

### MISSISSIPPI STATE FOOTBALL POSTGAME NOTES

## Mississippi State vs. Ole Miss November 28, 2019 | Davis Wade Stadium | Starkville, Miss.

### **GENERAL**

- After tonight's win, State is bowl eligible for the 10<sup>th</sup> straight season. The Bulldogs join Alabama, Georgia, LSU and Texas A&M as the only SEC schools to go to a bowl game every season this decade.
- This game marked the 116<sup>th</sup> meeting of one of the nation's most-played rivalries.
- This game was the 92<sup>nd</sup> "Battle for the Golden Egg."
- The two teams played on Thanksgiving for the 26<sup>th</sup> time tonight.
- State honored 26 seniors prior to kickoff: DE Fletcher Adams, DT Lee Autry, OL Tommy Champion, S Brian Cole
  II, RB Malik Dear, RB Nick Gibson, TE Farrod Green, WR Stephen Guidry, DT Kendell Jones, LB Sh'mar KilbyLane, S Jaquarius Landrews, LB Leo Lewis, RB Alec Murphy, OL Tyre Phillips, WR Tristan Pisacane, DE Chauncey
  Rivers, H/P Kody Schexnayder, CB Maurice Smitherman, QB Tommy Stevens, OL Michael Story, LS Nathan
  Swanson, WR Deddrick Thomas, LB Tim Washington, OL Evans Wilkerson, OL Darryl Williams, WR Isaiah Zuber.
- With tonight's victory, the Bulldogs have won six out of the last eight against the Rebels at Scott Field.
- State improved to 45-64-6 in the all-time series against Ole Miss with an 11-14-1 mark on Thanksgiving.
- The Bulldogs have won three of the last four played on the holiday against the Rebels.
- MSU has defeated Ole Miss each of the last two seasons and three times in the last four meetings.
- State has also won seven out of the last 11 meetings against the Rebels.
- Tonight's game marked the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of "The Kick and the Pick" game in 1999 when the Bulldogs earned a dramatic 23-20 victory over Ole Miss on Thanksgiving in Starkville.
- Tonight's 21-20 win marked State's smallest margin of victory during the all-time series.
  - The Bulldogs previous smallest margin of victory was a 9-7 decision on Nov. 30, 1937.
  - It marked the first game decided by one point in the series since Nov. 29, 1997.
- Joe Moorhead became just the second MSU head coach since the end of World War II to defeat Ole Miss in his
  first two meetings.
- Ole Miss won the coin toss and deferred its option. MSU received the opening kickoff.
- Tonight's attendance was 57,529.

#### **TEAM**

- MSU's game captains were QB Tommy Stevens, P/H Kody Schexnayder, S Brian Cole II, LB Erroll Thompson and C Darryl Williams.
- State's first scoring drive featured a trio of 20+ yard plays, highlighted by RB Nick Gibson's 27-yard TD run.
- MSU's second scoring drive which ended in a QB **Garrett Shrader** 5-yard TD run was the Bulldogs' longest drive of the season in terms of time (7:41).
- The Bulldogs had a trio of takeaways on the night and now have at least one in 25 of the last 28 games.
- MSU's defense matched a season-high with four sacks and notched a SEC season's best nine tackles for loss.
  - Over the last two games, MSU's defense has secured eight sacks and 19.0 tackles for loss.
- Rushed for 200+ yards for the eighth time this season.

#### **RB NICK GIBSON**

- Scored State's first TD of the game on a 27-yard run during the first quarter.
- Has scored a touchdown rushing in each of the last two games and three of the last four.
- Added a 30-yard run on State's first play of their first drive of the fourth quarter.



