



POSTGAME NOTES

Game Three • Mississippi State (3-0, 1-0 SEC) at Troy (1-2, 0-1 Sun Belt) • Saturday, Sept. 15, 2012 • Veterans Memorial Stadium

TEAM NOTABLES

- Mississippi State is 3-0 for the first time since 1999, becoming the sixth MSU squad since 1980 and the 20th team in school history to start out with three wins.
- For the first time in school history, Mississippi State had a running back with over 175 yards rushing and a wide receiver with over 175 yards receiving.
- The Maroon and White's 13-game non-conference winning streak is the longest since MSU set a school record with 18-straight wins against non-league foes from 1941-47. Under Dan Mullen, MSU has won 14 of 16 out of league games.
- After scoring zero points off five turnovers last week vs. Auburn, Mississippi State forced 20 points off four turnovers in the first half at Troy.
- The 43 points allowed by State through the first three games is the lowest total through the first three contests in the Dan Mullen era.
- Mississippi State's 12 turnovers forced tie Alabama and Kansas for the most in the country.
- The Bulldogs have won five-straight games for the first time since a six-game winning streak in 2010. Both are the only winning streaks of five games or more since the start of the 2001 season.
- After finishing today with a plus-four turnover margin, Mullen is now 19-1 when winning the turnover battle. The Bulldogs are now plus-11 this season in turnover margin.
- Head Coach Dan Mullen bettered his record to 23-0 when leading after three quarters, while the Bulldogs won their 27th-straight contest when holding a lead entering the final period.
- Mississippi State has outscored its opponents, 151-35, in the first half during its last seven wins.

PLAYER NOTABLES

- Hornung Award Watch List wide receiver Chad Bumphis hauled in a school-record tying three touchdown passes, joining Sammy Milner vs. Florida on Sept. 27, 1969. With the three scores, Bumphis tied Eric Moulds and Justin Jenkins for most touchdown receptions in school history (17).
- Bumphis also tallied a career-high 180 receiving yards on six catches, the eighth-highest receiving total in school history for a single game and the most by a MSU player since Jamayel Smith recorded 208 receiving yards in 2007 vs. Arkansas.
- Additionally, Bumphis tallied a touchdown reception in his third-straight games for the first time in his career, becoming the first MSU wide receiver since Tony Burks in 2006 to reel in a touchdown in three-straight games.
- Senior defensive back Darius Slay currently leads the FBS with four interceptions, finishing the game with two picks, six tackles, one pass breakup and his first career fumble recovery.
- Junior running back LaDarius Perkins rushed for a career-high 179 yards on 23 carries. The total tied for the 10th-highest output in school history. Perkins has rushed for four touchdowns in the first three games of 2012 after rushing for four total scores in his 21 previous games entering the season.
- Junior quarterback Tyler Russell became the first MSU signal caller since Kevin Fant in 2003 to throw for multiple touchdowns in three-straight games in the same season.
- With 13 tackles tonight, senior linebacker Cameron Lawrence now has double-digit tackles in five of his last seven games.
- With Deontae Skinner's forced fumble in the second quarter, the junior linebacker has now forced three fumbles in his last six games.
- Outland Trophy and Lombardi Award watch list member Gabe Jackson has started all 29 games of his career, marking the longest streak on the team.
- Redshirt freshman Justin Malone made his first career start for the Maroon and White at right guard.
- True freshman Devon Bell made his first career field goal, drilling a 37-yard field goal with 9:57 left in the first quarter.
- Sophomore linebacker Ferlando Bohanna recovered their first career fumble.
- Senior wide receiver Chris Smith hauled in a career-long 45-yard reception.

Troy vs Mississippi State Notes

- Troy captains were WR Justin Albert , LB Kanorris Davis, OL Jared Fleming and DB Brynden Trawick
- Troy won the toss and deferred to the second half
- RG Jimmie Arnold made his first start of the season, replacing Zach Johnson who did not play
- Today's game marked the first time an SEC opponent has ever visited Veterans Memorial Stadium in the 63-year history of the facility (opened 1950)
- A crowd of 29,013 saw the game, setting a Veterans Memorial Stadium attendance record. That's 3,013 more than saw the Trojans 2001 win in Starkville over Mississippi State (26,000).
- Running back Shawn Southward moved into third place on the Trojans' career rushing touchdown list as his two-touchdown effort gives him 28 for his career.
- The two-touchdown performance marked the seventh career multi-touchdown game of Southward's career.
- Running back Shawn Southward's two-touchdown performance gave him 162 career points, tying him for 10th place with Vince Green (1967-70).
- Wide receiver Eric Thomas' seven catches today gave him 92 on his career, moving him into 14th place on the Trojans' career leaderboard.
- For the third straight game, the Troy defense held their opponent scoreless on its opening drive. For the second straight game the opponent went 3-and-out.
- The Trojans did not give up a sack in the game. Thus far through three games this season, the Trojans have allowed just one sack on 145 pass attempts.
- Running back Shawn Southward rushed for 137 yards in the game, marking the fourth 100-yard rushing performance of his career. Southward broke the century mark twice as a freshman in 2009 and earlier this season at UAB.
- On Troy's final drive at the end of the first half, the Trojans successfully converted two fourth down conversions during a 74-yard drive. The Trojans last converted two fourth downs on one drive against Alcorn State on Sept. 13, 2008.
- Justin Albert's fourth-quarter 31-yard touchdown rush marked the first rushing touchdown of his career and his career-long run.
- Quarterback Corey Robinson's 343-yard game marked the 15th 300-yard performance of his career.
- Mississippi State entered as one of four teams in the country to give up 10 points or less in the first two games.
- The 572 yards of total offense by Troy were the most surrendered by an SEC defense all season. Mississippi State had given up 481 yards combined in its first two games.

