



ARKANSAS

vs KENT STATE



6

SEPTEMBER 9, 2023

DONALD W. REYNOLDS RAZORBACK STADIUM

28

GAME NOTES

- » QB KJ Jefferson has thrown for at least two touchdowns in each of his last six games under center. Jefferson finished by completing 13-of-19 passes for 136 yards and two scores.
- » After accounting for two touchdowns vs. Kent State, QB KJ Jefferson is now responsible for 73 career touchdowns (53 passing and 20 rushing). He is four shy of the Arkansas career touchdown responsibility mark currently held by Matt Jones with 77 (53 passing and 24 rushing).
- » RB AJ Green made his first career start. He finished with career highs in attempts (15) and yards (82).
- » WR Andrew Armstrong has recorded at least one reception in 18 consecutive games dating back to his 2021 season at Texas A&M-Commerce.
- » After hauling in two touchdown receptions, WR Andrew Armstrong has caught multiple touchdown receptions in a game six times in his career.
- » The Razorback defense has returned an interception for a touchdown in consecutive weeks (vs. Western Carolina, vs. Kent State) for the first time since 2016 (at TCU, vs. Texas State).
- » Since the start of the 2020 season (Sam Pittman's first as head coach), the Razorbacks have totaled 40 interceptions in 38 games.
- » DL Trajan Jeffcoat has a career high with 1.5 sacks.
- » LB Antonio Grier recorded an interception (and returned it 25 yards for a TD) in his first career snap as a Razorback.
- » LB Jaheim Thomas posted a career high 12 tackles (three solo). Thomas finished with two tackles for loss, including tying his career high in sacks with 1.5 on the day. It was his second career game with double-digit tackles.
- » Arkansas defense allowed just 26 total rushing yards. It was the fewest by a Razorback opponent since against New Mexico State (11) in 2017.
- » The 19 points by Razorback opponent in the first two games are the fewest since allowing 10 for the first two games of 2011 (7 by Missouri State and 3 by New Mexico).
- » Arkansas is off to a 2-0 start for the third consecutive season under head coach Sam Pittman. The Hogs had not started 2-0 in three consecutive seasons since 1998-2000 under Houston Nutt.
- » The last time Arkansas' defense held somebody to less than 10 points was against UAPB on Oct. 23, 2021

WEATHER

83°

CLEAR, 8 MPH NE BREEZE

GAME INFO

CAPTAINS

Landon Jackson, Trajan Jeffcoat, KJ Jefferson, Brady Latham

COIN TOSS

Arkansas won the toss and deferred to the second half.

UNIFORMS

ARK - Red Helmet, Red Jersey, White Pants
KSU - White Helmet, White Jersey, Gold Pants

ATTENDANCE

73,173

ARK SCORING

TOUCHDOWN | 1Q | 1:12

Antonio Grier 25-yard interception return.

TOUCHDOWN | 2Q | 2:20

Andrew Armstrong 5-yard reception from KJ Jefferson

TOUCHDOWN | 3Q | 5:50

Rashod Dubinion 1-yard rush.

TOUCHDOWN | 4Q | 10:16

Andrew Armstrong 9-yard reception from KJ Jefferson

STARTERS

ARKANSAS

QB KJ JEFFERSON
 RB AJ GREEN
 WR ANDREW ARMSTRONG
 WR JAEDON WILSON
 WR ISAAC TESLAA
 TE LUKE HASZ
 LT ANDREW CHAMBLEE
 LG BRADY LATHAM
 C BEAUX LIMMER
 RG JOSHUA BRAUN
 RT PATRICK KUTAS

KENT STATE

DE LANDON JACKSON
 DT TAUREAN CARTER
 DT ERIC GREGORY
 DE TRAJAN JEFFCOAT
 LB JAHEIM THOMAS
 LB BRAD SPENCE
 CB DWIGHT MCGLOTHERN
 S AL WALCOTT
 S JAYDEN JOHNSON
 CB JAHEIM SINGLETARY
 NB LORANDO JOHNSON