### **RB KYLIN HILL**

- Rushed for 132 yards on a career-high tying 27 carries.
- Topped 100-yards rushing for the eighth time this season and 11<sup>th</sup> time in this career.
  - The eight 100-yard rushing games this season is tied for No. 1 in school single season history with **Anthony Dixon** (2009) and **Nick Fitzgerald** (2016).
  - 11 100-yard rushing games is good for sole possession of sixth place in school career history.
- State has had at least one 100+ rusher against Ole Miss in four consecutive games since 2016.
  - Became the fifth MSU player to have multiple 100+ rushing games versus Ole Miss since 1950.
  - o The others include **John Bond** (1980, 1983), **Michael Davis** (1993, 1994), **Anthony Dixon** (2006, 2009) and **Nick Fitzgerald** (2016, 2018).
  - Only Davis and Hill have had the 100+ rushing outings come during back-to-back seasons.
- Remained in MSU's top-five list for single-season with 1,347 rushing yards on the season.
  - Will enter MSU's bowl game 28 yards shy of Nick Fitzgerald (2016) for third place and 44 yards away from Anthony Dixon's (2009) single-season record.
- Elevated his career total to 2,474 rushing yards which enabled him to surpass James Johnson (1997-98) into the No. 9 position on MSU's all-time list.
  - o Will enter MSU's bowl game 47 yards shy of **Dak Prescott** (2012-15) for the No. 8 spot.
- Made it seven different games this season with at least one 20+ yard run.

### **QB GARRETT SHRADER**

- Finished the night with a pair of rushing touchdowns.
- Upped his season rushing touchdown total to six.
- Made his fourth career start and first since Oct. 26 at Texas A&M.
- Capped State's second scoring drive of the game with a 5-yard TD run.
- Scored MSU's third touchdown of the night late in the third quarter on another 5-yard scamper.
- Was 10-of-14 in the air for 108 passing yards.

#### WR DEDDRICK THOMAS

Caught two 20-yard passes. Each resulted in a first down and were on MSU touchdown drives.

### LB ERROLL THOMPSON

- Led the team in total tackles (11), his third game with 10+ stops this season.
- For his career, he has tallied double-digit tackles in five different games.
- Forced a fumble for the second time this season, which was recovered by S Brian Cole II.

### **S MARCUS MURPHY**

- Equaled his career-best in tackles (8), also recorded eight stops at Arkansas earlier this season.
- Registered his second career INT with 6:10 left in fourth quarter, also had an INT at Arkansas earlier this season.

### **CB CAMERON DANTZLER**

• Set a career-high in tackles (9), all solo stops.

### **DE CHAUNCEY RIVERS**

- Tied a career-high in tackles (5), all three five-tackle outings have come against SEC opponents this season.
- Also matched a career-best in sacks (1.5), previous 1.5 sack performance was versus LSU this season.
- His strip sack recovered by LB Willie Gay Jr. in the third quarter led to MSU's game-winning TD drive.

#### **C DARRYL WILLIAMS**

• Made his 37<sup>th</sup> career start on the offensive line ... Has started 37 of State's last 38 games.



# **OLE MISS 20, MISSISSIPPI STATE 21**

Nov. 28, 2019 • Davis Wade Stadium • Attedance: 57,529





### **SERIES INFORMATION**

- Tonight was the 116th all-time meeting between Ole Miss and Mississippi State ... The series is tied with Michigan-Ohio State for the 15th-longest series in NCAA Division I history.
- Ole Miss still holds a 62-46-6 advantage in the series dating back to 1901, including a 22-15-3 mark in Starkville.
- The original record is 62-48-6 in favor of Ole Miss ... The Rebels had wins in 2012 & 2014 vacated due to NCAA ruling, while Mississippi State forfeited wins in 1976 & 1977.
- Tonight was the 92nd "Battle of the Golden Egg," as the two schools started playing for the trophy in 1927 ... Ole Miss holds a 56-29-5 advantage in the "Egg Bowl".
- It was the 26th time the series has been played on Thanksgiving Day ... Ole Miss now holds a 14-11-1 advantage in Thanksgiving games, including an 8-5 mark in games played in Starkville.

### **CAPTAINS**

• Josiah Coatney (DL), Octavius Cooley (TE), Alex Givens (OL), Benito Jones (DB)

### **STARTER NOTES**

- Eleven different Rebels have started all 11 games of the season. **OFFENSE**: **Ben Brown** (RG), **Alex Givens** (RT), **Michael Howard** (LT), **Eli Johnson** (C), **Jonathan Mingo** (WR), **Elijah Moore** (WR), **Royce Newman** (LG), **DEFENSE**: **Josiah Coatney** (DL), **Lakia Henry** (ILB), **Jalen Julius** (FS), **Qaadir Sheppard** (OLB).
- Ole Miss had the same starting five offensive lineman every game this season: Michael Howard (LT), Royce Newman (LG), Eli Johnson (C), Ben Brown (RG), Alex Givens (RT).
- Ben Brown and Alex Givens both tallied their team-leading 24th consecutive start for Ole Miss on the offensive line.

