



# 2003 LSU BASEBALL

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2003 LSU Baseball Notebook

Monday, June 9

Overall Record: 45-20-1

SOUTHEASTERN CONFERENCE CHAMPIONS

SEC TOURNAMENT RUNNERS-UP

BATON ROUGE REGIONAL CHAMPIONS

BATON ROUGE SUPER REGIONAL CHAMPIONS

Last week's results (2-1):

NCAA super regional, Alex Box Stadium, Baton Rouge

Friday—lost to Baylor, 4-2

Saturday—def. Baylor, 6-5

Sunday—def. Baylor, 20-5

This week's games (all times CDT):

NCAA College World Series, Omaha

Friday—Cal St. Fullerton, 1 p.m. or 6 p.m.

Sunday—South Carolina or Stanford, 2 p.m. or 6 p.m.

Notes from the week:

- LSU clinched its 12<sup>th</sup> berth in the College World Series since 1986 by defeating Baylor in three games in the super regional round. The Tigers had missed the CWS in both 2001 and 2002, marking the first time LSU had missed the trip to Omaha in consecutive years since making its first visit.
- A record crowd of 7,492 jammed into Alex Box Stadium to witness the super regional finale, the largest ACTUAL crowd to see the Tigers at home, breaking the previous mark of 7,460 vs. Mississippi St. in a May 9, 1992 doubleheader. The super regional drew an actual crowd of 22,076, easily the highest attendance ever for a three-game series.
- For the season, the Tigers drew a PAID attendance of 291,676, averaging 7,478 admissions for 39 home dates. The total attendance mark is a new LSU record, breaking the previous mark of 286,874 set in 2000, although the per-game figure falls just short of the record of 7,532 set in 2002.
- LSU completed its home slate at 30-8-1, the 12<sup>th</sup> time since 1985 that LSU has won 30 or more games in a season at The Box, and the first time since 1998 LSU has cracked the 30-win plateau at home.
- Coming into the weekend, 25 of 32 home teams had won their super regional series, and LSU proved this theory true again by winning for the second time on home turf. LSU is 4-7 all-time in super regional games since the format began in 1999, 4-1 at home and 1-6 on the road.



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- The Tigers again proved to be kings of the comeback from the brink of elimination, as for the seventh time, LSU won two consecutive games to advance. The Tigers have won regional championships in 1989, 1990, 1997, 1999 and 2002 when needing two wins on the final day to advance.
- LSU is now 29-13 all-time in NCAA Tournament elimination games, counting regional and super regional championship games but NOT including CWS title games. The Tigers are 20-2 in elimination games at home, losing only to Cal St. Fullerton in the 1992 South I Regional and to Rice in the 1995 South Regional.
- The Tigers are now 28-5 in NCAA Tournament play when the opportunity to advance for one team or the other is on the line. LSU is also 20-1 in those games at home, with the only loss coming to Virginia Commonwealth in the first game of the 2001 regional championship round.
- LSU also upped its record to 17-5 in "winner take all games", which are games where both teams have the chance to advance to the next round or win a championship.
- LSU enters the CWS at 99-35 all-time in NCAA Tournament play, and the Tigers' .739 winning percentage keeps them first all-time in that category. A win by LSU in the CWS this week will not only be the Tigers' 100<sup>th</sup> NCAA Tournament win, but its 30<sup>th</sup> win in Omaha, something that only six other schools have achieved.
- Combined with South Carolina's sweep of North Carolina in its super regional, the SEC will have a presence in Omaha for a record 11<sup>th</sup> consecutive year and 18<sup>th</sup> time in the last 19 years, with 1992 being the only year since 1985 that a SEC team has not made the CWS. However, this year is only the second year under the current format that more than one SEC team has made it to Omaha. Alabama went in 1999, LSU won the championship in 2000, Georgia and Tennessee made it in 2001 and South Carolina was runners-up last year.
- LSU continued its incredible run of winning when it scores in double figures in the post-season, as Sunday's super regional finale improved the Tigers to 46-1 in the NCAA Tournament and 62-2 all-time when the Tigers score 10 or more. The only post-season losses when LSU scored 10 or more runs were in the 1996 SEC Tournament to Kentucky (12-11) and in the 1999 Baton Rouge regional to East Carolina (11-10).
- LSU is now 22-0 this season when scoring 10 or more runs and is 34-1 under coach Smoke Laval when hitting double figures. The lone loss since the start of the 2002 season was a 12-11 loss at Houston on February 24, 2002.
- The 20 runs scored by LSU on Sunday were the most for LSU in a single post-season game since a 21-0 rout of UL-Monroe (coached at the time by current LSU coach Smoke Laval) in the 2000 Baton Rouge regional.
- LSU's 11-run sixth inning vs. Baylor is the Tigers' fifth 10-run inning in NCAA Tournament play. The Tigers' record is 18 in the seventh inning of the 1996 South II Regional championship game vs. Georgia Tech. The other double figure innings came in 1997 vs. South Alabama (2<sup>nd</sup> regional championship game, 11 runs, 4<sup>th</sup>), 1998 vs. Cal St. Fullerton (regional championship game, 10 runs, 4<sup>th</sup>) and 2000 vs. UL-Monroe (regional second round, 14 runs, 3<sup>rd</sup>).
- Baylor joined Auburn as teams to be victimized at Alex Box Stadium for an 11-run inning and 20 runs in a game this year. Auburn gave up 11 runs in the third inning of LSU's 20-3 rout on May 10. LSU also tallied 11 runs in the fourth inning of its 15-4 victory over Tennessee at home on April 27.
- How's this for a turnaround? The 20 runs scored by LSU on Sunday are four more runs than LSU scored in its previous seven super regional games COMBINED. Starting with the 2001 super regional vs. Tulane, LSU had scored 16 runs in seven super regional games, through the second game of the Baylor series on Saturday. LSU had scored in double figures in only one of its first 11 super regional games, a 14-8 victory over UCLA in the second game of the 2000 series.



