

WEEK Three
LOUISIANA AT MISSISSIPPI STATE

STARKVILLE, Miss. -- Nick Fitzgerald admitted that he wasn't on his 'A' game last weekend at Kansas State, which served as his first game of the season. The fifth-year senior changed up the script against Louisiana-Lafayette and hushed a few critics regarding his passing ability.

Hitting on several long throws and converting on third downs, Fitzgerald accounted for 350 yards of offense and six touchdowns to lead No. 16 Mississippi State to a 56-10 victory Saturday night.

Fitzgerald ran for 107 yards and four touchdowns, the second time he's had four rushing touchdowns in a game. Fitzgerald also completed 14 of 21 passes 243 yards and two touchdowns. It was a far cry from the performance he had last Saturday and he focused on remaining calmer in the pocket against Louisiana.

"It's huge," Fitzgerald said. "With our offensive line and their ability to move people off the ball, we know we're able to run the ball. We had some long third-down conversions that we hit and kept the drives going that end up as touchdowns. That is what you need and we kept our poised. The game plan was similar to last week as far as the throws, it was about settling down and making the throws and I brought the throws down a little bit."

Aeris Williams added 101 yards and a touchdown on the ground for Mississippi State (3-0). The Bulldogs totaled 607 yards of offense with 331 yards on the ground.

"We challenged the team after last week and we addressed those this week," Mississippi State coach Joe Moorhead. "Louisiana came out with a field goal and we responded well and dictated the game in all three phases. We took a positive step forward tonight but by no means are we there yet. But I like our improved execution and I think we're getting better every week."

As a team, Mississippi State produced six rushing touchdowns and did so for the first time since the 2000 season against Middle Tennessee State. Keith Mixon led the Bulldogs with four catches for 80 yards and one touchdown while Stephen Guidry added three catches for 57 yards and one touchdown.

Louisiana's Andrew Nunez was 21 of 29 for 224 yards with a touchdown and an interception. He threw a 4-yard scoring pass to Jamarcus Bradley in the fourth quarter.

Louisiana (1-1) got on the board first with a 38-yard field goal from Kyle Pfau early in the first quarter. But it was all Mississippi State the rest of the first half. The Bulldogs scored on all five first-half possessions.

"I thought Nick had some good reads and good throws on third downs and did it into tight coverage," Moorhead said. "To be honest, it wasn't a big amount of variation from what we did last week and we just saw things we could have done better on some of those overthrows. I was confident in Nick knocking some rust off and knew he would improve in game 2. Nick took the corrections from last week and we expected that. He took a step in the right direction."

Fitzgerald was 8 of 13 passing for 171 yards and a touchdown pass to Stephen Guidry in the opening half. The fifth-year senior also rushed for 81 yards and three scores in the half.

Louisiana was 0 of 5 on third down in the opening half and also failed on all three fourth-down conversion attempts. For the game, the Ragin' Cajuns converted just 4 of 13 on third down while Mississippi State was 8 of 11 on third down.

THE TAKEAWAY

Nick Fitzgerald bounced by from a slow start against Kansas State and dramatically improved his completion percentage. Fitzgerald was suspended in the opener and in his season debut last weekend at Kansas State. Fitzgerald was just 11 of 27 passing with one interception and two touchdowns.

But he was much more accurate in his second start of the season. He completed 14 of 21 for 243 yards and two touchdowns before exiting the game late in the third quarter. The Georgia player also notched his second straight 100-yard rushing game.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
ULL	3	0	0	7	10
MSST	14	21	14	7	56

