

Roberson's status for tonight's K-State bowl game uncertain

Quarterback says sexual encounter was consensual

TEMPE, Ariz. (AP) — Eli Roberson brought Kansas State unprecedented football success. Now it's uncertain whether the senior quarterback will be allowed to play in what would be his final collegiate game tonight against Ohio State in the Fiesta Bowl.

The days leading up to the game between the #7 Buckeyes and #8 Kansas State had been uneventful. The Wildcats, in their first BCS contest, were optimistic and fired up about their chances of beating the defending national champions. That all changed on Thursday when Roberson was accused of

sexually assaulting a 22-year-old woman at the team hotel.

Coach Bill Snyder will decide whether Roberson plays, and no one keeps tighter control over his program — and the information that goes public — than the Kansas State coach.

"I've known coach Snyder for several years now and I know he'll do the right thing," Kansas State athletic director Tim Weiser said.

There was no word yet this morning on what Snyder's decision will be, or if he has made one already.

Roberson, the Wildcats' career record holder for total offense, told

police that he had consensual sex with the woman but did not assault her. No charges were filed, but the woman said the incident occurred between 3 and 3:30 a.m. in a room other than Roberson's.

The team had an 11 p.m. curfew. The backup quarterback for the Kansas State Wildcats is freshman Dylan Meier.

Roberson brings a double threat of passing and running. His skills, combined with the running of all-American Darren Sproles, have made the Wildcats virtually unstoppable during a seven-game winning streak, when they've outscored opponents 271-60.

Despite missing 2 1/2 games with a wrist injury, Roberson needs 57 yards rushing to become the third player in NCAA Division I history to run for 1,000 yards and pass for 2,000 in the same season.

"I couldn't task for a better year in the way we came back and showed everybody that we still are a team, when a lot of people doubted us," he said earlier in the week.

Ohio State's rushing defense ranks first in the nation, but Chris Perry ran for 154 yards and two touchdowns in the Buckeyes' regular-season finale at Michigan five weeks ago.

Kansas State's double-barreled running attack presents even more problems than Michigan's did.

"That makes it exponentially more difficult, when the quarterback has to be accounted for," Ohio State coach Jim Tressel said. "That's a whole new world and you have to do a good job of maybe keeping them off balance."

Kansas State burned then-No. 1 and unbeaten Oklahoma for 519 yards in a stunning 35-7 victory in

the Big 12 championship game, earning the Wildcats their first Bowl Championship Series berth.

"It's going to be extremely difficult," Ohio State defensive tackle Tim Anderson said.

"This is probably one of the most high-powered offenses in the country. They obviously have a tremendous backfield with Sproles and Roberson, a receiving corps that's very good, and probably one of the best offensive lines we've seen all year, if not the best."

Sproles rushed for a school-record 1,948 yards this season, 1,021 in the last five games.

The Michigan debacle has motivated the Buckeyes' defense.

"Everybody on defense knows that's not how we normally play," Anderson said.

"I know nobody's happy with that performance. This is a way for

us to kind of come back and redeem ourselves."

The No. 8 Wildcats (11-3) were one-touchdown favorites over the No. 7 Buckeyes (10-2) before the Roberson situation came to light. Ohio State was a decided underdog in the Fiesta Bowl a year ago, but beat Miami 31-24 in double-overtime to win the national championship.

Tressel and his players say their practices leading up to this game have been at least as intense as they were a year ago, when the stakes were higher.

"I think there's no question they will give the same kind of effort they did last year," Tressel said. "We're going to have to play better than we did a year ago to be successful, but I'm convinced that emotionally they're going to be ready to go."



Dinkel getting ready

TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Colby High School junior Jared Dinkel readied a shot during basketball practice this week at the high school. The Eagles were getting ready for their game against St. Francis at home Saturday. The action starts at 4:45 p.m. with the girls' "C" team at the Colby Community Building, followed by the boys' junior varsity game at 6:15 at the high school gym, then the girls' junior varsity at the high school gym (as soon as the varsity girls' game is completed). The varsity girls' game starts at 6:30 p.m. at the community building, followed by boys' varsity. The "C" team start is a change of time.

Bowl roundup Southern Cal shows why it's No. 1

PASADENA, Calif. (AP) — Point made.

Top-ranked Southern California laid out its case for the national championship the best way it knew how — by dominating No. 4 Michigan with a 28-14 victory Thursday in the Rose Bowl.

Matt Leinart threw three touchdown passes and caught another to lead the Trojans past the Wolverines with a performance that should be enough to persuade voters to leave USC atop the poll.

The Associated Press' No. 1 team has never dropped in the rankings after winning its bowl, and it doesn't look as though it will happen this time, either.

While the Trojans are primed to win their first title in 25 years, they would have to share it.

Voters for the USA Today/ESPN coaches' poll are obligated to crown the winner of Sunday's Sugar Bowl between No. 2 LSU and No. 3 Oklahoma, playing in the BCS championship game.

Orange Bowl
#10 Miami 16, #9 Florida St. 14
MIAMI (AP) — Jarrett Payton ran for 131 yards, Jon Peattie kicked three field goals and Miami shut out Florida State in the second half.

It was Miami's fifth consecutive victory in the heated series — its longest winning streak since 1957. Florida State (10-3) lost consecutive bowl games for the first time since the 1979 and 1980 seasons.

Like several other memorable games in this storied rivalry, the outcome was decided by a kicker.

Not only did Peattie hit a career-long 51-yarder to give the Hurricanes (11-2) the lead in the third quarter, but Florida State's Xavier Beitia missed a 39-yarder with 5:30 to play. And yes, it was wide right.

It was the fifth time a Florida State kicker has missed a decisive kick in this rivalry.

Gator Bowl
#23 Maryland 41, #20 West Virginia 7
JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (AP) —

Scott McBrien threw for a career-high 381 yards, helping Maryland rout West Virginia in a rematch of a regular-season game that was almost as lopsided.

Playing against the team he left, McBrien threw for three scores and ran for another. Steve Suter returned a punt for a touchdown and made a highlight-reel catch to help the Terrapins (10-3) reach the 10-win mark for the third straight year under coach Ralph Friedgen.


Outback Bowl
#13 Iowa 37, #17 Florida 17
TAMPA, Fla. (AP) — Fred Russell ran for 150 yards and one touchdown, and Iowa dominated Florida for its first January bowl win since the 1959 Rose Bowl.















Nathan Chandler threw for one TD and ran for another, Nate Kaeding kicked three field goals and Iowa (10-3) scored on a blocked punt for the third time this season to finish with double-digit wins in consecutive years for the first time in school history.



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