to an individual of an opposing team for the first time in 16 games, ending their streak of limiting individuals from opposing teams to 100 yards rushing or less at 15 games. Mississippi State's Kylin Hill finished the game with a total of 123 rushing yards on 14 attempts.
- * DQ Thomas tallied a single game career-high eight total tackles.
- * Shannon Showers logged a career high 10 total tackles and four solo tackles.
- * Ky'el Hemby registered a career-high nine total tackles.
- * Santrell Latham tied his career high of five total tackles.

- * Jacques Turner recorded a single game career-high of five total tackles.
- * Darius Kennedy notched a single game career-high four total tackles and two solo tackles.
- * Von'Darius Freeman tallied a single game career-high two tackles.
- * De'Mikal Chesser recorded the first tackle of his Southern Miss career.

Special Team Notes

- * Andrew Stein attempted and missed a 36 yard field goal with 4:50 remaining in the first quarter.
- * Matt Bromell recorded the first two punts of his Southern Miss career. Bromell was responsible for Southern Miss' first two punts of the game. Bromell's longest punt of the day was 29 yards.
- * Andrew Stein converted the PAT after Adams' touchdown reception.
- * Trevor Terry tossed a PAT pass that was completed for a two-point conversion after Mitchell's fourth quarter touchdown. The PAT pass was the first of Terry's Southern Miss career.

Miscellaneous Note

- * There were no penalties called on either team in the first half of the game.

**2019 Mississippi State Football
Head Coach Joe Moorhead Quotes
vs. Southern Miss
September 7, 2019**

Opening Statement

JM: "First and foremost, I want to thank our fans who came out and braved the elements. To have a show like that on opening day with the heat, humidity, and whatnot, it was a great environment for our guys, and you can see why it's one of the best in college football, if not the best. As I mentioned to the team inside, I want to give credit to our training staff, strength and conditioning staff, and our sports nutrition department. All week we talked about hydration, nutrition, and what we needed to do to come out in this type of environment for the guys flourish and not get dehydrated or worn out. I think they did a really good job with that. In terms of the game, I think we didn't flinch in the face of adversity. There were a lot of opportunities here where a guy went down on offense, a guy went down on defense, or maybe a play didn't go the way we wanted to, I think that's indicative of this team. I've said it all along, we have great leadership and great chemistry. We're taking in 12 one-week seasons. We've got to be like our mascot; we got to be a dang bulldog. We have to bow our neck, bow our back and just find a way to win every single week. We had a true-freshman quarterback play a majority of the game, a true-freshman tailback scored a touchdown, and a true-freshman cornerback intercept the ball. Offensively, we're looking to strike balance. I don't think they had given up 30 points in a game over the last 12 games. I don't think they'd given up a 100-yard rusher in 15 [games]. We were able to do both of those things and it's credit to [Southern Miss head coach Jay Hopson and [Southern Miss defensive coordinator] Tim Billings and their staff. That's a good football team who is going to win a lot of games. I was pleased with our balance and our productivity on offense. We left some things on the field, but I think as we continue to progress, we will be able to clean those up. Defensively, [we need to] continue to create turnovers. I think we took a positive step from last week in terms of our tackling and our assignments. Obviously, there will be a few things to clean up there, but I was pleased with our progress. [We had] a bunch of guys playing in different spots. Then, special teams, outside of the one missed field goal, I felt like Scott [Goodman] kicked the ball better and we covered better. I think Tucker [Day] is continuing to improve like we had anticipated coming off of last season. It was a great team win, so I'm happy to be 1-0 this week."

Q: Do you have an update on Tommy Stevens?

JM: "It is upper body, but he will get looked at by the medical staff now, and we can give a more thorough update tomorrow when we come for medical checking."

Q: Depending on Stevens status, is Garrett Shrader your starting quarterback next Saturday?

JM: "I can't answer that right now. Hopefully we will see if Tommy is alright, and we will go in and grade film tomorrow, and talk about personnel, like we do on Sundays. I wish I had an answer right now, but I don't."

Q: Do you have any other injury updates?

JM: "Cameron Dantzler has a little lower-body [injury], and I think he was fine and could have gone back in. [Head athletic trainer] Thomas [Callans] and his staff are looking at all the guys now, and we will meet tomorrow at 3:00 and go over an injury after the kids report for treatment. The status as of right now is up in the air. We will know a little better tomorrow."

Q: What were your thoughts on Shrader and how the other true-freshman handled themselves during the game?

JM: "That's one thing; we've been recruiting Garrett for a long time, and his decision to come to Mississippi State and enroll as a mid-year. I think that is one of the benefits for a quarterback, to come and get that extra semester of preparation. Since I've known him, a situation has never been too big for him. When Tommy [Stevens] was down, we said, "you're in," and he didn't have those big deer in a headlight eyes. He just got in there. We got in at halftime and talked about a couple of plays he wasn't necessarily comfortable with, because he didn't get a ton of reps during the week. For a true-freshman to come in and operate the way he did, I believe he was 7-for-11. He ran the ball pretty well, and I was happy about how he was able to step in there."

