

WEEK ONE
KENT ST at ARIZONA ST

Freshman Daniels leads Arizona State to 30-7 win in opener

TEMPE, Ariz. -- Jayden Daniels passed for a pair of touchdowns and ran for another in his Arizona State debut, and the Sun Devils shut out the Kent State Golden Flashes for three quarters in a 30-7 win Thursday night in a season opener.

Daniels finished 15 of 24 for 284 yards and two touchdowns. Arizona State has won 21 straight home openers and got its first win over a Mid-American Conference opponent.

The Sun Devils held the Golden Flashes to 200 total yards -- 80 passing -- and recovered two fumbles. Kent State, which went with two quarterbacks in juniors Woody Barrett and Dustin Crum, lost its sixth straight opener.

Daniels, who played the entire game except for a few snaps at receiver, became the first true freshman to start the season opener in the modern era of Sun Devils football, which began in 1972 when freshmen became eligible to play.

"It's the first win. Just happy, proud moment," Daniels said. "At first I was nervous but actually after the game settled down, it was just having fun playing football all over again, Pop Warner, high school and everything else."

Daniels' first career touchdown pass was 8 yards to running back Eno Benjamin with 3:57 left in the first quarter. He hit Brandon Aiyuk on a 77-yard screen pass that went for another score in the third quarter.

"A little inconsistent, couple of bad reads when he should have ran the ball a couple of times," Sun Devils head coach Herm Edwards said. "But look, he's a freshman quarterback. For the most part, he did some good things too. The one thing I liked about the guy, no matter what was going on in the game, he was always composed."

Benjamin, who set an Arizona State single-season school record with 1,642 rushing yards last season -- a total that led the Pac-12 -- had 102 yards rushing on 22 carries.

Kent State, 2-10 last season, managed just one drive into the Arizona State half of the field in the first half. The Golden Flashes were stopped on downs at the Sun Devils 34 in the first quarter.

"The defense did a fabulous job. Special teams was flipping the field, then the defense held them to some field goals and those were big-time wins," Kent State head coach Sean Lewis said. "You need to seize those opportunities and it's the duty of the offense, when there's opportunity in those positions in the game to inject some life in the sideline and go get points and invigorate the bench."

Barrett found sophomore Isaiah McKoy for a 21-yard touchdown pass early in the fourth quarter for the Golden Flashes' only points.

A 10-0 halftime lead became 27-0 in the third quarter with Daniels' 1-yard touchdown run, the second of three Cristian Zendejas field goals and the highlight play of the night, the touchdown to Aiyuk, which was the longest pass play of his college career.

"It's basically give him a good ball and let him do what he's got to do," Daniels said. "That's all him."

Zendejas was the place-kicker in the absence of Brandon Ruiz, who dealt with a lower-body injury.

MORE FROM DANIELS' DEBUT

Daniels completed the first pass of his college career with 12:41 left in the first quarter, a 42-yard connection with Frank Darby. Then he took his first sack, for a 6-yard loss, moments later.

THE REPLACEMENTS

Zendejas, a walk-on redshirt sophomore, hit field goals from 35, 31 and 40 yards. The Sun Devils also had to turn to freshman Dohnovan West with No. 1 center Cade Cote unable to play.

"In the NFL they say 'Next man up'," Edwards said. "That's how it was at a lot of positions. Last night we found out the kicker was a little sore ... Then the center gets hurt earlier in the week and its 'OK, who's up?' That's the way it works around here."

THE TAKEAWAY

Kent State: Hanging with a solid Pac-12 team in 102-degree heat for a half was something to build off of, but the Golden Flashes couldn't sustain the effort on defense and were victimized on offense by dropped passes and a low third-down conversion rate.

