

WEEK THREE
KENT ST at AUBURN

Whitlow, Nix lead No. 8 Auburn past Kent State, 55-16

AUBURN, Ala. -- The Auburn Tigers came out determined to run and run some more.

It was a pretty effective strategy.

JaTarvious Whitlow rushed for 135 yards and two touchdowns and Bo Nix ran and passed for scores to lead the eighth-ranked Tigers to a 55-16 victory over Kent State Saturday night. "We found our identity early in running the ball," Nix said. "We really moved them up front and we got in a rhythm running the ball. That really opened up certain outside throws, some short ones and got me in a little bit of a rhythm."

The Tigers (3-0) piled up 467 rushing yards -- and three 100-yard rushers -- in their final tune up before Southeastern Conference play. They also got some big plays running and passing from Nix, including a 49-yard flea flicker to a wide-open Eli Stove for a touchdown in the third quarter.

Then both offensive stars were able to head to the sideline after the Tigers avoided a pre-SEC letdown against the Golden Flashes (1-2).

Most of the damage was done with a running game that had struggled at times.

Nix had runs of 17 and 18 yards on consecutive plays to set up a touchdown on the opening drive and added a 1-yard score. He completed 12 of 16 passes for 161 yards for an offense that topped its combined points from the first two games.

"I really think the quarterback keeping it a few times early really opens things up the middle," Auburn coach Gus Malzahn said.

Backup quarterback Joey Gatewood ran for 102 yards and a pair of touchdowns. Shaun Shivers, Auburn's 5-foot-7, 179-pound running back, also gained 102 yards. It was the first time Auburn had three 100-yard rushers in a game since 1983 with a Bo Jackson-led group against Maryland.

The Golden Flashes closed to 14-10 early in the second quarter on Dustin Crum's 53-yard downfield strike to Isaiah McKoy. Auburn had gone six-plus quarters without giving up a TD before that, but it was Kent State's last big highlight for a while.

"We were executing. We were straining and we were fighting and finding ways to make those plays because our level of detail was really, really high," Kent State coach Sean Lewis said. "So we knew against this team that the margin for error was really low, so we were straining and the kids had a great attention to detail. I think over the course of the game that waned a little bit and the game got away from us."

Crum completed 15 of 24 passes for 198 yards and a touchdown, but was sacked five times. Marlon Davidson was responsible for half those sacks for the Tigers.

BROWN HURT

Auburn defensive tackle Derrick Brown sustained an unspecified injury in the first quarter. He watched the second half in street clothes. Asked if it appeared to be a serious injury, Malzahn said, "I don't think so." He didn't elaborate.

THE TAKEAWAY

Kent State: Started Crum at quarterback for the second straight game. Former starter and ex-Auburn signee Woody Barrett entered the game in the third quarter, down 38-10. Barrett did contribute a fourth-quarter touchdown pass. Lewis drew an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty in the first half.

Auburn: Took care of business ahead of the SEC opener. Diversified its running attack considerably, with Kam Martin, Shivers and quarterbacks Nix and Gatewood getting more involved. The defense allowed four straight third-down conversions on the opening drive but did get stronger.

SIDELINED

Auburn left tackle Prince Tega Wanogho was replaced in the starting lineup by Bailey Sharp. It was the senior's first career start. Malzahn said Wanogho was "a little banged up." Top receiver Seth Williams was held out with a shoulder injury.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
KENT	3	7	0	6	16
AUB	14	10	14	17	55

