

http://www.nicholsonstudentmedia.com/sports/griffin-brothers-lead-ucf-knights-to-shutout-in-first-frost/article_97170bea-72ab-11e6-9a45-27f2d29901f4.html

<

PREVIOUS

Photos: UCF Knights shut out South Carolina State in First Frost

>

Griffin brothers lead UCF Knights to shutout in First Frost

Tim Briggs Updated Sep 15, 2016



Paige Wilson

UCF offensive lineman Wyatt Miller lifts quarterback Justin Holman in celebration after the first touchdown of the season on Saturday 3 at Bright House Networks Stadium. The Knights shut out South Carolina State 38-0.

It has been 639 days since UCF (1-0) last won a football game, but the drought has finally ended after an opening night 38-0 drubbing of South Carolina State.

“We’re going around saying we broke the curse,” defensive back Shaquill Griffin said.

The Knights received an excellent performance from their defense in their first shutout since a “War on I-4” stifling against USF on Nov. 27, 2014. A second half offensive explosion saw the team collect 462 yards on 91 plays in the game, which is the kind of efficiency that head coach Scott Frost expects from his offense on a weekly basis.

In the 2015 season opening loss against FIU, the Knights ran just 64 plays.

“I thought we played well,” Frost said. “We can play a lot better. Particularly in the first half offensively we missed some opportunities and at times we looked good and at times we shot ourselves in the foot. We’re going to keep the foot to the gas all the time. I want our kids to play aggressive and know their coaches are behind him to do that.”

Tonight that aggressive effort and mentality was led by Shaquem and Shaquill Griffin. The Griffin Bros. wreaked havoc on the Bulldogs all evening. Shaquem notched six tackles and a forced fumble and Shaquil tipped and snatched an impressive interception in the third quarter.

“Before the game we did our prayer in the end zone and he told me ‘I love you, I’m proud of you, we made it this far,’” Shaquem said. “And even when I made a mistake I knew I had ten [teammates] behind me, and that was the whole thing, just going fast and not worrying about anything else coming out.”

The pace of the UCF defense was blistering as defensive backs and linemen flew around the field collecting four tackles for loss. For the offense, the “UCFast” mantra waited until the second half to follow through and for the better part of the first half, it looked more like “UCFieldGoal.”

Kicker Matthew Wright was a perfect 4-for-4 on field goal tries, but UCF left more than a few points on the table, going just 1-for-9 on third down conversions in the first half.

“I was thrilled with Matt,” Frost said. We have to finish off those drives, and if you have a field goal kicker like that it saves points for you when you sputter on offense.”

The offense was stagnant at times due to Holman’s first half inaccuracy throwing the ball. He was 6-for-17 for 28 yards through the air in the first half, but recovered well to finish 14-for-28 with 193 yards and two passing touchdowns.

He also scampered in for a 10-yard rushing touchdown in the second quarter for UCF's first touchdown of the season, and it was then that things settled down. Coach Frost noted that before the game it looked like Holman had "drank 11 Red Bulls."

"It was like slow motion to see that student section. I let everything out and I said 'we're home,'" Holman said.

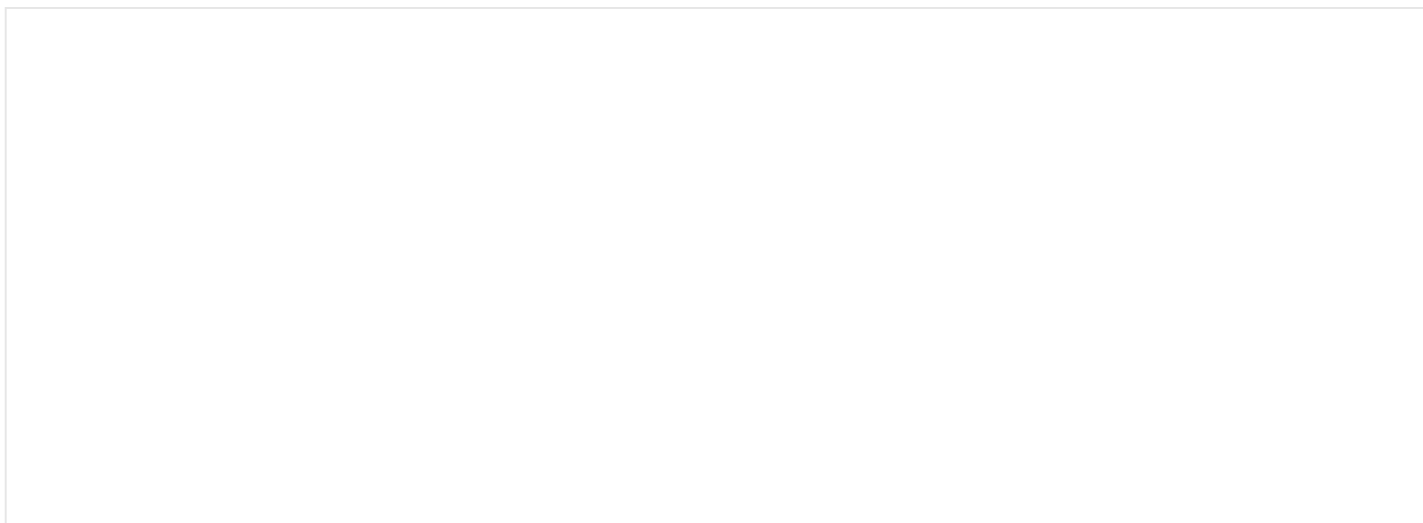
Once things slowed down for Holman, they sped up for the Knights. Second half touchdowns from Tristan Payton and Tre'Quan Smith, last season's American Conference Rookie of the Year, charged UCF to an expansive lead that wouldn't be challenged.

The wide receiver tandem combined for 99 receiving yards and two touchdowns.

The bulk of UCF's carries in the running game went to true freshman Jawon Hamilton as he got the start. Along with Hamilton, true freshman Adrian Killins displayed elusiveness on a few runs, and the pair showed why they were very highly sought after recruits.

"I think a lot of guys played in their first college football game tonight, and that's tough to play your first game ever as a college freshman," Frost said. "I remember my first game. I didn't even know which way I was going. We played four backs tonight and they all deserve that. Adrian and Jawon are going to be special players around here and I'm excited to watch their career."

The Knights travel to Michigan to play the Wolverines on Saturday at noon. The game will be nationally televised on ABC.





Photos: UCF Knights shut out South Carolina State in First Frost
Updated Sep 15, 2016



📷 +27

Photos: UCF spirit teams cheer to victory at First Frost
Sep 4, 2016