

Gabriel throws for 3 TDs, No. 22 UCF trounces UConn 56-21

ORLANDO, Fla. -- Dillon Gabriel threw for 281 yards and three touchdowns to help No. 22 UCF rebound from its first regular-season loss in nearly three years with a 56-21 rout of Connecticut to begin American Athletic Conference play Saturday night.

The two-time defending AAC champions improved to 29-2 since the start of 2017, bouncing back from a 35-34 loss at Pittsburgh that stopped a league- and school-record 25-game regular-season win streak.

Gabriel completed 11 of 16 passes without an interception for UCF, and he threw TD passes of 73, 16 and 13 yards to Gabriel Davis while UCF (4-1, 1-0) built a 42-0 halftime lead.

Darriel Mack Jr. replaced the true freshman at the start of the third quarter. It was his first action of the season after sitting out the first four games with a broken ankle, which had opened the door for Gabriel and Notre Dame transfer Brandon Wimbush to play early.

UConn (1-3, 0-1) fell to 0-7 in ACC openers and has lost 12 consecutive conference games.

Steven Krajewski came off the bench to throw for 273 yards, including second-half TD passes of 16 yards to Cameron Ross, 12 yards to Ardell Brown and 15 yards to Matt Drayton.

Mack, who was 9 of 13 for 97 yards and one TD, led the Knights in the AAC title game and Fiesta Bowl after two-time AAC offensive player of the year McKenzie Milton sustained a serious knee and leg injury in last year's regular-season finale.

THE TAKEAWAY

Total domination for UCF, as expected. UConn began the game with pair of runs that were stopped for no gain, and it was pretty much downhill from there. Starting quarterback Jack Zergiotis was intercepted on third down. Krajewski's first pass was intercepted, too, and returned 48 yards by UCF's Nevelle Clarke for a touchdown.

Zergiotis lost a fumble on the Huskies' second possession, and Krajewski lost one in the first half as well, when the redshirt freshman lost his grip on the ball trying to throw a pass. UCF was up 42-0 by the time UConn drove into field-goal range twice in the closing minutes of the first half, only to watch kick Clayton Harris miss from 40 and 52 yards.

POLL IMPLICATIONS

The Knights tumbled seven spots in the Top 25 after losing to Pitt. Beating a 44-point underdog that's dropped 12 straight conference games and 19 in a row to FBS opponents likely won't do much to improve their ranking this week.

Final	1	2	3	4	T		
CONN	0	0	7	14	21		
UCF	28	14	14	0	56		
Scoring Summary -----							
FIRST QUARTER			CONN	UCF			
UCF TD 12:44 Greg McCrae 1 Yd Run (Dylan Barnas Kick)							
3 plays, 35 yards, 0:43			0	7			
UCF TD 7:21 Gabriel Davis 73 Yd pass from Dillon Gabriel (Dylan Barnas Kick)							
1 play, 73 yards, 0:12			0	14			
UCF TD 3:17 Nevelle Clarke 48 Yd Interception Return (Dylan Barnas Kick)							
2 plays, -1 yard, 0:53			0	21			
UCF TD 1:06 Adrian Killins Jr. 75 Yd Run (Dylan Barnas Kick)							
1 play, 75 yards, 0:11			0	28			
SECOND QUARTER			CONN	UCF			
UCF TD 11:04 Gabriel Davis 16 Yd pass from Dillon Gabriel (Dylan Barnas Kick)							
8 plays, 97 yards, 2:26			0	35			
UCF TD 10:06 Gabriel Davis 13 Yd pass from Dillon Gabriel (Dylan Barnas Kick)							
2 plays, 14 yards, 0:19			0	42			
THIRD QUARTER			CONN	UCF			
UCF TD 12:37 Marlon Williams 21 Yd pass from Darriel Mack Jr. (Dylan Barnas Kick)							
10 plays, 76 yards, 2:23			0	49			
UCF TD 5:48 Bentavious Thompson 2 Yd Run (Daniel Obarski Kick)							
5 plays, 47 yards, 1:26			0	56			
CONN TD 1:30 Cameron Ross 16 Yd pass from Steven Krajewski (Clayton Harris Kick)							
8 plays, 77 yards, 4:18			7	56			
FOURTH QUARTER			CONN	UCF			
CONN TD 10:36 Ardell Brown 12 Yd pass from Steven Krajewski (Clayton Harris Kick)							
7 plays, 62 yards, 3:45			14	56			
CONN TD 0:19 Matt Drayton 15 Yd pass from Steven Krajewski (Clayton Harris Kick)							
7 plays, 62 yards, 1:44			21	56			
Team Stats			CONN	UCF			
First Downs			24	27			
Passes for First			13	13			
Rushes for First			9	12			
Penalties for First			2	2			
Third Down Efficiency			4-14	4-9			
Fourth Down Efficiency			1-2	0-3			
Total Yards			426	607			
Total Plays			76	67			
Avg Gain Per Play			5.6	9.1			
Net Yards Rushing			145	230			
Rushes			40	37			
Yards Per Rush			3.6	6.2			
Net Yards Passing			281	377			
Comp-Att			23-36	21-30			
Yards Per Pass			7.8	12.6			
Times Sacked			3	2			
Yds Lost To Sacks			-20	-22			
Interceptions			2	0			
Punts			5	2			
Punt Average			40.2	34.0			
Penalties			7	11			
Penalty Yards			60	90			
Fumbles			4	1			
Fumbles Lost			2	1			
Time of Poss			38:09	21:51			
Individual Stats							
RUSHING							
CONNECTICUT	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG		
Kevin Mensah	23	123	5.3	0	18		
Steven Krajewski	8	26	3.3	0	17		
Art Thompkins	6	1	0.2	0	6		
Jack Zergiotis	3	-5	-1.7	0	7		
UCF	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG		
Adrian Killins Jr.	3	77	25.7	1	75		
Bentavious Thompson	11	71	6.5	1	15		
Trillion Coles	7	47	6.7	0	16		
Darriel Mack Jr.	6	27	4.5	0	16		
Greg McCrae	4	25	6.3	1	9		
Otis Anderson	3	3	1.0	0	4		
Team	1	-3	-3.0	0	0		
Dillon Gabriel	2	-17	-8.5	0	0		
PASSING							
CONNECTICUT	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Steven Krajewski	22	33	273	8.3	3	1	
Jack Zergiotis	1	3	8	2.7	0	1	
UCF	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Dillon Gabriel	11	16	281	17.6	3	0	
Darriel Mack Jr.	9	13	97	7.5	1	0	
Brandon Wimbush	1	1	-1	-1.0	0	0	
RECEIVING							
CONNECTICUT	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG		
Cameron Ross	6	91	15.2	1	32		
Ardell Brown	4	55	13.8	1	22		
Jay Rose	3	34	11.3	0	21		
Matt Drayton	2	33	16.5	1	18		
Art Thompkins	5	27	5.4	0	13		
Cameron Hairston	2	24	12.0	0	13		
Jayce Medlock	1	17	17.0	0	17		
UCF	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG		
Gabriel Davis	5	119	23.8	3	73		
Jacob Harris	1	74	74.0	0	74		
Marlon Williams	3	62	20.7	1	32		
Otis Anderson	2	37	18.5	0	25		
Ryan O'Keefe	3	29	9.7	0	17		
Alex Harris	3	18	6.0	0	9		
Greg McCrae	1	14	14.0	0	14		
Jarrad Baker	1	10	10.0	0	10		
Bentavious Thompson	1	9	9.0	0	9		
Tre Nixon	1	5	5.0	0	5		