### **GENERAL NOTES**

• Attendance for tonight's game was 57,529.

### **OFFENSIVE NOTES**

- RB Jerrion Ealy rushed for a career-high 15 times for 82 yards and one TD ... Ealy finished the season with six rushing TDs, the second-most ever by an Ole Miss freshman.
- QB John Rhys Plumlee finished the contest 9-of-14 passes for 121 yards ... Plumlee carried the ball 18 times for 34 yards and one TD.
- Plumlee finishes his freshman campaign with 12 rushing touchdowns and 16 total TDs, both Ole Miss freshman records.
- Plumlee became the sixth Rebel (eighth time overall) to surpass the 1,000-yard rushing plateau on the season (Kayo Dottley, 1949 1,312 yards; Dexter McCluster, 2009 1,169 yards; BenJarvus Green-Ellis, 2007 1,137 yards; Deuce McAllister, 1998 1,082 yards; Jordan Wilkins, 2017 1,011 yards; BenJarvus Green-Ellis, 2006 1,000 yards)
- QB Matt Corral completed 6-of-12 passes for 124 yards and one touchdown.
- RB Snoop Conner tallied 11 rushes for 31 yards ... Conner finished with five rushing TDs on the season, tied for third-most by an Ole Miss freshman.
- WR Dannis Jackson tallied a career-high three receptions for 25 yards.
- WR Dontario Drummond posted a career high in receiving yards (50).
- Matt Corral's fourth down pass completion of 57 yards to Braylon Sanders was Ole Miss' longest pass of the season.
- Sanders finished the contest with two catches for 88 yards.

### **DEFENSIVE NOTES**

- Ole Miss forced a turnover in 10 of their 12 games this season.
- The Rebels have registered three or more sacks in eight games this season, including three tonight vs. Mississippi State.
- ILB Jacquez Jones tied his career high with nine tackles on the night.
- DB Keidron Smith tallied his third forced fumble of the season
- OLB Sam Williams registered a career-high three tackles for loss
- DL Josiah Coatney tied his season high with seven total tackles.

### SPECIAL TEAMS NOTES

• P Mac Brown punted five times for an average of 44.4 yards, with a long of 50.

Mississippi State vs. Ole Miss Mississippi State Head Coach Joe Moorhead November 28, 2019 | Davis Wade Stadium

### **Opening Statement**

"Obviously, it is a huge win for the program on a lot of different levels. I'm incredibly proud of this team, particularly the 26 seniors. For them to fight the way that they did today in all three phases, until the very end of the game and until the last second ticked off the clock. I couldn't be any prouder of the players, the coaches, our administration, the state, this school and the majority of our fans. In 21 years of coaching and a bunch more as a player, I don't know that I've entered a season and gone through a season with as much adversity as we've had to face from having 10 guys out to start the season – some of our best players – going through a quarterback rotation and having a ton of injuries. We had some ups and downs but the kids just kept fighting. I think more than anything it's a validation for this team and a validation of our culture. To me, it puts an exclamation point on the narrative floating around that I'm not the right man for this job, this program or I can't coach in this league. That's not the case. I'm damn proud of this team. I love the way our kids handle adversity. I love the way the coaches fought through adversity. I know there was a lot of ups and downs and a lot of belly aches. Just make sure that everybody understands: this is my school, this is my team, this is my program. I'm not interested in anyone's validation except the guys in that locker room. If you ask them who is the right man for the job their going to tell you it's me. I promise you that. I'm not going to get into what we've done in the past years and how we were able to get to a bowl. No one get it twisted. I understand what it means for this program and I'm here. This is my team. This is my school. This is my program."

### Q: What was the strategy coming into tonight?

JM: "It was a great plan and going through the year we had our struggles. Sometimes stopping runs, stopping passes, and Coach [Bob] Shoop and his staff, particularly on a short week, and coming off of them on a bye week, we just had to get numbers in the box. We mixed up or coverages and mixed up or pressures. [Ole Miss offensive coordinator] Coach [Rich] Rodriguez does a good job scheming up runs, and we had to put in people we are confident in. I thought, for the most part, we tackled well, we got the ball on the ground, we got off the field on third down. The credit goes to Coach Shoop, his staff, and players for putting a great game plan together to stop the most prolific rushing offense in the SEC."

