

**WEEK TEN**  
**LA TECH AT MISS ST**

STARKVILLE, Miss. -- Mississippi State quarterback Nick Fitzgerald's third touchdown pass of the first quarter was a perfect throw, expertly dropped over three Louisiana Tech defenders and into the hands of a sprinting Kylin Hill.

It was just three weeks ago that the Bulldogs' offense was in complete disarray.

That's certainly not the case anymore.

Fitzgerald threw for 243 yards and four touchdowns to lead No. 21 Mississippi State over Louisiana Tech 45-3 on Saturday night. The Bulldogs are playing some of their best football of the season heading into next week's game against No. 1 Alabama, which is coming off a 29-0 win over LSU.

"It's very apparent I'm a lot more comfortable in the pocket, a lot more comfortable in the passing game," Fitzgerald said. "I really liked our last two games and the plan that we've had."

Mississippi State (6-3, No. 18 CFP) was never seriously challenged on Saturday, scoring 21 points in the first quarter of what quickly turned into a lopsided game. Fitzgerald completed 17 of 28 passes and threw his touchdowns to Stephen Guidry, Dedrick Thomas, Jesse Jackson and Hill.

"We needed to start fast and knock the belief out of these guys," Mississippi State coach Joe Moorhead said.

Fitzgerald also ran for 107 yards. Mississippi State has a 16-3 record during Fitzgerald's career when he breaks the 100-yard mark.

Louisiana Tech (6-3) was competitive in a loss to LSU this season, but its second game against a Southeastern Conference opponent didn't go well. J'Mar Smith completed 14 of 30 passes for 98 yards.

Mississippi State's offensive revival continued for a second straight game after an encouraging 28-13 win over Texas A&M last week. The Bulldogs finished with 532 total yards against Louisiana Tech.

Fitzgerald had plenty of time to throw most of the night and his four touchdown passes in the first half went for 11, 36, 23 and 10 yards. That helped give the Bulldogs a comfortable 31-3 halftime lead.

"I did not expect them to do to our defense what they did," Louisiana Tech coach Skip Holtz said. "That is a real testament to them, and the way they came out and played."

To put Fitzgerald's improvement in perspective, he threw just four touchdown passes over his first six starts of the season. On Saturday, he had four in less than 30 minutes of game action.

Mississippi State's defense was once again excellent, giving up just 238 total yards. The Bulldogs didn't give up a touchdown on Saturday and they've given up just nine offensive touchdowns all season, which leads the nation.

**THE TAKEAWAY**

Louisiana Tech was never a factor in this one. The offense occasionally moved the ball, but couldn't score touchdowns. The defense gave up too many big plays in the first half, especially in the passing game.

Mississippi State's offense has done a complete 180 over the past two weeks and Fitzgerald's arm has turned into an asset instead of a liability. Now the Bulldogs get their shot at top-ranked Alabama in Tuscaloosa next weekend and there's no doubt Mississippi State will have to play a near-perfect game to have a chance.

"Certainly, when you're heading on the road to play the No. 1 team in the country, you definitely want to have momentum going in your favor," Moorhead said.

**POLL IMPLICATIONS**

Mississippi State won't get a huge bump from beating a team from Conference USA, but the convincing nature of the victory should give the Bulldogs a small boost.

**STAT OF THE GAME**

Mississippi State's defense has allowed just two touchdowns over opponents' last 51 offensive possessions.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
LT	3	0	0	0	3
MSST	21	10	7	7	45

**Scoring Summary** -----

	LT	MSST
<b>FIRST QUARTER</b>		
MSST TD 12:38		
Stephen Guidry 11 Yd pass from Nick Fitzgerald (Jace Christmann Kick)	0	7
4 plays, 70 yards, 2:22		
MSST TD 7:02		
Dedrick Thomas 36 Yd pass from Nick Fitzgerald (Jace Christmann Kick)	0	14
8 plays, 59 yards, 4:08		
LT FG 3:15		
Bailey Hale 46 Yd Field Goal	3	14
9 plays, 35 yards, 3:41		
MSST TD 0:07		
Kylin Hill 23 Yd pass from Nick Fitzgerald (Jace Christmann Kick)	3	21
6 plays, 75 yards, 3:04		
<b>SECOND QUARTER</b>		
MSST FG 5:23		
Jace Christmann 47 Yd Field Goal	3	24
15 plays, 58 yards, 6:28		
MSST TD 0:30		
Jesse Jackson 10 Yd pass from Nick Fitzgerald (Jace Christmann Kick)	3	31
12 plays, 85 yards, 2:45		
<b>THIRD QUARTER</b>		
MSST TD 4:12		
Aeris Williams 29 Yd Run (Jace Christmann Kick)	3	38
2 plays, 37 yards, 0:44		
<b>FOURTH QUARTER</b>		
MSST TD 13:20		
Keytaon Thompson 19 Yd Run (Jace Christmann Kick)	3	45
2 plays, 81 yards, 0:39		

Team Stats	LT	MSST
First Downs	15	26
Total Yards	238	532
Total Plays	63	65
Avg Gain Per Play	3.8	8.2
Net Yards Rushing	140	289
Rushes	32	36
Yards Per Rush	4.4	8.0
Net Yards Passing	98	243
Comp-Att	14-31	17-29
Yards Per Pass	3.2	8.4
Times Sacked	1	3
Yds Lost To Sacks	-6	-18
Interceptions	1	0
Punts	7	3
Punt Average	39.6	40.7
Penalties	5	3
Penalty Yards	35	25
Fumbles	1	0
Fumbles Lost	0	0
Possession	29:49	30:11

**Individual Stats**

**RUSHING**

LT	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Kam McKnight	13	59	4.5	0	11
Justin Henderson	8	35	4.4	0	11
Jaquwis Dancy	3	24	8.0	0	12
DeAndre Marcus	3	15	5.0	0	6
J'Mar Smith	5	7	1.4	0	4

**MSST**

	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Nick Fitzgerald	18	107	5.9	0	33
Nick Gibson	2	64	32.0	0	62
Aeris Williams	2	42	21.0	1	29
Keytaon Thompson	3	42	14.0	1	21
Kylin Hill	5	20	4.0	0	8
Robert Rivers	2	10	5.0	0	5
Dontavian Lee	2	7	3.5	0	6
Jalen Mayden	1	2	2.0	0	2
Team	1	-5	-5.0	0	0

**PASSING**

LT	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
J'Mar Smith	14	30	98	3.3	0	0	74.1
Aaron Allen	0	1	0	0.0	0	1	-200.0

MSST	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Nick Fitzgerald	17	28	243	8.7	4	0	180.8
Keytaon Thompson	0	1	0	0.0	0	0	0.0

**RECEIVING**

LT	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Kam McKnight	2	32	16.0	0	25
Cee Jay Powell	4	22	5.5	0	10
Adrian Hardy	1	13	13.0	0	13
George Scott	1	13	13.0	0	13
Teddy Veal	2	8	4.0	0	6
Alfred Smith	1	6	6.0	0	6
Jake Norris	1	5	5.0	0	5
Jaquwis Dancy	2	-1	-0.5	0	0

MSST	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Dedrick Thomas	3	70	23.3	1	36
Jesse Jackson	3	44	14.7	1	24
Kylin Hill	5	38	7.6	1	23
Justin Johnson	1	37	37.0	0	37
Devonta Jason	1	17	17.0	0	17
Keith Mixon	1	13	13.0	0	13
Austin Williams	1	13	13.0	0	13
Stephen Guidry	1	11	11.0	1	11
Nick Gibson	1	0	0.0	0	0