Arizona State: Daniels looked poised for an 18-year-old true freshman leading a major program's offense, and was just one of many freshmen to take the field for ASU. Daniels will need to get rid of the ball a little faster before taking a sack, as he took five Thursday. But he showed he could hit open receivers on the run and provided an added dimension with his ability to run with the ball.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
KENT	0	0	0	7	7
ASU	10	0	17	3	30

Scoring Summary -----

	KENT	ASU
FIRST QUARTER		
ASU FG 10:26 Christian Zendejas 35 Yd Field Goal		3
7 plays, 41 yards, 3:04	0	
ASU TD 3:57 Eno Benjamin 8 Yd pass from Jayden Daniels (Christian Zendejas Kick)		10
5 plays, 34 yards, 2:19	0	
THIRD QUARTER		
ASU TD 11:17 Jayden Daniels 1 Yd Run (Christian Zendejas Kick)		17
9 plays, 70 yards, 3:41	0	
ASU FG 9:38 Christian Zendejas 31 Yd Field Goal		20
4 plays, 5 yards, 0:53	0	
ASU TD 3:53 Brandon Aiyuk 77 Yd pass from Jayden Daniels (Christian Zendejas Kick)		27
5 plays, 86 yards, 2:36	0	
FOURTH QUARTER		
KENT TD 12:29 Isaiah McKoy 21 Yd pass from Woody Barrett (Matthew Trickett Kick)		27
8 plays, 69 yards, 2:58	7	
ASU FG 8:03 Christian Zendejas 40 Yd Field Goal		30
9 plays, 53 yards, 4:26	7	

Team Stats	KENT	ASU
First Downs	11	18
Passes for First	5	9
Rushes for First	6	8
Penalties for First	0	1
Third Down Efficiency	5-18	8-16
Fourth Down Efficiency	1-2	0-0
Total Yards	200	455
Total Plays	64	70
Avg Gain Per Play	3.1	6.5
Net Yards Rushing	120	171
Rushes	40	46
Yards Per Rush	3.0	3.7
Net Yards Passing	80	284
Comp-Att	12-24	15-24
Yards Per Pass	3.3	11.8
Times Sacked	3	5
Yds Lost To Sacks	-25	-24
Interceptions	0	0
Punts	9	5
Punt Average	44.6	63.0
Penalties	5	6
Penalty Yards	42	50
Fumbles	6	1
Fumbles Lost	2	1
Time of Poss	25:37	34:23

Individual Stats

RUSHING					
	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
KENT ST					
Jo-El Shaw	16	67	4.2	0	15
Dustin Crum	6	24	4.0	0	26
Xavier Williams	4	13	3.3	0	7
Jamal Parker	1	11	11.0	0	11
Craig Elmore	3	5	1.7	0	3
Joachim Bangda	3	1	0.3	0	4
Woody Barrett	7	-1	-0.1	0	5
ARIZONA ST	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
Eno Benjamin	22	102	4.6	0	17
Isaiah Floyd	6	34	5.7	0	10
Ethan Long	3	21	7.0	0	16
Jayden Daniels	12	13	1.1	1	11
A.J. Carter	2	2	1.0	0	3

PASSING							
	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
KENT ST							
Woody Barrett	9	16	83	5.2	1	0	9.0
Dustin Crum	3	8	-3	-0.4	0	0	10.3
ARIZONA ST	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Jayden Daniels	15	24	284	11.8	2	0	83.4

RECEIVING					
	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
KENT ST					
Antwan Dixon	4	44	11.0	0	17
Isaiah McKoy	2	26	13.0	1	21
Joachim Bangda	1	5	5.0	0	5
Javaughn Williams	1	4	4.0	0	4
Keshunn Abram	1	3	3.0	0	3
Kavious Price	3	-2	-0.7	0	8
ARIZONA ST	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
Brandon Aiyuk	4	140	35.0	1	77
Frank Darby	3	53	17.7	0	42
Eno Benjamin	3	32	10.7	1	14
Kyle Williams	2	20	10.0	0	10
A.J. Carter	1	16	16.0	0	16
Ricky Pearsall	1	16	16.0	0	16
Tommy Hudson	1	7	7.0	0	7