QB MIKE ALAIMO
 RB GAVIN GARCIA
 WR JACK COULSON
 WR LUKE FLORIEA
 WR CHRISHON MCCRAY
 TE JUSTIN HOLMES
 LT JIMTO OBIDEGWU
 LG DUSTYN MORRELL
 C ANDREW PAGE
 RG NOLAN RUMLER
 RT CAM GOLDEN

DE STEPHEN DALY
 DT CJ WEST
 DT OLIVER BILLOTTE
 DE MATT HARMON
 LB KHALIB JOHNS
 LB DEVIN NICHOLSON
 LB CJ HARRIS
 FS BRYCE SHEPPERT
 SS JALANI WILLIAMS
 CB DJ MILLER
 CB CAPONE BLUE



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ARKANSAS QUOTES

Sam Pittman, Arkansas Head Coach

Opening statement:

"I give Kent State a lot of credit. With what happened to them last week and then to come back and play like they did, I want to give them a lot of credit. They had a nice game plan of trying to control the clock and letting it run down... We had nine drives all day... They were very physical.

"I thought they [outplayed us physically] in the first half especially, but congratulations to them. I told Coach [Kenny Burns] after the game the score was much closer than 28-6, I felt like, and that he did a wonderful job with his team.

"They will have a good football team if they continue to work through him. He's a good football coach. We have a lot to get better at, I'm sure you'll ask me about it."

"Right now, we're still trying to figure out who that other guy besides Jaheim Thomas is. I was frustrated at half because we couldn't get off the field."

"I can tell you the analytics say to go for it, the 'Samalytics' says don't. We went for it on 4th and 4, too, and we end up scoring."

"In the second half the play was better, but it still wasn't good."

KJ Jefferson, Arkansas QB

"It all comes down to focus, I mean that's the main thing, no excuses. We just gotta lock in to the details and execute the game plan and come out with an edge and play passion from the start. I mean we kinda did that second half play with an edge and a chip on our shoulder and an edge to want to go on and pull this thing out and get a victory but I feel like we gotta come out with an edge, a chip on our shoulder early on in the game to go on and set that tempo, set that standard.

Was that a little surprising that you had to run as much as you did?

"Not at all. I mean I would do anything for my team as long as we get the victory and put my teammates in the best position to win. So, I would do anything. Once Coach Enos called the play and I mean it was just up to me to execute and I put my trust in those guys to block. Andrew, the lineman, the running back, those guys can block, and I just executed so I wasn't surprised at all.

In the first touchdown pass to Andrew, can you describe that play from your perspective?

"Well the snap was kind of low, it caught me by surprise, the low snap. But first before the play started I looked at the down visual and it was 3rd down so I didn't want to fall on the ball. You know it's the red zone so I just grabbed it and rolled out. And I saw Andrew wide open so I just tried to give him a good catchable ball and he made a play. Originally he was supposed to be a little high/low route for Andrew and the running back so that was originally what it was supposed to be but we made it work. I mean we ended up still getting back to the high/low so we made it work.

On Arkansas' defense:

"The defense did an outstanding job. I mean they came out, they executed their game plan, they played as a unit, as a team on defense, they fly around the ball, get a lot of TFLs and a lot of guys run the ball. So, they came out, executed their game plan.

"I was extremely proud of our defense and as an upfront offense perspective, I'm just telling my guys like defense is doing their job. So, it's time for us to wake up and go on and play Arkansas standard football. So that's the main thing. I mean we gotta come out, get back to the drawing board, clean up some things that we had messed up on and keep moving forward. Have good days and good days.

Isaac had 3 catches today, a couple of them were really contested.

"Like you said, they both led to touchdowns. We needed a spark, needed somebody to make a play, and Isaac came through with a contested catch on the first one. We needed that to get the momentum flowing on our side. So just being able to just read the defense and then just Teslaa making a great contested catch and me putting the ball in the air that only he can catch.

"And the second pass I threw to Tes was contested as well. We felt like it was pass interference, because he basically tackled him, but I mean like just putting the ball anywhere near Tes. I mean he'll go make a play on it, so just having a guy like that, that you can put it around. He has an extreme catch radius, so just putting the ball around it and knowing that he'll make a play.