### Q: How would you assess Jaquarius Landrews' performance?

JM: "With [John Rhys Plumlee] ability, and how he is able to make plays by design and improvisation, you can't [anticipate what he is going to do]. You kind of just run your own [defense] and get that kid on the ground. He's done it against the best teams in the conference, and if he continues to do it, his future is bright. We need to make sure that between he and [Jerrion] Ealy and the rest of those guys, we did a good job stopping the run. I think we did that for the most part."

### Q: What were your emotions like during that last drive?

JM: "I got them down, probably a little bit. From the fourth-and-24 completion, the pass-interference penalties, and kind of some of the other stuff, you know, the last penalty happened, and they did their little celebration. We had the option to take it during the kickoff or the [point after touchdown]. We took it on the PAT. I feel bad for that kid, but I feel great for the Bulldogs."

### Q: When did you realize that you would start Garrett Shrader?

JM: "Tommy [Stevens] got a little bit of an upper-body injury during the [Abilene Christian] game. We evaluated him on Sunday and Monday, hoping it would get better during the week. I think we knew by Wednesday for sure and we knew that Garrett was going to be the guy."

### Q: What did you think of Garrett Shrader's performance?

JM: "I said to him before the game, 'you are out here for a reason, so be Garrett Shrader.' He's not unflappable, certainly he didn't play a perfectly clean game, but for a true-freshman under those circumstances, with a couple fourth-down conversions, we ran the ball and distributed it to the playmakers. The kid has an incredibly bright future, this season, at Mississippi State and moving forward."

### Q: Is this rivalry what you expected?

JM: "I've been a part of West Virginia-Penn State, Pitt-Penn State and some other great rivalries. The ingredients to a great rivalry are usually proximity, passion of the fan bases, and familiarity of the teams. This obviously has all of it. Most of our kids were going out on the field to [John Rhys] Plumlee and [Johnathan] Mingo, those are relationships. If there is a better rivalry in college football, I'd like to see it."

### Q: What was it like to see Nick Gibson in his final home game?

JM: "We talked about earlier in the week how Nick has been a tremendous role player. He has been behind Aeris [Williams] and Kylin [Hill]. His carries have been limited, but when he's been there, he has been incredibly effective. He does a great job on pass protection. Nick's a great kid, and he will continue to do well in the bowl game, and I hope he has a chance to play on Sundays."

### Q: How happy were you to see Marcus Murphy make big plays tonight?

JM: "I love Marcus Murphy. He has gone through more in the past year that would break most grown men. For him to be able to fight through all of that, fight through some of the stuff this year, to get on the field, make huge plays, and he's also doing phenomenal in the classroom. Once again, he is a local product that decided to stay home, and he's having great success at this university. I love Marcus."

Mississippi State vs. Ole Miss Mississippi State Student-Athlete Quotes November 28, 2019 | Davis Wade Stadium

### Offensive Student-Athletes

### **QB** Garrett Shrader

### Q: Take us through the week, how did you find out you were going to start?

GS: "I found out pretty early on that Tommy [Stevens] had an injury that would probably hold him out. I hate that for him, but it was a good week at practice from an offensive standpoint and everyone in general. We felt good about this week. We did the little things right, on and off the field. We had a good week at practice even though it was a short week – only two days and a walk-through. We felt confident. It was fun to get out there and just go play the game."

### Q: What does the Egg Bowl feel like for a freshman?

GS: "I found out today what the rivalry was all about. It was a fun atmosphere. Thanks to everyone who came out. It was definitely fun."

### Q: What is Joe Moorhead like as a coach and how do you see him?

GS: "He has a certain set of beliefs about how the program should be run and that's just getting everybody to buy into it, which is the biggest thing. I absolutely believe in him and everything that he says and does. He's going to be my coach and we are going to win a ton more games with him."

### **RB Nick Gibson**

Q: For your final home game you get to leave with the Egg Bowl trophy, how does that feel? NG: "It feels amazing because we know we have bragging rights for another year and I no doubt played a part in it. There's just not a better feeling."

