



MISSISSIPPI STATE FOOTBALL POSTGAME NOTES

Mississippi State vs. Abilene Christian

November 23, 2019 | Davis Wade Stadium | Starkville, Miss.

GENERAL

MSU's game captains were QB **Tommy Stevens**, P/H **Kody Schexnayder**, S **Brian Cole II**, LB **Erroll Thompson** and 73 **Darryl Williams**.

The game was Homecoming for the Bulldogs.

- Rachel Dumke of Franklin, Tennessee, homecoming queen
- Spencer Kirkpatrick of Tupelo, homecoming king.

This was State's first night game of the season.

This was the latest ever Homecoming game in school history by nine days (Nov. 14, 1942).

ACU won the toss and elected to defer to its option. MSU received the opening kickoff.

Today's attendance: 54,638

MSU's first-time starters: S **Shawn Preston Jr.**, DT **Nathan Pickering**

State has now won 15 in a row against FCS teams.

MSU has now won 42 of its last 49 games against non-conference opponents (12 of 13 during regular season).

The Bulldogs improved 57-21-3 on Homecoming.

State bettered its record to 8-0 all-time against teams from the Southland Conference.

TEAM

Logged 400+ yards of total offense for the fifth time this season.

Rushed for 200+ yards for the seventh time this season.

Outgained ACU 155 to 15 in the first quarter.

Outrushed the Wildcats 125 to 5 in the first quarter.

Scored 30+ points for the fifth time this season.

Picked off multiple passes for the third time this season.

Recorded a season-high four sacks.

DE AARON ODOM

Recorded one half sack in the third quarter, the first of his career.

DE KOBE JONES

Recorded one half sack in the third quarter, giving him 1.5 for the season.

RB KYLIN HILL

Went over 200 yards from scrimmage for the third time this season, totaling 237 yards (153 rush + 84 pass).

Entered MSU's top-10 list for single-season rushing yards on his second carry, which was 19 yards.

- With 153 yards, moved up to fourth on the MSU single-season rushing list with 1,215 yards.
- 176 yards shy of matching the school record.

Topped 100-yards rushing for the seventh time this season and 10th time in this career.

- Seven 100-yard rushing games is tied for No. 3 in school single season history.
- 10 100-yard rushing games is tied for No. 6 in school career history.

Eclipsed 150+ yards rushing for the fourth time this season.

- Most 150+ yard rushing games by a Bulldog in a season since at least 2000.

Scored on a career long 88-yard touchdown reception in the second quarter.

- Third-longest passing play and seventh-longest play from scrimmage in MSU history.
- Longest catch by an SEC player this season and tied for longest by an FBS running back this season.



- One of just three SEC players this year with an 80+ yard reception.
- Scored at least one touchdown from scrimmage in 10 of his last 14 games dating back to 2018.
- Logged his 10th run of 20+ yards on his seventh carry of the game (22 yards) ... Added another later in the game and now has 11 this season.
- Logged a 20+ yard run for the sixth game this season.
- Scored a rushing touchdown for the fourth straight game.
- Has a rushing touchdown in seven different games this season.

S JAQUARIUS LANDREWS

Recorded the first interception of his career in the second quarter.

S FRED PETERS

Collected the first interception of his career in the fourth quarter.

Followed that up with his first career sack on the same drive.

DT NATHAN PICKERING

Made his first career start at defensive tackle.

Recorded one half sack in the first quarter to give him 1.5 on the season.

DE CHAUNCEY RIVERS

Recorded 1.0 sack for a loss of 13 yards on Abilene Christian's first possession to bring his season total to a team-leading 3.5 and career total to 6.0

QB GARRETT SHRADER

Responsible for two touchdowns (1 passing; 1 rushing)

First touchdown came in the fourth quarter on a six-yard pass to WR **Austin Williams**.

Also carried the ball 10 yards to the end zone on State's final drive.

Completed a 34-yard pass to WR **JaVonta Payton** on his final passing attempt of the night.