- The highlight of Sunday's outburst was the grand slam by sophomore 1B Clay Harris. For Harris, it is his second career grand slam, joining the pinch-hit slam he hit on February 17, 2002 vs. Mercer in his first career at-bat in an LSU uniform. Surprisingly, it took LSU 81 home runs to hit its first grand slam of 2003 after hitting three in 65 home runs in 2002.
- The grand slam was LSU's first in a post-season game since the late Wally Pontiff hit a bases-loaded shot against Florida in the 2000 SEC Tournament championship game, and the Tigers' first in the NCAA tournament since Brad Cresse hit one on May 24, 1998 vs. Cal St. Fullerton.
- Harris, a first team All-SEC selection, is 7-for-26 (.269) has made the most of his hits in the NCAA Tournament, as four of them have been home runs. Harris also hit a leadoff home run in the eighth inning of Saturday's game that tied the score at 5-5, and he is now tied for the team lead with Ryan Patterson with 15 home runs on the year.
- Harris may be the Tigers' biggest bopper in the post-season, but the hottest hitter has been freshman catcher Matt Liuzza. Liuzza went 8-for-13 (.615) in the super regional, and is now batting an even .500 (12-for-24) in the NCAA Tournament.
- Liuzza did not have a three-hit game through the end of the regional, but he made up for that by going 3-for-4 in the first super regional game vs. Baylor, and after a 2-for-4 game on Saturday, followed that up by going 3-for-5 on Sunday.
- The stellar post-season for junior 3B Ivan Naccarata continues. The Canadian collected his biggest hit of the season on Saturday, as his solo home run gave LSU the lead for good to even the super regional with Baylor. Naccarata is batting .425 (17-for-40) with 12 runs scored in the Tigers' 10 post-season games and is hitting .429 in the NCAA Tournament with nine runs scored, a pair of home runs and six RBI.
- For junior SS Aaron Hill, the super regional represented his last games in Alex Box Stadium, as he was the Toronto Blue Jays' first round selection (13<sup>th</sup> overall) in Tuesday's Major League Baseball draft. But Hill didn't disappoint the home crowd, lacing an RBI single in the ninth inning on Sunday in his final at-bat in front of the home fans.
- Hill, who was 5-for-15 in the super regional, collected his biggest hit of the series on Saturday, when his two-run home run gave the Tigers a 3-0 lead in the first inning.
- Sophomore RF Jon Zeringue went 0-for-7 in the Tigers' first two super regional games, but broke out of his slump in the biggest possible way on Sunday with a three-run home run in the second inning that tied the game at 3-3, and LSU would never be headed after scoring a fourth run in the inning.
- Zeringue finished Sunday's game with career highs in runs scored and RBI (4 each), and is hitting a team high .378 over the second half of the season, raising his batting average to .333 after being mired at .204 in the first month of the campaign.
- Like Zeringue, sophomore LF Bruce Sprowl failed to get a hit in the first two games of the super regional, but Sprowl more than made up for it on Sunday by going 3-for-4 with a season high three runs scored.
- Everyone got into the act on Sunday, as sophomore DH Quinn Stewart made the most of a pinch-hitting role, lacing an RBI double and eventually scoring a run. Stewart had not played at all in the NCAA tournament prior to the cameo role, as he suffered a sprained left ankle in warm-ups prior to LSU's first NCAA regional game against Northeastern.
- Freshman RHP Justin Meier was named a Freshman All-American on Thursday by Collegiate Baseball, and then followed that up on Sunday by pitching a complete game to lead the Tigers to the College World Series. Meier, who had not pitched since losing to Alabama in the SEC tournament championship game on May 25, went the distance for the second time this year, joining a 5-1 win over South Carolina on April 4. Meier is 8-3 with a 2.83 ERA on the year, the best among LSU starting pitchers.



