



**TENNESSEE FOOTBALL POSTGAME NOTES**  
**Sept. 30, 2023 | Knoxville, Tenn. | Neyland Stadium**  
**FINAL SCORE: No. 21/19 Tennessee 41, South Carolina 20**



### General Notes

- Saturday's attendance at Neyland Stadium: 101,915
  - Tennessee has now sold out nine consecutive home games, a streak dating to Sept. 17, 2022, vs. Akron.
- Tennessee's all-time on-field record improved to 871-411-53 with Saturday's win (NCAA record: 860-411-53).
- Saturday marked the 42nd meeting between Tennessee and South Carolina and the 22nd matchup in Knoxville.
  - With the victory, Tennessee now owns a 29-11-2 on-field record against South Carolina, including a 19-3 mark at Neyland Stadium.
- Tennessee donned its Nike "Dark Mode" uniform with black helmets, black jerseys and black pants in Saturday's contest.
  - It marked just the second time in program history that the Vols wore all black uniforms (including helmets) after defeating Kentucky, 44-6, on Oct. 29 last year.
  - The Vols are 4-1 all-time when wearing black jerseys, including a 3-0 record vs. South Carolina.
- Head coach **Josh Heupel** earned his 50th career victory as a head coach with Saturday's win (28 at UCF, 22 at Tennessee).
- The Vols are 15-3 at home under Heupel, outscoring opponents 824-373. Tennessee has won 12 consecutive games in Neyland Stadium, a streak that dates to Nov. 20, 2021 vs. South Alabama.
  - Tennessee's 12-game home winning streak is its longest since winning 23 straight in Neyland Stadium from 1996-2000.
  - It's the fourth longest streak in the country behind Georgia (22), Michigan (19) and Utah (17).
- Saturday marked Tennessee's first home night game of the 2023 season. During Heupel's tenure as head coach, Tennessee is 6-1 in night games at Neyland, including five consecutive victories under the lights of its home venue.
- UT has won six straight SEC games in Neyland Stadium, which is its longest home SEC win streak since winning 15 straight SEC home games from 1996-99.
- The Vols have won four straight SEC home openers, and Heupel is 3-0 in SEC home openers having outscored opponents 124-73.

### Vol Captains/Coin Toss

- Tennessee's team captains for Saturday's game: DB **Jaylen McCollough**, WR **Bru McCoy**, LS **Matthew Salansky**, TE **Jacob Warren**
- South Carolina won the toss and elected to receive the opening kickoff. Tennessee defended the south goal.

### Team Offensive Notes

- **Josh Heupel**-led teams have scored 30 or more points in 58 games (33 at UCF, 25 at Tennessee) and own a 50-8 record when doing so.
- His teams have scored 40-plus points 38 times (18 times at Tennessee).
- Tennessee's rushing attack piled up 238 yards on the ground, marking UT's fourth game with more than 200 rushing yards this season. The Vols are averaging
  - RBs **Jaylen Wright**, **Jabari Small** and **Dylan Sampson** each tallied rushing scores in Saturday's win. Since 2022, the trio has scored in the same game on four occasions (9/1/22 vs. Ball State, 11/12/22 vs. Missouri, 11/26/22 at Vanderbilt, 9/30/23 vs. South Carolina).
- Tennessee led South Carolina 14-10 at the end of the first quarter. The Vols have outscored opponents 376-142 in the opening stanza under Heupel, including 45-19 this season.

## Individual Offensive Notes

- QB **Joe Milton III** completed 21-of-32 passes for 239 yards, one touchdown and two interceptions in the victory. He has a touchdown pass in nine consecutive games, tying the 10th-longest streak in program history.
- RB **Jaylen Wright** had a game-high 123 rushing yards on 16 carries Saturday night, marking his third 100-yard game of the season and fifth of his career.
  - Wright opened the scoring with a 42-yard rushing burst in the first quarter, his longest run of 2023 and first touchdown of the season.
- RB **Jabari Small** capped another first-quarter scoring drive with a two-yard rushing touchdown, his second of the season and 24th of his career.
  - The senior from Memphis is one score from breaking into the program's all-time top 10 for career rushing touchdowns.
- WR **Squirrel White** led all players with 104 receiving yards on nine catches. It was Tennessee's first 100-yard receiving game this season and the third of White's career.
  - Late in the first quarter, White hauled in Tennessee's second-longest pass play of the season with a 50-yard connection with Milton.
- Out of halftime, Tennessee produced a methodical, 12-play, 75-yard touchdown drive capped by **Jacob Warren's** second receiving score of the season with a six-yard grab in the back left corner of the end zone.
- RB **Dylan Sampson** finished with 91 all-purpose yards (49 rushing, 42 receiving), including a six-yard touchdown with 4:09 remaining in the contest for his sixth rushing score of the season.

## Team Defensive Notes

- The Vols finished the game with six sacks for a loss of 27 yards. It was Tennessee's most sacks in an SEC game since having seven vs. Mississippi State on Oct. 12, 2019.
- Tennessee's defense was especially effective in late downs, limiting the Gamecocks to 2-of-14 on third-down conversions and 2-of-5 on fourth down conversions.
  - South Carolina finished Saturday's game with 11 first downs, the fewest allowed by Tennessee since allowing 10 vs. Tennessee Tech on Sept. 18, 2021.

## Individual Defensive Notes

- With his second tackle of the game in the first quarter, senior LB **Aaron Beasley** recorded his 200th career tackle.
  - He finished Saturday's game with four total stops, moving his career total to 202.
- DB **Kamal Hadden** put the Vols ahead 24-10 late in the second quarter with his first career pick-six, returning an interception 28 yards to the south end zone.
  - Hadden was the first Vol to return an interception for a touchdown since Theo Jackson had a 55-yard pick-six vs. Vanderbilt on Nov. 27, 2021.
- DL **James Pearce Jr.** led the Vols with two sacks in the game, his second game with multiple sacks this season.
  - The sophomore edge rusher has five sacks and 7.0 TFLs in five games this year.

## Special Teams Notes

- P **Jackson Ross** booted three punts for 147 yards (49.0 avg), including a career-long 54 yarder and a 53-yarder that was downed inside the 10-yard line.

## Career Highs

The following players set or tied career highs in the respective statistical categories listed below:

### Offense

- **TE McCallan Castles**
  - 2 receptions (ties career-high)
- **WR Chas Nimrod**
  - 1 reception (first of career)
  - 10 receiving yards
- **RB Dylan Sampson**
  - 2 receptions
  - 42 receiving yards
- **TE Jacob Warren**
  - 1 receiving touchdown (ties career-high)
- **WR Squirrel White**
  - 9 receptions (ties career-high)

### Defense/Special Teams

- **DL Dominic Bailey**
  - 0.5 sacks (career-high)
  - 0.5 tackles for loss (ties career-high)
- **LB Arion Carter**
  - 1 tackle for loss (first of career)
- **DL Bryson Eason**
  - 4 tackles (ties career-high)
- **DL Kurrott Garland**
  - 1 sack (ties career-high)
- **DB Kamal Hadden**
  - 1 interception (ties career-high)
  - 28 interception return yards
- **DL Joshua Josephs**
  - 1 sack (ties career-high)
  - 1 tackle for loss (ties career-high)
- **DE James Pearce Jr.**
  - 3 tackles (ties career-high)
  - 2 sacks (ties career-high)
  - 2 tackles for loss (ties career-high)
- **DL Omari Thomas**
  - 1 sack (ties career-high)
- **P Jackson Ross**
  - 54-yard long punt
- **KR Cameron Seldon**
  - 1 kick return
  - 21 kick return yards