Q: You threw the ball well early, what did you see that made you think you could go over the top against them?

JM: "I think Tommy started off 9-for-10 and he had a real nice streak going there. I don't know if it was what we were seeing or what we game planned for. I was preaching last year, about what we wanted to see heading into the season, we want to be a team that is balanced, and can run and pass with people [and have] effectiveness. Hopefully the last two games you've seen kind of a snapshot of what we want to be. If teams take the run away, we are able to throw it, and if teams take a throw away, we are able to run it. We had it rolling pretty good there. We were just calling the plays we had game-planned, and the kids went out and executed it and did a great job."

Q: How early in the week was James Jackson moved back to offense, and how do you think he did?

JM: "I think it was Tuesday. I usually don't see the guys who are in [on] the offensive line, because Marcus [Johnson] does a great job rotating them. I will have to see from the film, but I didn't see anything egregious that jumped out. For not practicing at center since spring ball and going into the game and being able to function. I think that is a credit to James [Jackson], and his selflessness and just being a team guy, and also Marcus' ability to get him ready in a short amount of time."

Q: How much confidence does Kylin Hill give Garrett Shrader?

JM: "You don't necessarily want to have a true-freshman in there and start throwing the ball around the yard. But, to have a guy like Kylin, and Nick [Gibson] ran the ball well, and Lee [Witherspoon], as well, as you are weening a new guy in there and getting him accustomed to the speed of the game with his first experience, that you lean back on a strong run game like we have. I think Kylin ran for 125 [yards] today. He is one of the best backs in the conference, and one of the best backs in the country. To have that luxury is good for any quarterback, particularly a young one."

**2019 Mississippi State Football
Student-Athlete Quotes
vs. Southern Miss
September 7, 2019**

Offensive Student-Athletes

Kylin Hill | RB | Jr.

Q: How pleased are you with your last two performances these past two weeks?

KH: "You can always get better, but so far I'm pretty pleased. The hard work is paying off."

Q: What do you feel like is working for you by now having big statistics game after game?

KH: "Just being comfortable. One year in the system, I feel like I can be myself now."

Q: When you see Tommy get down you know you're going to get more touches. What excites you?

KH: "It never excites you to see your teammate go down. Tommy is a hard-working guy, but I had to step up to the plate. I had to do what I had to do to get the win."

Garrett Shrader | QB | Fr.

Q: Did you feel prepared to play today, or was it one of those things where you won't know until you try it type of things?

GS: "I thought I was, but it took a while to adjust. Systematically, I was ready to go. Processing the line, I was a little bit slow, but I'll get used to it."

Q: Tommy goes out and then Kylin went out not long after that. Those are two of your key players in the offense. Was there panic? What were the attitudes like in that moment?

GS: "Next man mentality, next man up. That's what we did, that's how we played. We had a bunch of young guys making plays today. Lee [Witherspoon] came in there and scored a good touchdown, Martin [Emerson] with a pick. It was just a flash of the good stuff coming."

Q: How much confidence did you have walking into this week only having two reps this past week?

GS: "The guys were really supportive when they saw me step in there. A lot of help around me was what got us the win today. I was just in there managing and trying to do what they gave me. We came out with the win, it was good."

Defensive Student-Athletes

Jaquarius Landrews | SS | Sr.

Q: Talk about the defensive effort. It seemed like you all had some good plays out there today, little bit more yardage than you all wanted to but still getting turnovers.

JL: "I feel like the first half we did pretty good shutting them down. The second half, we got a little too comfortable and gave up a couple of explosive plays. We are going to take the win, learn from our mistakes and make sure we come back the second half prepared like we were the first half."

Q: Some people talk about a bend but don't break defense. Are you all okay with that, or is it just a game-by-game thing?

JL: "Most definitely, it is a bend but don't break. There's always going to be adversity, and you never know when it is coming. So, we always stick to the bend but don't break mentality."

Q: You all had trouble getting to their quarterback Jack Abraham at the beginning of the game. You got to him more later in the game, and he got more inaccurate. What was the difference?

JL: "I feel like everybody did what they are supposed to do, and everybody locked in a little bit more. Of course, there were a couple of explosive plays, but everybody did their job for the most part."

Brian Cole II | STAR | Sr.

Q: People talk about this defense finding their own identity. Do you feel like after a couple of weeks now that you all are finding it?

BC: "Yeah, but we are still figuring it out too. We have to get better because we are about to get into SEC play. So, obviously there is more, a lot more we can do. We still have errors we need to correct. We just have to get better regardless, keep stacking these little wins and run with it. We always have mistakes to fix."

Q: Coach mentioned the only thing that matters in his mind is the score margin, is that a new mentality?

BC: "Most definitely. At the end of the day when our back is up against the wall, we still got to stand our ground. We can't let teams put points up on the board, just like coach said. The offense can have a whole bunch of bad plays. It won't really hurt, but the defense can have one bad play. There could be points on the board. So, we always just got to go. I like the mentality though."

Q: How big was it to force the field goal that was missed?

