

Football Dominates Bucknell in Season Opener, 56-12

PHILADELPHIA – Brandon Sanders caught nine passes for 115 yards, and Gavin Pringle returned an interception 36 yards for a touchdown, but Temple rolled to a 56-12 victory over the Bucknell football team on Saturday at Lincoln Financial Field in front of 26,378 fans.

Sanders's play and the energy displayed on the Bison sideline were highlights of head coach Dave Cecchini's debut. The Owls, Bucknell's first FBS opponent since 2015, used stout defensive play, particularly in the first quarter, and a banner game by quarterback Anthony Russo to take the first meeting between the once long-time rivals since 1970.

"I'm really proud of how we sustained our effort in the second half," Cecchini said. "We had some great drives on offense. We moved the football but couldn't finish. We made some three-and-outs on defense, and we did it playing a lot of third-team guys. Unfortunately, we gave up a couple of big plays, and that was young guys making mistakes. We can live with that." Temple (1-0) set the tone early, covering 75 yards in 12 plays to score a touchdown on its opening drive. By the end of the first quarter, the Owls held a 21-0 lead; they posted 229 yards of total offense and 12 first downs while limiting the Bison to a single first down and 22 passing yards.

Bucknell (0-1) chipped away at Temple's edge during the second quarter. After the Owls scored a touchdown on their first possession of that frame to make it a 28-0 game, the Bison put together the next two scoring drives.

Pringle's pick 6 gave the Bison new life with 8:13 on the clock. The freshman stepped in front of a Russo pass and dashed 36 yards up the sideline to the end zone; a failed extra point kept the score at 28-6.

Bucknell's defense forced a punt on Temple's next possession. John Chiarolanio then engineered an eight-play, 60-yard drive capped by a 37-yard Ethan Torres field goal; the highlight of that drive was a sprawling, one-handed grab by Sanders on a Chiarolanio deep ball that advanced the Bison 42 yards to the red zone.

The Owls ultimately went into the intermission up by a 35-9 margin after Russo found Re'Mahn Davis for a 51 yard touchdown with 1:02 remaining in the half. They held sizable advantages in total offense (427-66) and first downs (22-4) at that point in the contest.

Tarrin Earle came in at quarterback to start the second half and led Bucknell on a 13-play, 64-yard march down the field. The Bison ultimately settled for a 28-yard Torres field goal that made it a 35-12 game.

Temple went on to score three more touchdowns to bring the final score to 56-12. Russo set a new career high with his four touchdown throws and 409 yards on 32-for-41 passing despite exiting the game early in the fourth quarter. The Owls ended the game with advantages in total offense (695-211), first downs (32-16) and time of possession (30:31-29:29).

"With how well we performed in the second half, it was sad to see it go to 56-12," Cecchini said. "I felt like we competed a little bit better than the final score shows. On the whole, I'm really proud of them. We didn't just show glimpses of being a very good football team out there, we showed some drives. Overall, there's a lot to work with, a lot to go from, and we're going to have to do that if we're going to win at Sacred Heart."

For Bucknell, Logan Bitikofer (6-for-9, 39 yards), Chiarolanio (3-for-8, 69 yards) and Earle (11-for-25, 82 yards) all saw action at quarterback. In his return from an injury that cost him the 2018 campaign, Chad Freshnock led all Bison running backs with 30 rushing yards.

Conner Romango paced Bucknell with 12 tackles (nine solo), matching his career-high total set last year at then No. 14/15 Villanova. Rick Mottram also reached the double digits, making 10 tackles (eight solo). Cooper Kim and Joe Schiano each posted a tackle for a loss.

Temple was led by Davis, who totaled 60 rushing yards and 78 receiving yards; he also ran for one touchdown and caught one touchdown pass. Brandon Mack caught nine passes for 130 yards. The Owl defense registered five tackles for a loss of 27 yards and two sacks for a loss of 17 yards.