- The other LSU pitcher to be named a Freshman All-American, Jason Determann, had himself yet another outstanding relief outing on Saturday. The redshirt southpaw pitched three scoreless innings and retired the final five batters he faced, including a comebacker to the mound by Baylor's top hitter, David Murphy, to end the game. Determann is now 7-0 with a 2.67 ERA on the year and has walked just seven batters in 60 2/3 innings, and in the post-season, he is 3-0 with a 3.45 ERA, giving up one walk in 15 1/3 innings.
- Although he didn't get the win in his final Alex Box Stadium appearance, senior RHP Bo Pettit turned in a gutsy performance on Saturday, going six innings despite having a painful blister on the middle finger of his pitching hand. Pettit reached two personal milestones in the game, recording his 300<sup>th</sup> career strikeout to become only the ninth LSU pitcher to achieve that feat, and also notching his 300<sup>th</sup> inning of work on the mound.
- Junior RHP Nate Bumstead suffered a tough loss on Friday in the super regional opener, as a lack of run support doomed the second team All-SEC selection. It marked the first time this year that Bumstead went more than three innings in a start and took a loss, as the Las Vegas native went eight innings and gave up four runs on nine hits. In Bumstead's previous losses, he gave up eight runs in 2 2/3 innings to Kansas on February 16, and seven runs in 2/3 of an inning vs. Auburn on May 11.
- When LSU scored in the sixth inning of Friday's game, it broke a 28 2/3 innings scoreless drought for the Tigers in super regional play, dating back to the fifth inning of the third game of the 2001 series vs. Tulane. Through the end of Friday's game, LSU scored a total of two runs in a span of 38 2/3 innings in super regional action.

#### On deck for this week:

- LSU arrives in Omaha on Wednesday night, and after a workout at Rosenblatt Stadium on Thursday, the Tigers get down to business with a Friday matchup with Cal St. Fullerton. The Titans won their super regional in three games over Arizona St. after sweeping through its regional, as coach George Horton has Fullerton in the CWS for the third time in his seven-year tenure after replacing legendary coach Augie Garrido.
- The only meeting between LSU and Fullerton in Omaha is one the Tigers would rather forget, as the Titans scored 11 times in the first inning and went on to a 20-6 rout of LSU in a 1994 elimination game, marking the only time that LSU has gone two-and-out in Omaha. Since that game, LSU has allowed 20 or more runs just twice—losing 28-2 to Alabama in 1997 and 23-10 to Ole Miss in 2001.
- LSU and Fullerton last met in the 1998 South II regional in Baton Rouge, and after the Titans took a 7-0 lead in the first meeting between the teams, the Tigers rallied for a 13-11 victory. The next day, a 10-run fourth inning removed any doubt in the championship game as LSU breezed to a 14-3 win and a trip to the CWS.
- Fullerton is the only team other than LSU to win a regional in Baton Rouge, although the Titans didn't have to play the Tigers in either regional final. In 1992, Fullerton ousted the Tigers in a semifinal match, 11-0, before defeating Ohio St. in the title game, and in 1995, the Titans took out NCAA newcomer Rice in the final after the Owls had spanked LSU twice.
- The teams first met in the 1987 South II Regional final at the University of New Orleans, with LSU taking a 7-3 victory to advance to its second straight CWS. The teams met again in the 1988 Busch Challenge at the Superdome, with the Titans winning that one, 7-2.
- LSU will take on either South Carolina or Stanford in its second game. The Tigers, of course, are familiar with the Gamecocks from the SEC, and LSU won two of three from Carolina in April at Baton Rouge. The Tigers hold a 19-9-1 all-time edge over USC, but the Gamecocks won two of



three in the 2002 SEC Tournament in the teams' most recent post-season meeting. LSU won SEC Tournament meetings in 1992 and 1998.

- All four meetings between LSU and Stanford have come in Omaha, with the most recent in the 2000 national championship game. In that game, Stanford led 5-2 heading into the bottom of the eighth, but home runs by Blair Barbier and Jeremy Witten in the eighth tied the game at 5-5, and LSU won the game in the bottom of the ninth on Brad Cresse's base hit that scored Ryan Theriot with the championship run. The Tigers beat the Cardinal twice (10-5 and 13-9) in 1997, with Stanford winning 6-5 in 10 innings in 1987 on Paul Carey's grand slam off of LSU's Ben McDonald.



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