Scoring Summary -----

	KENT	AUB
FIRST QUARTER		
KENT FG 8:42 Matthew Trickett 21 Yd Field Goal		
17 plays, 71 yards, 6:18	3	0
AUB TD 5:47 JaTarvious Whitlow 3 Yd Run (Anders Carlson Kick)		7
8 plays, 69 yards, 2:55	3	7
AUB TD 0:11 Kam Martin 35 Yd Run (Anders Carlson Kick)		14
7 plays, 93 yards, 3:12	3	14
SECOND QUARTER		
KENT TD 10:47 Isaiah McKoy 53 Yd pass from Dustin Crum (Matthew Trickett Kick)		14
4 plays, 86 yards, 1:13	10	14
AUB TD 8:16 Bo Nix 1 Yd Run (Anders Carlson Kick)		21
7 plays, 60 yards, 2:31	10	21
AUB FG 0:00 Anders Carlson 45 Yd Field Goal		24
12 plays, 58 yards, 2:34	10	24
THIRD QUARTER		
AUB TD 12:02 JaTarvious Whitlow 16 Yd Run (Anders Carlson Kick)		31
8 plays, 67 yards, 2:58	10	31
AUB TD 5:59 Eli Stove 49 Yd pass from Bo Nix (Anders Carlson Kick)		38
5 plays, 77 yards, 2:11	10	38
FOURTH QUARTER		
AUB FG 14:55 Anders Carlson 37 Yd Field Goal		41
9 plays, 61 yards, 4:38	10	41
KENT TD 12:36 Kavious Price 15 Yd pass from Woody Barrett (Two-Point Pass Conversion Failed)		41
10 plays, 75 yards, 2:19	16	41
AUB TD 8:49 Joey Gatewood 2 Yd Run (Sage Ledbetter Kick)		48
7 plays, 69 yards, 3:47	16	48
AUB TD 2:27 Joey Gatewood 2 Yd Run (Sage Ledbetter Kick)		55
9 plays, 69 yards, 4:40	16	55

Team Stats	KENT	AUB
First Downs	19	32
Passes for First	10	7
Rushes for First	6	25
Penalties for First	3	0
Third Down Efficiency	9-18	8-13
Fourth Down Efficiency	0-0	1-1
Total Yards	321	633
Total Plays	68	79
Avg Gain Per Play	4.7	8.0
Net Yards Rushing	92	467
Rushes	32	62
Yards Per Rush	2.9	7.5
Net Yards Passing	229	166
Comp-Att	18-36	13-17
Yards Per Pass	6.4	9.8
Times Sacked	5	2
Yds Lost To Sacks	-20	-19
Interceptions	0	0
Punts	7	2
Punt Average	43.7	36.0
Penalties	5	6
Penalty Yards	53	59
Fumbles	0	2
Fumbles Lost	0	0
Time of Poss	26:37	33:27

Individual Stats

RUSHING

KENT ST	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
Dustin Crum	11	30	2.7	0	16
Woody Barrett	4	27	6.8	0	26
Joachim Bangda	4	14	3.5	0	6
Jo-El Shaw	6	9	1.5	0	6
Craig Elmore	1	5	5.0	0	5
Xavier Williams	5	4	0.8	0	3
Kavious Price	1	3	3.0	0	3

AUBURN

	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
JaTarvious Whitlow	17	135	7.9	2	39
Joey Gatewood	12	102	8.5	2	18
Shaun Shivers	12	102	8.5	0	27
Kam Martin	7	71	10.1	1	35
Bo Nix	7	21	3.0	1	18
Harold Joiner	4	19	4.8	0	6
Malik Miller	2	13	6.5	0	8
Cord Sandberg	1	4	4.0	0	4

PASSING

KENT ST	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Dustin Crum	15	24	198	8.3	1	0	80.8
Woody Barrett	3	11	31	2.8	1	0	15.8
Kavious Price	0	1	0	0.0	0	0	0.1

AUBURN

	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Bo Nix	12	16	161	10.1	1	0	82.5
Joey Gatewood	1	1	5	5.0	0	0	96.4

RECEIVING

KENT ST	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
Isaiah McKoy	4	85	21.3	1	53
Kavious Price	4	41	10.3	1	15
Adam Dulka	2	34	17.0	0	18
Jo-El Shaw	2	33	16.5	0	21
Antwan Dixon	4	30	7.5	0	15
Mike Carrigan	2	6	3.0	0	7

AUBURN

	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
Eli Stove	6	88	14.7	1	49
Sal Cannella	1	27	27.0	0	27
Jay Jay Wilson	3	21	7.0	0	9
Anthony Schwartz	1	13	13.0	0	13
Will Hastings	1	11	11.0	0	11
Harold Joiner	1	6	6.0	0	6