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No. 21 K-State Uses Big Second Half in 51-9 Win

MANHATTAN, Kan. (AP) -- All week, Kansas State coach [Bill Snyder](#) harped on his team about starting fast. He wanted the No. 22 Wildcats to put away Missouri State early in their season opener, and give the backups some valuable repetitions before next week's showdown with Miami.

Well, it was 9-6 at halftime Saturday night, and Snyder began thinking to himself, 'I'm going to go out and tell them I want a very slow start next week and see what happens.'

Maybe they'll start off the way they finished.

[Collin Klein](#) threw a pair of second-half touchdown passes, [John Hubert](#) ran 95 yards for a fourth-quarter score and the Wildcats piled up 42 unanswered points in 51-9 victory. The late binge made for a score that was widely expected, even though Kansas State struggled to get there.

'We talked about starting fast and we started real slow,' said wide receiver [Chris Harper](#), who caught one of the TD passes. 'A lot of guys were anxious. That's what it was.'

There were plenty of anxious people in the sellout crowd of 50,007, too, remembering the way last season's opener went. Kansas State needed a long TD pass from Klein in the waning minutes to beat Eastern Kentucky, another program from the Football Championship Subdivision.

'Starting off that way, I was like, 'Oh no, not again,' said [Anthony Cantele](#), who was perfect on three field-goal tries. 'The offense pulled it off again, just like I knew they would.'

Hubert finished with 152 yards rushing, [Braden Wilson](#) and [Daniel Sams](#) added touchdown runs, and [Tramaine Thompson](#) returned a punt 89 yards to complete the late scoring surge.

Missouri transfer Ashton Glaser was 22 of 44 for 257 yards for the Bears (0-1), who won just two games last season and had been going through some turmoil - special teams coach Bob Montgomery resigned just 10 days ago so to pursue a business opportunity.

'It's kind of disappointing the final score didn't show how we really played in the game,' Glaser said. 'We missed some opportunities, and we've got to take advantage of them next time.'

It was the 20th straight season-opening win for Snyder, who returned to the sideline four years ago after a brief retirement to rescue a once-proud program that had fallen back on hard times.

The Wildcats surprised just about everyone by winning 10 games last season.

Expectations are much higher this year - the Wildcats will get everyone's best shot - and that began with Missouri State, which had a healthy advantage in total offense most of the night.

The Bears were done in by a couple of major mistakes, though: Wide receiver Julian Burton fumbled just short of the goal line to waste a touchdown chance in the first quarter, and a dropped pass midway through the fourth wiped out another likely score.

'We couldn't get the ball in the end zone,' said Missouri State coach Terry Allen. 'I was really proud of them, and disappointed by the final score and how it all unraveled at the end. I told them that we can be a good football team. I believe that, and we just can't let the fourth quarter snowball have a reaction on us for the rest of the year.'

The Wildcats certainly didn't give the Hurricanes, who beat Boston College earlier in the day, any helpful video to prepare for next week's matchup in Manhattan.

They hardly blitzed on defense and ran a vanilla offense, and that was part of the reason the game was close into the second half. The run-first Klein didn't take off on a designed running play until midway through the second quarter, and

he finished with just 54 yards rushing.

'There was just a plethora of issues,' Snyder said. 'We played poorly the first half; we played better the second half. It was that simple.'

The Wildcats started to roll with 7:06 left in the third quarter, when Klein hit Thompson in the corner of the end zone for an 18-yard touchdown pass. Klein's running ability then set up Wilson's four-yard touchdown run a few minutes later to make it 23-9.

The Wildcats quickly got the ball back and Hubert scooted free for a 95-yard touchdown, the second-longest in school history. Gerald Hackney went 96 yards against Kansas on Nov. 2, 1948.

Klein added a short touchdown pass to [Chris Harper](#) before giving way to Sams, the freshman backup, and he scooted 46 yards for another touchdown. Thompson capped the scoring with his dynamic punt return in the closing minutes to make the score appear much more lopsided.

'We were able to get things correct,' Klein said. 'We were better at the end of the game than we were at the start, and that's what matters.'