BC: "It is always good. It is a turnover basically in our book. So, that's basically a three and out. It gives the guys on the offense a chance to get back on the field."

**2019 Mississippi State Football
Southern Miss
Head Coach Jay Hopson
Quarterback Jack Abraham
Running Back Kevin Perkins
Defensive Back DQ Thomas
vs. Southern Miss
September 7, 2019**

Opening Statement

JH: I give credit to Mississippi State. They played a good game and deserved that 'W.' I thought they fought hard, and we had some adversity early. I think we came out and blocked really good the first half. I thought we battled back. I was really proud when there was about five and half minutes to go, and we were down two scores with the ball. I thought we had an opportunity there to make it extremely interesting. Of course, Mississippi State had a big turnover that kind of sealed the game, but I'm proud of our effort. We fought. We certainly got a lot of mistakes to correct, but I thought our players fought. I was extremely proud of them.

Q: What is your opinion of Kylin Hill?

JH: He's a really good back, no doubt. He was good in high school, and he's just really good. A couple of times we had him in the back field, and he just moved it forward and got the first down. I certainly grabbed his neck before I got off the field, and I just thought he played a well game and ran the ball physically. We've got to wrap him up when we have the opportunities, but again, he played a well game.

Q: Was there ever a turning point in the game?

JH: We got behind the stakes early. We just got down early second quarter, 14-0. We had a chance because a couple of times we would get down inside of their 30- or 35-yard line, and we came away with no points while Mississippi State came away with 14 points. The touchdown right before the half, that hurt because it definitely made it a three-score game then. I really felt like we could get back early and come out the second half and get the ball back. I thought we could've scored on that next possession and made it interesting. We made it 31-15 with about five and a half or six minutes to go and had the ball. Now, you're in a situation that if you score there and go for two, we're going to do an on-sides kick and see what happens. To give Mississippi State credit, they deserved to win the ball game, but again, I'm proud of our guys fighting.

Q: How will you use a game like playing against Mississippi State to help you with a difficult schedule?

JH: Any time you're playing good SEC talent, you know you're playing teams that are excellent football teams. It is a good measuring stick. We'll go back on film to see the little things that we could've done better, but that's part of the process. I'm really pleased with the fight. I'm not happy with the score, and I don't think any coach or competitor would be. The bottom line is our guys are fighting hard and playing hard. It would have been really easy when we were down 31-7 to hang it up, but here we go, now it's 31-15. It's our ball, and we're trying to get it to 31-22 and give ourselves a chance. Our guys kept plugging. That's something that I told them at the end of the game that I'm so proud of them because I've never known this team to quit, stop or give up. They just keep plugging and keep fighting, and that's something as a football coach that you've got to be proud of. You want to win every game, but unfortunately, this game you don't but can stand pretty tall as long as you know that you're surrounded by a bunch of fighters. I think that's what we have.

Jack Abraham | Quarterback | Jr.

Q: You guys kind of stalled out a couple of times in the first half. What was it that MSU was doing that was getting you guys off kilter?

JA: Nothing, it was us. We were shooting ourselves in the foot. We were getting behind the sticks, and we were hurting ourselves. Something that we did last week, and we did a little bit this week too, is that we've got to improve on that next week.

Q: Can you expand on things that you maybe saw in the second half that you liked that you wish you'd seen more of in the first half?

JA: It really wasn't anything that we saw in the second half. It just came down to us executing. We didn't execute well enough in that first half, and it really wasn't anything that they were doing. They're definitely a talented defense, but we had a key on what they were doing the whole time. It just came down to us executing.

Kevin Perkins | Running Back | R-Jr.

Q: It seems like you all had success running the ball. What do you think was key for you all today?

KP: As far as coming out and running the ball, we had a heck of a week at practice. Our offensive line stepped up. We had a running back go down last week, so everybody knew that they had roles as far as stepping up. That's what happened today; we brought it together.

Q: Is this kind of what you all have seen in camp? I know last week it seemed like it was kind of tough. Are you encouraged by the way they were hitting?

KP: Of course, the linemen do a tremendous job stepping up. The defensive line was pushing. We just kept running.

Q: Do you think every running back offers something different?

KP: Most of us come out as power backs. We have speed guys, guys that can make tight cuts and knife through the defense. We all bring something different.

DQ Thomas | Defensive Back | Sr.

Q: Early, when State got rolling, what were some issues for you all?

DT: Just miscommunication. A lot of guys were not on the same page. A lot could be made up with our effort on defense, so I think it was just us not communicating on defense.

Q: On Kylin Hill, how tough is it to tackle that guy for 20-plus carries?

DT: He's probably one of the best backs we've seen this year so far and probably that we're going to see. He's has good talent with a good offensive line. He's a pretty tough guy. He's pretty good.

Q: What would you say the mood was in the locker room?

DT: We just missed the opportunity. A lot of things on defense and offense. Things could've been executed differently. Going into next week, Coach Hopson already emphasized that we're going to correct the mistakes that we made, so I'm looking forward to next week already.