QB TOMMY STEVENS

Responsible for three touchdowns (2 passing; 1 rushing)

First touchdown pass of the game was an 11-yard strike to WR **Deddrick Thomas**.

Career-long 88-yard touchdown pass to RB **Kylin Hill** in the second quarter.

Tossed multiple touchdown passes for the fourth time this season.

Also found the end zone on the ground in the third quarter from 30 yards out.

- Second straight week with a 30+ yard run (had 46-yard run vs. #5 Alabama)

88 yards rushing (second straight week with 80+ yards on the ground).

WR DEDDRICK THOMAS

Caught a touchdown pass from QB Tommy Stevens late in the first quarter, his second TD catch of the season.

His 11-yard TD reception in the first quarter was his first TD reception since 10/12/2019 at Tennessee.

Pushed his career touchdown reception total to nine.

Caught multiple touchdown passes in a season for the third straight year.

C DARRYL WILLIAMS

Made his 36th career start on the offensive line.

Has started 36 of State's last 37 games.

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Mississippi State Head Coach Joe Moorhead

November 23, 2019 | Davis Wade Stadium

Opening Statement

“Heading into the game, it was going to be very much a do-your-job type of endeavor. In all three phases, we’re going to have to come out and play with great urgency, great precision, and do it for four quarters. I thought we saw it at times. Across the board, offense, defense, and special teams, we’ve got to play much cleaner. I thought there were a ton of positive things in the run game. I thought we did some things in the pass game. The defense held them [Abilene Christian] to seven [points]. We did a good job with our PAT’s and our field goals. I’m an English major, not a math guy. I know you’ve got to get to five before you get to six. At the end of the day, pleased with the win and ready to move on to Egg Bowl week.”

Q: Tommy [Stevens] has given you guys a lot in the run game the past few weeks. How much has he added and opened things up a little bit?

JM: "It has been a great compliment to Kylin Hill and the other running backs, who I think are running very hard, with great pad level and physicality, while protecting the football. Heading into the Arkansas game that was a discussion I had with Tommy, that he needs to, as he has for the majority of his career, be a threat with his arm and his legs. Not try to pigeon hole himself as a pocket passer and do the things that made him successful. I think we have seen that in the past few weeks.”

Q: Is there an update on Tyre Phillips?

JM: “Tyre went a little bit in the second half and then we kind of pulled him out as we got some of the reserves in, but we’re banged up. We will get in tomorrow morning and look at the injury report. It is a short turn around, and I think health wise in a sense that there is only five days left in the regular season, and we’re fighting.

Q: Your three touchdowns in the first half came off of consecutive drives. What was the difference between that and the first few drives and that result?

JM: “I think we ran the ball very effectively. I think we protected, I think we threw it in the proximity of the receiver, and I think that we caught the ball. I think the difference was probably execution, in those three scoring drives compared to the first few.”

Q: Monday you said you would not look at Ole Miss until right after the game and they have had about two weeks to prepare, how much of a disadvantage is that that they’re going to have two full weeks to prepare?

JM: “I lied. I looked at them this week. I don’t make the schedules and I am not involved in that decision making process. They had the luxury of having a bye week and a bunch of days to get ready and we are coming off a short week. It is what it is. We are not going to complain. We are

not going to make excuses. We are going to go in tomorrow and watch this tape really early in the morning, grade it, and then we are going to move on and make a game plan.”

Q: The 88-yarder to Kylin seemed to add some creativity, did you know that it was going to work out that well, and how long have you had that in the tank?

JM: “We called that a couple of times this year. It’s best designed for the split safety, two-high defense. We get the MIKE isolated on the [running] back, and then you run a power at him, and he is responsible for the three-vertical, and he is also responsible for the C gap. If he had turned it around with Kylin, then the quarterback would have run the ball. We got it off one time this year against Southern Miss and they went single high and we threw it to Kylin and he caught it for a short gain. That was one P10, position and 10, off the sideline it would have been off-split safety stuff so that’s why we went with it.

Q: Took a couple of drives for the offense to warm up there, what were you seeing from the teams in the first quarter?

