

CITRUS BOWL  
KENTUCKY VS PENN STATE

ORLANDO, Fla. -- Winning 10 games, beating Penn State on New Year's Day, and finishing in the Top 20 is no small deal for the Kentucky Wildcats.

So when Mark Stoops took a seat on the podium flanked by linebacker Josh Allen and running back Benny Snell Jr. after Tuesday's 27-24 victory in the Citrus Bowl, the coach understandably was beyond excited.

"It was extremely important to this team, to all of us, to come home with some hardware, to come home with a trophy," Stoops said.

Snell ran for 144 yards and two touchdowns to become Kentucky's career rushing leader and helped the 16th-ranked Wildcats end their best season in more than four decades on a winning note.

"There's no question that these guys changed the culture," Stoops said. "They've done so much and meant so much to this team and this program that it was very important to finish, to collect the trophy, win 10 games and win a game on New Year's Day. Believe me, we had a great belief that we didn't have to do anything special (to win), just be us."

Snell scored on runs of 2 and 12 yards in the second half, then carried for a couple of crucial first downs to help Kentucky (10-3) run out the clock after Penn State's Trace McSorley trimmed a 27-7 deficit to three points despite playing with a foot injury.

McSorley threw for 246 yards and two touchdowns, and the Nittany Lions' career passing and wins leader also rushed for a team-high 75 yards and one TD.

"The same thing that troubled us throughout the season troubled us here again today. Dropped balls, missed opportunities. That's really kind of the story of the game," said Penn State coach James Franklin, whose team started slowly on offense, missed one field goal and had another blocked.

Lynn Bowden Jr. scored on a 58-yard punt return for Kentucky. Allen, the Southeastern Conference defensive player of the year, had three of the Wildcats' six sacks.

"The three guys we knew we needed to stop were Bowden, Snell and Allen. All three of them showed up today," Franklin said.

"They've built their program around those guys, they built their season around those guys," Franklin added. "They made plays. That's what great players do."

Penn State (9-4) trailed 27-7 entering the fourth quarter, but McSorley's wasn't finished. His 1-yard TD run capped a 75-yard drive, and he followed with an 18-yard TD pass to Pat Friermuth to cut Kentucky's lead to six.

The Nittany Lions marched to the Kentucky 14 on their next possession and pulled within 27-24 with 4:12 left.

Thanks to Snell, a junior who already has declared for the NFL draft, McSorley didn't get the ball back until just one second was left on the clock.

Franklin declined to discuss specifics of McSorley's injury.

"We don't typically get into specifics. ... Obviously Trace was experiencing some discomfort. The doctors felt like he could go, but it really just came down to Trace on how Trace felt," Franklin said.

McSorley, who was to undergo further evaluation, said he hadn't received "definitive information" on whether his foot was broken.

"I've been through too much, the team has been through too much. ... They told me it was a matter of if I could deal with the discomfort," the quarterback said. "If I could do that, I was going to play."

HISTORIC SEASON

Kentucky finished with its first 10-win season since 1977 -- when the Wildcats went 10-1 -- and just the third time in program history. The school also did it in 1950. Snell, meanwhile, broke Sonny Collins' career rushing record on his 12-yard TD run that made it 27-7 late in the third quarter. Collins rushed for 3,835 yards from 1972-75.

THE TAKEAWAY

Kentucky: Facing a tradition-rich opponent in a New Year's bowl was significant for the Wildcats, who made the most of the opportunity. Along with the three sacks, Allen blocked a field goal to key a strong defensive effort, while the offense shrugged off a slow start to help the Wildcats pull away in the second half.

