



2003 LSU BASEBALL

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2003 LSU Baseball Notebook

Thursday, May 1

Overall Record: 31-14-1

Southeastern Conference Record: 15-5-1 (West division and overall leader)

Results so far this week:

Tuesday—lost to Tulane at Superdome, New Orleans, 9-5

Wednesday—def. New Orleans, 7-2

This weekend's games (all times CDT):

Friday—at Mississippi St., 6:30 p.m.

Saturday—at Mississippi St., 3 p.m. (live TV on SEC-TV, Fox Sports Net South and Southwest)

Sunday—at Mississippi St., 1:30 p.m. (live TV on Jumbo Sports Network)

Notes from the midweek games:

- Tuesday's game with Tulane in the Louisiana Superdome fell short of breaking the NCAA paid attendance record of 27,673 set last year, but the paid crowd of 18,319 that came to this year's game was the largest paid attendance for an NCAA baseball game this season.
- Tuesday's game marked the 10th consecutive LSU-Tulane game in the New Orleans area to draw a five-figure crowd. Eight of the 10 games to draw that crowd were held at Zephyr Field in suburban Metairie, including all three games of the 2001 super regional, which drew more than 11,000 for each game.
- Wednesday's win over UNO improved LSU to 8-0 this season against in-state competition at Alex Box Stadium and 10-3 overall vs. Louisiana teams. All three losses to in-state foes came in the New Orleans area—two at Zephyr Field (to Tulane on March 11 and to UNO on March 25), and the loss on Tuesday at the Superdome.
- LSU also extended its overall home winning streak eight games, with the last home loss coming on April 11 to Ole Miss. LSU is now 22-6-1 at home this season.
- The back-to-back games on Tuesday and Wednesday were LSU's first back-to-back midweek games since April 17-18, 2001, when the Tigers split a home-and-home series with Northwestern St.
- Despite the loss, a bright spot from the Tulane game came from true freshman LHP Greg Smith, who turned in one of his best relief outings of the year. Smith, the 2002 Louisiana prep player of the year at Alexandria Senior High, pitched a career high 4 1/3 in-



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nings and closed the game, giving up just one earned run and three hits. He gave up two unearned runs in the fifth inning, the ninth and 10th unearned runs Smith has given up this year.

- When he came into the game to relieve Jake Tompkins, Smith also continued his uncanny knack for leaving inherited runners stranded by leaving two runners on base. None of the 10 inherited runners Smith has had to deal with this year have scored.
- On Wednesday night, the Tigers got another strong pitching performance, this one by redshirt freshman LHP Jason Determann, who showed surprising durability by going eight innings and giving up just one earned run and eight hits while striking out six and walking none. Prior to Wednesday, Determann had never gone more than 5 1/3 innings in any outing.
- Determann, who threw 76 of his 108 pitches for strikes against UNO, improved to 4-0 on the year and lowered his ERA to 2.23 in 36 1/3 innings. Determann has walked just five batters and struck out 34 this year, and in April, he was 3-0 with a 2.25 ERA, allowing just one walk in 24 innings.
- LSU scored three of its runs against Tulane in the fifth inning on back-to-back home runs by Ryan Patterson and Jon Zeringue. The back-to-back homers are just the second such occurrence in 2003, but ironically, Patterson was involved in the first, teaming with Matt Liuzza for back-to-back home runs in the fourth inning on March 21 at Georgia.
- Speaking of Patterson, the Tigers' sophomore OF/DH hasn't cooled off from the week that earned him SEC Player of the Week laurels. Patterson was 1-for-2 with a sacrifice fly on Wednesday night vs. UNO, and he finished the month of April tied with Zeringue as the Tigers' leading hitter in the month at .400. Patterson drove in 22 runs, scored 20 runs and posted a .707 slugging percentage in 18 games in April, leaving his season batting average at .358, third behind the averages of Clay Harris (.384) and Aaron Hill (.365).
- As for Zeringue, he extended his hitting steak to eight games on Wednesday night, and in the Tigers' last 10 outings, Zeringue is batting .425 (17-for-40) with 11 runs scored. Zeringue is batting .374 in the second half of the Tigers' season, raising his season batting average to a solid .324 after being mired at .204 before returning to the starting lineup on March 22.
- The longest hitting streak heading into the weekend still belongs to sophomore 2B Blake Gill, whose single in the fifth inning extended his streak to 12 games. Gill is batting .388 (19-for-49) during the streak and has his average at .314 on the year after being as low as .238 after a 2-for-29 slump in late February.
- Other Tigers who extended lengthy hitting streaks this week were sophomore OF Bruce Sprowl (9 games) and freshman catcher Matt Liuzza (7 games).
- Unfortunately, Tuesday's game continued the struggles of senior RHP Jake Tompkins, who gave up eight hits and six runs (five earned) in 3 2/3 innings in falling to 1-5 on the year, while seeing his ERA rise to 5.05.

Looking ahead to this weekend at Mississippi State:

- LSU will enter Starkville with a 2 ½-game lead over Auburn and a 3-game lead over Mississippi St. in the SEC West division and overall standings. LSU hasn't won the SEC since 1997, losing leads in the month of May in both 1998 and 2001. The Tigers play host to Auburn next weekend before closing the season with Arkansas in Fayetteville.



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- The Tigers have won their last two series in Starkville, winning two of three in 1999 and 2001. But LSU's last game in Starkville was forgettable, as the Tigers were limited to one hit and lost, 13-0, after winning the first two games of that series, 9-1 and 7-1.
- Of course, MSU was coached by Pat McMahon on LSU's last two trips to State, and the Tigers have won only two series from a Ron Polk-coached State team at Dudy Noble Field, in 1986 and again in 1993. The Tigers also won a game in the 1995 SEC West Division tournament at Starkville, but are still only 54-104-1 all-time at State.
- Polk, in his second year of his second stint at State, is the only active coach in the SEC to have a winning record against LSU (other than first-year Vanderbilt coach Tim Corbin), holding a 62-46 mark against the Tigers, including a 4-3 mark as Georgia's coach in 2001 and 2002.
- One player on each team had tremendous success in last year's rain-shortened two-game series in Baton Rouge. For LSU, it was shortstop Aaron Hill, who was 6-for-9 with a home run and five RBI, while State first baseman Matthew Brinson, who was 4-for-6 with three doubles and a three-run home run for six RBI in the Bulldogs' 15-4 rout in the opener.
- In the opener, State ace Paul Maholm pitched a complete game, while LSU starter Bo Pettit struggled, giving up eight hits and six runs (five earned) in three innings as LSU used four pitchers.
- The second game, though, marked two important milestones for LSU in 2002. The first was that the 7-3 win turned around the Tigers season, as they went 28-10 over the final two months of the year after starting 16-12. The second was the conversion of pitcher Jake Tompkins, who came in to close for Lane Mestepey and pitched 2 2/3 innings of hitless relief to earn his first save. Tompkins would go on to earn second team All-SEC honors.



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