JM: “I was seeing red because I was mad that we weren’t executing at a high level. There were just some things within our drive; we needed to play with more precision. We moved the ball a little bit between the 30s and then we stalled out as we got down into the fringe area and in the red zone. We just need to block a little better and we needed to find the guy that was open and throw it to them, then we needed to catch it. I thought what we did on that fourth drive is that we started playing with a little more tempo, running a little more. I think that Tommy [Stevens] hitting Deddrick [Thomas] on that pass down in there, so it was more a matter of execution than anything.”

Mississippi State vs. Abilene Christian
Mississippi State Student-Athlete Quotes
November 23, 2019 | Davis Wade Stadium

Offensive Student-Athletes

QB Tommy Stevens

Q: Do you think you all got out of the game what you wanted to get out of it?

TS: "Yeah, we won. That's obviously the number one goal and we won the game. Obviously, there's a lot of things we need to clean up though. We won the game and put up a lot of points, but there's a lot in the film room we need to get better off of though. All in all, it was a good team win. I'm ready for the next one."

Q: Coach said it was a matter of execution to get rolling early on, what were you seeing there?

TS: "I agree. It starts with me and some throws I could have put in better places for the guys to make plays on. Ultimately, I have to get our guys the chance to make plays. I'll take the blame for that one. Like I said, we're going to learn from it tomorrow and get moving on this short week."

Q: Your new to the Egg Bowl, have your teammates told you what to expect?

TS: "Yeah. It's definitely been talked about a lot since I've gotten here, [in. regards to] the expectation and all of that. It's definitely something I've been looking forward to and we're going to have to bring it."

Q: For the guys that are from Mississippi, what have they told you to get you hyped up?

TS: "The people that live in the state of Mississippi know how important the game is...It's different to the people in Mississippi. It's obviously a really, really big deal and I've accepted that message and taken it as if I was from Mississippi because I know that it means everything to my teammates. At the end of the day, we just want to win the game."

RB Kylin Hill

Q: You talked about how you adjusted your running style, how much do you feel like that worked for you tonight?

KH: "A lot. Teams previously have stacked the box, so I can't be back there making too many moves. I have to be decisive, see the hole, hit it and get what I can get."

Q: How do you feel like the offense performed?

KH: "Pretty well, but it can be better. It can always be better, even from a win. We're just going to go over the tape and see what we can improve."

Q: How much is the way that Tommy [Stevens] has been running the ball opened things for you?

KH: "A whole lot, teams are not trying to let me get to the edge. They're all flowing to me, so it opens opportunity and time to capitalize on that which is amazing."

Q: With a bowl game riding on this game on Thanksgiving [Egg Bowl], what's the mindset in the locker room?

KH: "I'm ready. I'm locked in and focused. I know what it means."

Q: "What have you told some of the guys who haven't been in an Egg Bowl yet?"

KH: "I've already told the young guys that this week is one of the weeks that you can't play around with. This is basically the Super Bowl for us or a championship for us. It's a big rivalry that we've got to take it to the field."

Defensive Student-Athletes

S Fred Peters

Q: How did it feel playing tonight?

FP: "It felt great. I just had an opportunity, then I went out there and just played my best. I got my first opportunity to get out there for real, and I just gave it my all."

Q: How much of a confidence boost does it give the defense to have everyone back next week?

FP: "It will boost a lot of confidence. We will have everyone back on a defensive position, pretty much. But I believe we will come out ready to play."

Q: What was said in the locker room in preparation for next game?

FP: "The coaches just came in after the game and said, 'keep your head on straight, and come in and work tomorrow.'"

S Shawn Preston Jr.

Q: What was the defensive game plan going into this game?

SP: "Coach [Bob] Shoop gave us a game plan. He wanted, for this game, for people to make plays. He wanted us to come out big, buildup pressure, get a couple sacks and get a couple turnovers. We did that tonight, so that was a positive."

Q: How was the communication on the defense?

SP: "It was different. I mean, as the game went on, you know, because it was my first career start, so I guess I had a couple first-game jitters. I mean, it was pretty good. We got the car around. Yeah, it was good."