## Q: You're going to leave here with four bowl games and three Golden Egg trophies, what does that say about this senior class?

NG: "It says that we came in, contributed a lot to this program and helped to build it to what it is today. Hopefully, the under classman will continue to build it and make Mississippi State even greater than what it is right now."

## Q: What is Joe Moorhead like as a coach and what is it like being in that locker room with him?

NG: "He's a great coach. Fans are going to talk. You have your ups and downs. I told coach [Joe Moorhead] that everything we do is just a learning experience. I feel like we had some shaky moments this year, but we got it together. We came out and won when it matters, by keeping [the Golden Egg Trophy]."

### RB Kylin Hill

### Q: What are you feeling right now?

KH: "I'm excited. It was a much-needed win. If we lost, we'd be losing a lot of things. The bowl game and the Egg Bowl. I'm excited right now. Chills down my body. Crazy game."

## Q: You've been pretty adamant about Coach [Joe] Moorhead being your guy here. What's your thought about him being your coach?

KH: "I feel as if there is no coach in the country who loves his players like Coach [Joe] Moorhead. He makes everyone [better]. If you walk in with your head down, he will pull you to the side or his office and ask if you want to talk. I feel like he's the guy for the job. Right now, we're in the process of building. We had a lot of guys out with suspensions and injuries, so to be where we are right now is amazing."

### Q: What was the postgame like with everybody in the locker room?

KH: "The celebration was great, especially to see the young guys [celebrating]. I told them, I said there's no better celebration than the Egg Bowl. I think they understand now. Like I said, everybody was excited."

### **OL Darryl Williams**

### Q: What was it like going through the final 30 seconds of that game?

DW: "The last 30 seconds were wild. They [Ole Miss] had a good play going in. I think we executed and I'm just glad we got the win. Right now, I'm just feeling joy. I think we did a great job."

### Q: How does the bowl eligibility effect you after this game?

DW: "It's huge to know that we get another month of football, especially for the seniors to be able to showcase our talent and just get more opportunities. Not just for us, but for the young guys to get that extra practice in and prepare for the next season coming up. It's a great feeling knowing that we got our tenth [straight] bowl eligibility win."

### Q: How do you feel like Garrett Shrader handled his first Egg Bowl?

DW: "He did an excellent job. Once he fumbled the ball the first time, I told him to just keep up the throws. It's going to be an awful hard game and it's going to be uncomfortable, but you have to have grit in this game. Especially knowing that there's a great team over there [on the other sideline]. I'm thankful for him and I think that he held his composure very well."

### **WR Deddrick Thomas**

Q: Talk me through the play when you got the catch during that critical fourth down.

DT: "[Joe] Moorhead called a great play. I was just going on my route. I was just doing my job. The ball ended up finding me. [Garrett] Shrader did a great job sliding the pocket. I just had to come down with it."

Q: This has been tough with all the suspensions this year. How does it feel to end up with a victory in the end?

DT: "I'm just happy. I can't even explain. I wanted to cry. These are my brothers. These are the boys I've been with for four or five years. It feels great."

### Defensive Student-Athletes

### **DE Chauncey Rivers**

Q: How did you defend open spaces tonight with Ole Miss's quarterback John Rhys Plumlee? CR: "Like I said, all we've been doing is practicing our keys and paying attention. We knew what type of quarterback he [Plumlee] was ... He wanted to get on the perimeter, and he wanted to use his legs. At the end of the day, we played our keys, and we played hard. Everybody was running to the ball, and we found a way to get the win."

Q: How do you feel about Joe Moorhead, and how's he coached the team this season? CR: "I feel like he's a great coach. Every day, he comes out there and gives us his all. Every day, he comes out there with excitement and energy. He's just a great coach. He's behind his players 100 percent, and he shows us love."

### S Marcus Murphy

Q: What did the defense do differently than other teams to defend [John Rhys] Plumlee? MM: "Eye discipline. First and foremost, Coach [Moorhead] harped on us about feeling every run. Just feel it to the best of your ability and stop the run. They didn't really throw the ball, so we knew we had to key in on the run. At the end of the game, they put [Matt Corral] in and had to throw the ball. I feel like we gave up just as much as we wanted to gain. That's not Mississippi State football. We've got to finish every drive, every game and every play the same."