Scoring Summary -----

Quarter	Time	Player	Yards	Result	ULL	MSST
FIRST QUARTER						
	11:48	K. Pfau	38 yd FG	GOOD		
			9 plays, 54 yards, 3:12		3	0
	5:06	N. Fitzgerald	run for 1 yd	for a TD, (J. Christmann KICK)		
			13 plays, 74 yards, 6:42		3	7
	0:10	N. Fitzgerald	run for 10 yds	for a TD, (J. Christmann KICK)		
			6 plays, 62 yards, 2:14		3	14
SECOND QUARTER						
	9:35	A. Williams	run for 3 yds	for a TD, (J. Christmann KICK)		
			7 plays, 67 yards, 4:00		3	21
	4:54	N. Fitzgerald	run for 2 yds	for a TD, (J. Christmann KICK)		
			5 plays, 48 yards, 2:16		3	28
	0:18	N. Fitzgerald	pass, to S. Guidry	for 39 yds for a TD, (J. Christmann KICK)		
			5 plays, 64 yards, 1:11		3	35
THIRD QUARTER						
	13:16	N. Fitzgerald	run for 26 yds	for a TD, (J. Christmann KICK)		
			4 plays, 65 yards, 1:44		3	42
	6:01	N. Fitzgerald	pass, to K. Mixon	for 25 yds for a TD, (J. Christmann KICK)		
			9 plays, 85 yards, 3:52		3	49
FOURTH QUARTER						
	7:31	A. Nunez	pass, to J. Bradley	for 4 yds for a TD, (K. Pfau KICK)		
			10 plays, 47 yards, 5:11		10	49
	4:22	K. Thompson	run for 16 yds	for a TD, (J. Christmann KICK)		
			7 plays, 75 yards, 3:09		10	56

Team Stats	ULL	MSST
First Downs	13	30
Total Yards	310	580
Total Plays	60	66
Avg Gain Per Play	5.2	8.8
Net Yards Rushing	65	304
Rushes	26	42
Yards Per Rush	2.5	7.2
Net Yards Passing	245	276
Comp-Att	23-34	16-24
Yards Per Pass	7.2	11.5
Times Sacked	2	2
Yds Lost To Sacks	-16	-12
Interceptions	1	1
Punts	4	1
Punt Average	0.0	0.0
Penalties	4	3
Penalty Yards	25	15
Fumbles	1	0
Fumbles Lost	0	0
Possession	27:01	30:49

Individual Stats

RUSHING

ULL	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Trey Ragas	7	49	7.0	0	15
Raymond Calais	1	9	9.0	0	9
Levi Lewis	2	9	4.5	0	8
Ryheem Malone	1	3	3.0	0	3
Jordan Wright	1	0	0.0	0	0
Elijah Mitchell	6	0	-0.2	0	1
Team	1	-1	-1.0	0	0
Lorenzo McCaskill	1	-2	-2.0	0	0
Andre Nunez	7	-4	-0.6	0	6
MSST	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Nick Fitzgerald	15	107	7.1	4	36
Aeris Williams	11	101	9.2	1	28
Keytaon Thompson	5	52	10.4	1	16
Kylin Hill	6	32	5.3	0	16
Robert Rivers	3	21	7.0	0	9
Nick Gibson	3	8	2.7	0	10
Dontavian Lee	2	4	2.0	0	2

PASSING

ULL	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Andre Nunez	21	29	224	7.7	1	1	141.8
Levi Lewis	2	5	21	4.2	0	0	75.3
MSST	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Nick Fitzgerald	14	21	243	11.6	2	0	195.3
Keytaon Thompson	2	3	33	11.0	0	1	92.4

RECEIVING

ULL	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Keenan Barnes	4	76	19.0	0	41
Ryheem Malone	7	69	9.9	0	19
Trey Ragas	3	46	15.3	0	30
Elijah Mitchell	1	24	24.0	0	24
Matt Barnes	2	12	6.0	0	9
Earnest Patterson	2	9	4.5	0	8
Raymond Calais	1	4	4.0	0	4
Jarrold Jackson	1	3	3.0	0	3
Ja'Marcus Bradley	2	2	1.0	1	4
MSST	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Keith Mixon	4	80	20.0	1	25
Stephen Guidry	3	57	19.0	1	39
Dedrick Thomas	2	53	26.5	0	44
Jamal Peters	1	44	44.0	0	44
Justin Johnson	1	25	25.0	0	25
Austin Williams	1	25	25.0	0	25
Brad Cumbest	1	21	21.0	0	21
Malik Dear	1	12	12.0	0	12
Nick Gibson	1	6	6.0	0	6
Kylin Hill	2	-3	-1.5	0	0