On his defense allowing over 500 yards:

“Terrible,. Terrible, Terrible, Terrible.”

On Troy’s game atmosphere and his team’s effort:

“I tell you what, you know, give them credit. They played hard, what a great atmosphere they had. Their student body did a great job filling up the stadium and trying to give them home-field advantage, so their fanbase deserves that credit. I’m proud of our guys. They found a way to win the game. We made a lot of plays in the first half, we were kind of sloppy but we made plays. Didn’t play very well in the second half but when we needed to make a play, we made them. But the story of the day is that we didn’t play well on the defensive side of the ball at all. We’re very fortunate to play as poorly as we did and come out of here with a win.”

4th-and- 5 TD pass/QB play:

“We were going for a first down and it ended up being a touchdown so we’ll take it. It was right there on the edge and they had been scoring so fast... but we had a good play called and we felt we could get it. It’s hard to fault Tyler, but 11 of 26 is terrible. But I guess if you throw in at least seven drops in there, he would have had a huge day if we caught the ball some so we’ve got to fix that. It wasn’t just one guy, it was a host of character so we’ve got to fix that. ”

On defensive play:

“I’m going to sit with our staff and we’re going to get that fixed. I think we didn’t play very well, we got outcoached and we didn’t have a very good plan. They had guys open all night and huge running lanes. That’s a coaching issue and we’ll get that fixed.”

On offensive play:

“We put up 457 yards and dropped a ton of passes. I’m disappointed in the offense in that we were 4 of 14 on third down. There’s a lot of things we need to teach but it feels great to teach them after a win.”

On Troy’s first half play:

“I don’t think we stopped them much in the first half. Those turnovers really turned the tide for us and gave us the lead.”

Play of Darius Slay:

“I think Slay is coming into his own. Having a guy like Banks across from him really increases his level of play.”

Affect of this game on MSU’s mental state:

“I don’t think this will lead to a pat on the back. We had dropped passes, a couple of silly penalties and that’s the mental focus side of things. I think this will give us a sense of urgency coming back to practice this week.

Head Coach Larry Blakeney

Opening statement

"I was really truly proud of our football team. I was definitely proud of our people. I was definitely proud of our crowd. The energy that was in the stadium was awesome; as great as I've ever seen it, even in games we've won against those type people. We had plenty of chances to win this game and that makes it hurt even more. Our kids were really crushed. But, the thing we've got to do is learn how to beat Troy before we can beat anybody else. But, we are good enough to do just about anything. I'm not the least bit discouraged except for the turnovers, the explosive plays, and the timeouts. We squandered a timeout because we had 12 guys out there on a punt return. That always comes back to bite you late in a game, especially in a close game, especially when you are trying to come back from behind."

"I do like what I saw. These guys are playing hard for each other and it's encouraging, but we can't do all the things we did to ourselves and beat good teams."

"Mississippi State, credit to them, they hung in there and made big plays, and they got us a few times. But, I got the feeling in the middle stages of the third quarter there wasn't any way they could stop us on offense. I think we got them a little tired, we played fast, we made them line up and it was harder for them to sub and get calls in. We had great holes for Shawn Southward, Justin Albert, and even Deon Anthony."

"Corey was really good. I think there was one interception he'd like to have back. He's pretty darn good and I'm glad he is on our team. He will continue to furnish some firepower for us offensively. I'm really excited about this team. I'm hurt because we lost, but I am looking forward to getting back to work tomorrow."

On the Sun Belt Conference's play throughout the first three weeks of the 2012 season

"ULM's pretty good. They know what they're doing for sure. I think the Sun Belt's stronger than it's ever been team to team. A lot of good coaches and I think the Sun Belt is really growing in the right direction. We've got to keep growing ourselves, and try to find a way to stack a few wins together, and get some momentum."

On playing in-state teams and importance of Mississippi State coming to Troy

"Well in the state you don't have to worry about that. They don't come and they won't let us come. I'm not going to hold my breath for any of that stuff happens here. Credit Mississippi State, I know there have been some negotiations throughout the years. We've been over there twice. Should have been 2-0, won one and lost one, 11-8 and we threw six interceptions. Kudos to them, they're a good football team and I'm very appreciative to their administration for letting an SEC team come here."

On the last five minutes of the game

"If we would have been able to kick it deep, we've got they guy tackled and gotten a three-and-out or maybe a first down and three-and-out, I don't have any question we would have been out to win the game. Our kicker came through to keep the hope alive, but we couldn't get it done."

On Mississippi State's last touchdown catch by wide receiver Chad Bumphis late in the fourth quarter

"Well, you know, it's hard to say. The referee told me he did bobble it and re-controlled it and drug a toe. I got to trust that the man upstairs is correct."

On playing SEC teams at Veterans Memorial Stadium

"When you play SEC teams, you're going to run into some SEC players. I relish the opportunity to compete with them. We've been close a few times, won a game against (Mississippi) State and won a few in other leagues. The SEC is a very competitive league. We always relish the opportunity and we don't need to play five or six of them. It's always exciting and especially here. I was proud of our crowd. They hung in there with us for four quarters and the game was on the line until the end."