Q: What is the emotion on the field when the games over and the trophy gets brought out? MM: "It was a hard-fought game. When they missed the extra point, I cried. Every year, that's a rivalry game: Mississippi State versus Ole Miss. We won the game, and we pulled it out. We're going to a bowl game."

### **LB Erroll Thompson**

## Q: Do you feel like it made a difference with the defense that Mississippi State was tied or ahead the whole game?

ET: "I feel like it did. It's always good when we're not behind. Playing defense is easier when you're ahead or when it's an even game."

### Q: Can you put into words what it was like to see that missed extra point?

ET: "I'm still trying to put it into words. It's crazy, I'm just glad we got the win."

### Q: Are you ready to prepare for another bowl game?

ET: "It's great. We've been to a bowl game every year since I've come in and keeping that tradition alive is a great feeling."

Mississippi State vs. Ole Miss Ole Miss Postgame Quotes November 28, 2019 | Davis Wade Stadium

### **Head Coach Matt Luke**

### **Opening Statement**

ML: "I'm disappointed. Especially disappointed for our seniors. I just told them in the locker room how much I appreciated them battling through. I'm just really grateful for those guys. This will be the last time they put on the Ole Miss uniform. I'm just grateful for them. I'm sorry it didn't work out for those guys. It's a disappointing loss. The kids fought. We came up short. We had too many turnovers, too many mistakes, and didn't get it done."

### Q: Can you talk about your response to Elijah [Moore's] penalty?

ML: "Just disappointed. It's not who we are. We've been a discipline team all year. I'm just disappointed that it happened."

## Q: From this point, looking forward to the spring, do you consider it an open quarterback competition?

ML: "We'll evaluate all that moving forward. Right now, we just have a bunch of disappointed guys in the locker room that all wanted to win. Again, we're going to get through this thing together. We're going to go on the road recruiting, and we're going to build this thing. I told them, 'This is not the end, it's the beginning. We're going to go battle, fight, and get through this thing together.'"

## Q: With the way these games have gone the past few years, did you emphasize with your guys to stay away from penalties like the ones tonight?

ML: "Absolutely. We talked about it. We had five penalties. We just wanted to play a clean game. Nothing after the whistles or before the game was going to help us win the ball game, but we talked about that."

## Q: After the interception, was there any consideration about going back to John Rhys [Plumlee]?

ML: "No. He just made a poor decision there. We felt like we could move the football there. Matt [Corral] did a good job of that. Once we put him in there, it was his. The game dictated that too."

### **RB Snoop Conner**

### Q: What was your reaction to the way that ended?

**SC:** "It was a tough loss. I feel like we had that one, but you've got to give credit to Mississippi State. That's a good team. They had to come out and do the things that we didn't do early on and that might have cost us."

## Q: When you look at this game from the big picture perspective, what could you guys have done better?

**SC:** "Stop the run early on, not get penalties, things like that."

### Q: What did the coaching staff say to you guy in the locker room?

**SC:** "He (Coach Luke) was proud of our effort and proud of the way that we played. Now, we just have to get ready for next year."

### **QB John Rhys Plumlee**

## Q: From your perspective, what did you see at the end of the play? What did you guys see from the sideline?

**JRP:** "I didn't really have a good look at it. I think everybody was excited that we scored a touchdown. I think when you're excited, and you make a big play, you celebrate a little. It just didn't go our way."

### Q: You got some really close games this season. How do you use that to prepare for next season?

**JRP:** "Absolutely, that's a big motivational point going into next season. I think this team is going to work harder than it's ever worked. I think a lot of people can tell that there is something going on in Oxford, Mississippi right now. I think next season, it will be put on display."

### Q: What were they doing defensively that gave the team trouble running the ball?

**JRP:** "They're good athletes. They've got a good defensive scheme. We still left a lot of opportunities on the field, and I think we could've done better."

### Q: Would you consider this an open quarterback competition?

**JP:** "Yes, me and Matt [Corral], we compete. Week in, week out and day in, day out. But when it comes to game time, we're really excited for each other for whatever happens. There at the end when, he went in and made some big plays, I was excited for him. I was in his corner, and he's in my corner when I'm in. We compete every day, so I see it as a competition."