

**WEEK SIX
AUBURN AT MISSISSIPPI STATE**

STARKVILLE, Miss. -- Nick Fitzgerald ran for 195 yards and two touchdowns and Mississippi State's defense had another dominant performance in a 23-9 victory over No. 8 Auburn on Saturday night.

Mississippi State (4-2, 1-2 Southeastern Conference) came into the game among the nation's top 10 in scoring defense, and the Bulldogs were brilliant on that side of the ball once again. The Tigers hit on a couple big plays, but once they neared the end zone the Bulldogs clamped down.

Auburn (4-2, 1-2) settled for three field goals, which wasn't nearly enough.

Mississippi State's offense was a two-man show between Fitzgerald and Kylin Hill. The 6-foot-5, 230-pound Fitzgerald became the SEC's career leader for rushing yards for a quarterback with a 39-yard run in the fourth quarter. He passed former Florida star Tim Tebow for the top spot.

"He's a tough son of a gun," Mississippi State coach Joe Moorhead said. "You see him on a Sunday after a game and he's been through the battles. It's a testament to his leadership and a testament to his willingness to do what it takes for the team to be successful."

Hill finished with 126 yards on 23 carries, including several crucial runs in the second half. The Bulldogs finished with 349 yards rushing.

The Tigers were a mess on offense and a couple big mistakes nullified two touchdowns.

The first was when Jarrett Stidham overthrew a wide-open Darius Slayton for a sure six points. The second was when JaTarvious Whitlow ran for 41 yards but fumbled just before crossing the goalline. Mississippi State recovered in the end zone for a touchback.

"When you have opportunities, you have to seize the moment," Auburn coach Gus Malzahn said. "We had our hands on a ball or two in the end zone and just didn't make the plays. You've got to seize those moments."

Stidham finished 19 of 38 passing for 214 yards. The Tigers managed just 304 total yards.

The Bulldogs have struggled on offense over the past two weeks, scoring a combined 13 points in losses to Kentucky and Florida. They couldn't throw against the Tigers, but the Fitzgerald-Hill combo was enough to push them to the win.

"You make the right reads," Fitzgerald said. "The offense is designed to put one player in conflict. You can take the running back or take me. My job is to make him wrong."

After a tight first half, Mississippi State finally broke through for a touchdown when Fitzgerald barreled through Auburn's defensive line on a 1-yard dive in the second quarter. It was the Bulldogs' first touchdown in eight quarters -- dating to the second quarter of the team's 28-7 loss to Kentucky on Sept. 22 -- and gave them a 13-3 lead heading into halftime.

Fitzgerald added a 21-yard touchdown in the fourth quarter to seal the win.

THE TAKEAWAY

Auburn's offense never got going and it cost them an SEC victory. Stidham looked uncomfortable the entire night and big mistakes proved costly. The Tigers will likely take a plunge in the AP Top 25 on Sunday.

Mississippi State's offense started slow, but the Bulldogs were good enough on the ground to grind out a win. The defense continues to be excellent. Now the Bulldogs get a week off before heading to LSU for an interesting game in Baton Rouge.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
AUB	3	0	3	3	9
MSST	3	10	3	7	23

Scoring Summary -----

	AUB	MSST
FIRST QUARTER		
AUB FG 7:30		
Anders Carlson 47 Yd Field Goal	3	0
4 plays, 9 yards, 1:13		
MSST FG 2:37		
Jace Christmann 25 Yd Field Goal	3	3
9 plays, 67 yards, 4:53		
SECOND QUARTER		
MSST FG 10:13		
Jace Christmann 47 Yd Field Goal	3	6
7 plays, 39 yards, 2:31		
MSST TD 0:00		
Nick Fitzgerald 1 Yd Run (Jace Christmann Kick)	3	13
8 plays, 36 yards, 4:23		
THIRD QUARTER		
MSST FG 6:55		
Jace Christmann 32 Yd Field Goal	3	16
13 plays, 60 yards, 8:05		
AUB FG 5:45		
Anders Carlson 38 Yd Field Goal	6	16
6 plays, 55 yards, 1:10		
FOURTH QUARTER		
AUB FG 11:24		
Anders Carlson 24 Yd Field Goal	9	16
10 plays, 52 yards, 2:22		
MSST TD 2:02		
Nick Fitzgerald 21 Yd Run (Jace Christmann Kick)	9	23
8 plays, 70 yards, 4:31		

Team Stats	AUB	MSST
First Downs	15	22
Total Yards	304	418
Total Plays	59	74
Avg Gain Per Play	5.2	5.6
Net Yards Rushing	90	349
Rushes	21	57
Yards Per Rush	4.3	6.1
Net Yards Passing	214	69
Comp-Att	19-38	9-17
Yards Per Pass	5.6	4.1
Times Sacked	3	0
Yds Lost To Sacks	-27	0
Interceptions	0	1
Punts	3	3
Punt Average	47.0	40.0
Penalties	2	1
Penalty Yards	10	15
Fumbles	4	1
Fumbles Lost	2	0
Possession	18:07	41:53

Individual Stats

RUSHING

AUB	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
JaTarvious Whitlow	8	88	11.0	0	41
Anthony Schwartz	1	17	17.0	0	17
Shaun Shivers	1	8	8.0	0	8
Malik Willis	1	1	1.0	0	1
Asa Martin	1	0	0.0	0	0
Kam Martin	4	-2	-0.5	0	3
Jarrett Stidham	5	-22	-4.4	0	3

MSST	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Nick Fitzgerald	28	195	7.0	2	39
Kylin Hill	23	126	5.5	0	17
Aeris Williams	5	32	6.4	0	12
Team	1	-4	-4.0	0	0

PASSING

AUB	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Jarrett Stidham	19	38	214	5.6	0	0	27.9

MSST	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Nick Fitzgerald	9	17	69	4.1	0	1	52.8

RECEIVING

AUB	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Ryan Davis	8	91	11.4	0	42
Darius Slayton	4	58	14.5	0	24
John Shenker	1	26	26.0	0	26
Sal Cannella	2	16	8.0	0	11
Chandler Cox	1	10	10.0	0	10
Tucker Brown	1	9	9.0	0	9
JaTarvious Whitlow	1	3	3.0	0	3
Malik Miller	1	1	1.0	0	1

MSST	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Osirus Mitchell	1	23	23.0	0	23
Farrod Green	2	23	11.5	0	13
Justin Johnson	2	10	5.0	0	7
Dedrick Thomas	2	9	4.5	0	6
Aeris Williams	1	4	4.0	0	4
Austin Williams	1	0	0.0	0	0