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ARKANSAS QUOTES

Andrew Armstrong, Arkansas WR

On the second TD

"Well you know I just got around him. You know we're working at practice. We're throwing the sideline, working sideline drills, with the wires and the guidance of Coach (Guiton). When he rolled out, threw on the corner, I got both feet down. You know I was just being aware of where I was on the field and not stepping out of bounds and securing the pass and letting the ball in.

Andrew, how about your perspective on first TD.

"Oh yeah. Like I said, I'm a reaction player so I just saw everyone flying to the left, so I just flew to the right and it just happened for me to become wide open. I threw my hands up so you could see me, and he just threw a good pass, and I caught it on the back of the end zone.

Jaheim Thomas, Arkansas LB

On the goal line stand

"That's what we pride ourselves on. They were down there and had the momentum and we knew we had to stop them.

"We were just excited, man, because we just had to make the play. It was four-for-one, we didn't want them in the endzone, didn't want them to score. Just being down there, being able to play our physical brand of football and stay motivated and stay ready for when we had to make the play."

Trajan Jeffcoat, Arkansas DE

On Arkansas' Defense:

"That was great physical defense. That's what we stand for. We came together as a defense and knew what the situation was. It was triumphant.

"We've got to play harder. We gotta grind out, keep going, and trust the system.

"Our whole model was to dominate. Dominate the line of scrimmage, dominate as a whole, and as a unit. We all had that on our minds. We knew what we had to do, so we did it."



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SEPTEMBER 2, 2023

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KENT STATE QUOTES

Kenni Burns, Kent State Head Coach

Opening Statement

"I just told the team, we are not going to look at the result, we are going to look at how we got to the result. We did a lot of things that were better today. [We] didn't win. Obviously, we want to win the game, that's why we play, but I'm encouraged. I'm encouraged with how we played."

"They had a tough week of practice, and they came out and they responded. You know when you look at it, it's really a tale of two halves. The first half, I think we had more plays than they did. They second half, they were obviously out on the field way more. When you are playing a good team like that, you have to control the clock and we didn't do that in the second half, and we have to learn from it."

"[This] is a lot to build off. This is a good football team, and we are figuring it out each game we play. Offensively, we obviously need to play better than we played today. The big turnover gave them six points. Defensively, I thought they played harder. They tackled way better, but we have to play better, and we know that as a football team. That's a group of guys that are truly giving me everything they got, and we just need to keep doing that and the wins will take care of themselves. I'm really proud of this group. I'm proud of them. Obviously, we want to win, but I'm proud with how they fought."

"After the first game, I told everyone 'we know who we are now,' and as coaches we've got to go fix their problems. We didn't tackle well the first game and I thought we tackled better today. We swarmed to the ball way better, getting 11 hats to the ball. I think that was the secret sauce. We didn't call different plays, it wasn't like we did something different there, but we just played harder honestly and did a better job tackling."

Second half it seemed like KJ Jefferson ran the ball a little bit more and had success, what'd you think of him and some of those runs

"In the first half we plus-oned him in the box and made it harder for them to run the ball with the running back. But they're good coaches, they figured it out and they started running [KJ Jefferson] more and using the running back as a lead blocker, which they took our numbers away from us."

"That's a good coaching job by them, we did a good job of getting them down when we could. But again when you look at the first half, they had three to four yard gains, in the second half they became five to six yard gains and now they're flipping the field every couple of plays."

Can you talk a little bit about coming into these two atmospheres (UCF and Arkansas) and being able to grow from both of those games

"Yeah, two great venues, sold out crowds. It's what our guys come to Kent State to play in these type of venues. We'll eventually win these games, I've been a part of this for a long time where we've won these games at Western Michigan and North Dakota State, and I'm telling you we're close, we're really, really close."

"They just got to keep learning how to start fast, which they did, accelerate in the middle, which we kind of did, and then finishing strong, and we're getting there. I thought our guys handled the environment well. There wasn't very many procedure penalties and that's typically what you see in an environment like this."