Penn State: The Nittany Lions fell short of their goal to finish with 10 wins in three consecutive seasons for the first time since 1980-82. Three of their four losses were by a total of eight points.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
UK	10	0	17	0	27
PSU	0	7	0	17	24

Scoring Summary -----

	UK	PSU
<b>FIRST QUARTER</b>		
UK FG 12:23		
Miles Butler 28 Yd Field Goal		
5 plays, 24 yards, 1:52	3	0
UK TD 0:45		
Lynn Bowden Jr. 58 Yd Punt Return (Miles Butler Kick)		
3 plays, -3 yards, 2:34	10	0
<b>SECOND QUARTER</b>	UK	PSU
PSU TD 13:56		
Nick Bowers 1 Yd pass from Trace McSorley (Jake Pinegar Kick)		
5 plays, 75 yards, 1:49	10	7
<b>THIRD QUARTER</b>	UK	PSU
UK TD 12:38		
Benny Snell Jr. 2 Yd Run (Miles Butler Kick)		
6 plays, 65 yards, 2:22	17	7
UK FG 3:48		
Miles Butler 28 Yd Field Goal		
11 plays, 65 yards, 6:05	20	7
UK TD 1:35		
Benny Snell Jr. 12 Yd Run (Miles Butler Kick)		
2 plays, 66 yards, 0:57	27	7
<b>FOURTH QUARTER</b>	UK	PSU
PSU TD 13:37		
Trace McSorley 1 Yd Run (Jake Pinegar Kick)		
10 plays, 75 yards, 2:58	27	14
PSU TD 9:00		
Pat Friermuth 18 Yd pass from Trace McSorley (Jake Pinegar Kick)		
6 plays, 60 yards, 2:24	27	21
PSU FG 4:12		
Jake Pinegar 32 Yd Field Goal		
12 plays, 61 yards, 3:34	27	24

Team Stats	UK	PSU
First Downs	16	22
Total Yards	297	410
Total Plays	57	75
Avg Gain Per Play	5.2	5.5
Net Yards Rushing	176	164
Rushes	42	40
Yards Per Rush	4.2	4.1
Net Yards Passing	121	246
Comp-Att	9-15	17-35
Yards Per Pass	8.1	7.0
Times Sacked	4	6
Yds Lost To Sacks	-14	-33
Interceptions	0	1
Punts	9	5
Punt Average	44.8	51.2
Penalties	3	3
Penalty Yards	27	24
Fumbles	1	1
Fumbles Lost	0	1
Possession	30:42	29:18

Individual Stats

RUSHING							
UK	Rush	Yds	Avg	Long	TD		
26 Benny Snell	26	144	5.5	32	2		
3 Terry Wilson	10	29	2.9	15	0		
10 Asim Rose	4	9	2.3	4	0		
1 Lynn Bowden	1	0	0.0	0	0		
11 Tavin Richardson	1	-6	-6.0	0	0		
PSU	Rush	Yds	Avg	Long	TD		
9 Trace McSorley	19	75	3.9	20	1		
24 Miles Sanders	13	51	3.9	13	0		
4 Ricky Slade	4	27	6.8	12	0		
1 KJ Hamler	1	11	11.0	11	0		
32 Journey Brown	1	4	4.0	4	0		
20 Johnathan Thomas	1	0	0.0	0	0		
14 Sean Clifford	1	-4	-4.0	0	0		
PASSING							
UK	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
3 Terry Wilson	9	15	121	8.1	0	0	127.8
PSU	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
9 Trace McSorley	17	33	246	7.5	2	1	128.1
14 Sean Clifford	0	2	0	0.0	0	0	0.0
RECEIVING							
UK	Rec	Yds	Avg	Long	TD		
1 Lynn Bowden	5	84	16.8	54	0		
87 C.J. Conrad	1	21	21.0	21	0		
11 Tavin Richardson	2	12	6.0	8	0		
33 David Bouvier	1	4	4.0	4	0		
PSU	Rec	Yds	Avg	Long	TD		
3 DeAndre Thompkins	4	74	18.5	24	0		
1 KJ Hamler	1	41	41.0	41	0		
87 Pat Friermuth	2	38	19.0	20	1		
83 Nick Bowers	3	32	10.7	25	1		
5 Jahan Dotson	1	24	24.0	24	0		
6 Justin Shorter	2	17	8.5	12	0		
84 Juwan Johnson	2	13	6.5	8	0		
24 Miles Sanders	2	7	3.5	10	0		