Bucknell next travels to Sacred Heart for a 6 p.m. game on Saturday, Sept. 7.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
BUCK	0	9	3	0	12
TEM	21	14	7	14	56

Scoring Summary

	BUCK	TEM
FIRST QUARTER		
TEM TD 11:41 Jadan Blue 8 Yd pass from Anthony Russo (Will Mobley Kick)		7
12 plays, 75 yards, 3:19	0	
TEM TD 5:14 Jager Gardner 11 Yd Run (Will Mobley Kick)		14
10 plays, 77 yards, 4:32	0	
TEM TD 2:01 Jager Gardner 1 Yd Run (Will Mobley Kick)		21
6 plays, 77 yards, 2:23	0	

	BUCK	TEM
SECOND QUARTER		
TEM TD 11:45 Isaiah Wright 12 Yd pass from Anthony Russo (Will Mobley Kick)		28
9 plays, 96 yards, 3:02	0	
BUCK TD 8:13 Gavin Pringle 36 Yd Interception Return (Ethan Torres PAT failed)	6	28
2 plays, 3 yards, 0:35		
BUCK FG 2:46 Ethan Torres 37 Yd Field Goal	9	28
8 plays, 60 yards, 2:50		
TEM TD 1:02 Re'Mahn Davis 51 Yd pass from Anthony Russo (Will Mobley Kick)		35
6 plays, 81 yards, 1:39	9	

	BUCK	TEM
THIRD QUARTER		
BUCK FG 9:48 Ethan Torres 28 Yd Field Goal	12	35
13 plays, 64 yards, 5:12		
TEM TD 6:11 Aaron Jarman 10 Yd pass from Anthony Russo (Will Mobley Kick)		42
8 plays, 71 yards, 3:29	12	

	BUCK	TEM
FOURTH QUARTER		
TEM TD 14:53 Re'Mahn Davis 7 Yd Run (Will Mobley Kick)		49
10 plays, 82 yards, 3:38	12	
TEM TD 5:19 Travon Williams 89 Yd pass from Todd Centeio (Will Mobley Kick)		56
3 plays, 95 yards, 1:08	12	

Team Stats	BUCK	TEM
First Downs	16	32
Passes for First	8	22
Rushes for First	5	8
Penalties for First	3	2
Third Down Efficiency	4-17	11-15
Fourth Down Efficiency	2-3	1-1
Total Yards	211	682
Total Plays	68	82
Avg Gain Per Play	3.1	8.3
Net Yards Rushing	21	188
Rushes	26	36
Yards Per Rush	0.8	5.2
Net Yards Passing	190	494
Comp-Att	20-42	36-46
Yards Per Pass	4.5	10.7
Times Sacked	0	2
Yds Lost To Sacks	0	-17
Interceptions	0	1
Punts	8	3
Punt Average	0.0	0.0
Penalties	3	6
Penalty Yards	25	63
Fumbles	1	1
Fumbles Lost	0	0
Time of Poss	29:29	30:31

Individual Stats

RUSHING	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
BUCKNELL					
Chad Freshnock	10	30	3.0	0	7
Marquis Carter	6	18	3.0	0	7
Tarrin Earle	2	8	4.0	0	5
Jared Cooper	4	6	1.5	0	2
Stefone Moore-Green	1	-4	-4.0	0	0
Logan Bitikofer	2	-17	-8.5	0	0
TEMPLE					
Re'Mahn Davis	9	60	6.7	1	11
Jager Gardner	10	54	5.4	2	11
Isaiah Wright	3	38	12.7	0	34
Kyle Dobbins	2	11	5.5	0	7
Anthony Russo	4	10	2.5	0	9
Shaun Bradley	3	9	3.0	0	7
Jeremy Jennings	1	6	6.0	0	6
Todd Centeio	3	2	0.7	0	3

PASSING	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
BUCKNELL							
Tarrin Earle	11	25	82	3.3	0	0	--
John Chiarolanio	3	8	69	8.6	0	0	--
Logan Bitikofer	6	9	39	4.3	0	0	--
TEMPLE							
Anthony Russo	32	41	409	10.0	4	1	94.6
Todd Centeio	4	5	98	19.6	1	0	86.6

RECEIVING	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
BUCKNELL					
Brandon Sanders	9	115	12.8	0	42
Dominic Lyles	3	27	9.0	0	10
Chad Freshnock	2	25	12.5	0	18
Jared Cooper	2	13	6.5	0	11
Jake Wilson	1	4	4.0	0	4
Steven Walier	2	4	2.0	0	3
John McGuire	1	2	2.0	0	2
TEMPLE					
Brandon Mack	9	130	14.4	0	24
Jadan Blue	10	117	11.7	1	37
Travon Williams	1	89	89.0	1	89
Re'Mahn Davis	2	78	39.0	1	51
Isaiah Wright	8	61	7.6	1	18
Jose Barbon	1	11	11.0	0	11
Aaron Jarman	1	10	10.0	1	10
Thomas Mattioni	1	5	5.0	0	5
Kyle Dobbins	1	3	3.0	0	3
David Martin-Robinson	1	2	2.0	0	2
Kadas Reams	1	1	1.0	0	1