Q: How much of a confidence boost does it give the defense to have everyone back next week?

SP: "It's definitely a big confidence boost. Like Coach Shoop said, we got all our bullets from the chamber. We're locked and loaded. It's going to be a good game. It's senior day for the seniors. That's definitely something to look forward too. Of course, the Egg Bowl, and of course, we are trying to get the Egg Bowl trophy back to Starkville."

CB Martin Emerson

Q: What has the change in the lineup been like for the defense?

ME: "Next man up, mentality, so it hasn't been hard, really. Just communicate, and as long as we're on the same page, and play together, we should be good."

Q: What are you expecting to see from the Egg Bowl?

ME: "I know it's a big rivalry. Growing up, I know I'm out of state, but I knew about the Egg Bowl. You know, Mississippi State and Ole Miss, I know it's a big rivalry. I'm proud to be a part of it, and I'm proud to be at Mississippi State. We'll go out and play."

Q: How quickly can you get ready for the next game?

ME: "It's a quick turnaround, so we will take care of our bodies tomorrow, watch film, and have to put ourselves in a great position. We have to watch a lot of film and just buy into what the coaches say because we have a quick turnaround. Everything will be faster, so we have to prepare quicker."

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Abilene Christian Head Coach Adam Dorrel
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Opening Statement

AD: “First off, this was a great venue for our players and team to come through. It was first class the way Mississippi State did everything, from when we got here to the locker room with the way they treated us. I thought they had a very classy group of young of men. We have played some of these games before. I was very impressed with the way they acted the entire game and the way they played. I was very impressed with their coaching staff and just the environment. This is a lifetime of memories for our players.

“I was very proud of the way we played today. I thought we played extremely hard. I thought we played with a lot of passion and energy. We were outgunned in some spots and that’s difficult. That can be very challenging mentally for players. Our kids didn’t back down tonight, and I thought they played really hard. We only had one turnover tonight. We couldn’t get any, but we were so close. [Mississippi State] did a great job of running the football, especially with their quarterback. I was very pleased with our team tonight with offense, defense and special teams. We made some plays. I think the thing that I’m very appreciative of, I told our team this, is that we had a lot of guys who were extremely hurt tonight and were just trying to play through pain. For a head coach when your kids battle like that, it’s a great feeling. It beats winning. It beats anything. When you see kids that are hurt and they could easily tap out and they continue to play, it’s a really great feeling. I’m proud of our team tonight.”

Q: What have you seen out of Kobe Clark’s progression from this year?

AD: “If you look at him, you’re talking about a guy who is very resilient. We recruited Kobe, but at the end of the day, we didn’t offer him a scholarship. That never deterred him from us and his belief that he could play Division I football and his belief in ACU. He came to ACU with a huge financial commitment on his family’s part. Again, that’s why we all love that kid. He took a chance on us, and we put him on scholarship. I think for a kid who started last year as a freshman walk-on and his progression in a short amount of time, I’m just very proud of him. He’s a very diligent in what he does. He’s very tough. I mean, he took some hits tonight. What a great honor. There’s a big difference between him and Ronnie Vinson from a height standpoint, but both are great players. There’s going to be big things from him to come in the future.”

Q: How did you execute a strong start in the beginning of the game from the defense?

AD: “I thought [the defense] set the tone today. They got off the field early, and we couldn’t get out of that hole. That first touchdown that they gave up, they were on a short porch the first four drives in a row. [Mississippi State] finally scored on that. I thought they did a really great job. When you’re playing SEC athletes, they’re going to make people miss. There were sometimes where it was the style of offense that Mississippi State runs. When you run your quarterback, you’ve got to play 11-on-11. When you get guys out in space, you’ve got to tackle. Sometimes we did tonight, and sometimes we didn’t. Our guys did a pretty good job of leveraging the football tonight. We didn’t give up a lot of big

plays down the field. Our big thing tonight was that we wanted to make them earn everything. For the most part, we did a pretty good job of that.”