



2003 LSU BASEBALL

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2003 LSU Baseball Notebook

Monday, May 19

Overall Record: 37-18-1

Southeastern Conference Record: 20-9-1 (Conference Champions)

Last week's results (2-1):

Friday—won at Arkansas, 11-3

Saturday—lost at Arkansas, 6-5 in 10 innings

Sunday—won at Arkansas, 6-2

This week's games (all times CDT):

SEC TOURNAMENT AT HOOVER METROPOLITAN STADIUM, BIRMINGHAM

Wednesday—Arkansas, 8 p.m. (live TV on Comcast Sports Southeast)

Thursday—Mississippi St. or Ole Miss, 1 p.m. or 8 p.m. (live TV on Comcast Sports Southeast)

Friday-Sunday—TBA (live TV on SEC-TV, Fox Sports Net South and Southwest)

Championship game is Sunday at 3 p.m.

NO POSITION PLAYER OF THE WEEK NOMINEE

PITCHER OF THE WEEK NOMINEE: Fr. RHP Justin Meier (6-0, 205, Windmere, Fla.—West Orange High)

Notes on Meier:

- Meier turned in the most impressive outing of his stellar first season in Sunday's regular season finale, scattering five hits over eight shutout innings to help LSU clinch its season ending series at Arkansas.
- Meier forced the Razorbacks into 15 fly ball outs and seven ground ball outs as he walked only one and struck out two to improve to 7-2 on the year and lower his season ERA to 2.80.
- The eight-inning outing marked only the second time in his 12 starts this year that he has gone at least eight innings. Meier threw a complete game in a 5-1 victory over South Carolina on April 4.
- Meier enters the SEC Tournament on a two-game winning streak, marking the first time he has won consecutive conference starts since he moved into the weekend rotation following the season-ending elbow injury to Brian Wilson at the end of March.
- Meier began the season by winning three mid-week games, and after taking two no decisions, he earned the save on March 30 in the series finale at Alabama.
- The key for Meier has been run support. When LSU scores five or more runs when Meier starts,



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the Tigers are 6-0, but only 1-5 when they fail to reach five runs with Meier on the hill.

Meier's line this week:

Day	Opponent (Result)	Dec.	W-L	ERA	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
Sun.	at Arkansas (W)	W	1-0	0.00	8.0	5	0	0	1	2
SEC TOTALS (9 G-7 GS)			4-2	3.61	52.1	57	21	21	14	33
SEASON TOTALS (14 G-12 GS)			7-2	2.70	80.0	76	29	24	21	54

Notes on the week:

- With Friday's win over Arkansas in the series opener, LSU clinched the Southeastern Conference championship, the Tigers' first league crown since 1997. LSU has won eight conference championships since 1986 and 13 overall since the league began baseball in 1933, tied with Alabama for the all-time record.
- LSU coach Smoke Laval led the Tigers to the SEC championship in his second year at the Tiger helm, becoming the second coach in three years to win a league title in his second year at that school, as Ron Polk won the 2001 title in his second year at Georgia.
- Laval is the sixth LSU coach to guide the Tigers to the SEC championship. Of course, Hall of Fame coach Skip Bertman has a majority of LSU's conference crowns, leading the Tigers to seven (1986, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1996, 1997) in a 12-year run. Harry Rabenhorst claimed two titles (1939, 1946), while Red Swanson (1943), Mel Didier (1961) and Jim Smith (1975) won one each.
- Sunday's win in the regular season finale gave LSU its 20th SEC win, the Tigers' first 20-win season in conference play since the 1998 team went 21-9. This year marks the Tigers' seventh season of 20 or more SEC wins, with the LSU record coming with a 22-5 mark in 1986. Of the season in which LSU has won 20 or more conference games, only two (1994 and 1998) did not result in league championships.
- Ironically, LSU is the last team to win a conference championship with fewer than 20 league wins, as the 1993 Tigers won the title at 18-8-1. Since the league went to a 30-game schedule in 1996, 20 games has been the minimum needed to win the title.
- LSU continued its winning ways against the SEC West, as the Tigers' 9-6 mark in the division marked the 11th time in the 12 years since the conference returned to division play that LSU has posted a winning record within the division. The lone exception was a 10-11 mark in 1995, when SEC West tournament games counted in the standings.
- The Tigers were one of three SEC teams with a winning conference record on the road, joining Auburn and Mississippi St. at 9-6.
- LSU won its first series at Arkansas since 1997, as Friday's win broke a four-game losing streak and a 1-6 skein at Baum Stadium. LSU is now 35-15 all-time against Arkansas and 10-8 in games played at Fayetteville.
- The Tigers finished the year 9-6 on the road in conference play, and for the fourth consecutive year, won a majority of their conference road series. Since May of 2000, LSU is the only team to win at least one series at each of the other 11 conference road playing sites. LSU is a respectable 35-24 on the road in the SEC since the start of the 2000 season.
- The Tigers' offensive assault on the SEC continued with Friday's game, as LSU put up 11 runs against Arkansas, giving the Tigers 12 conference games of 10 or more runs this season. In 30 league games, LSU outscored the opposition by 101 runs (243-142) and hit .329 compared to .267 for the opposition.
- During the regular season, LSU won all 18 games in which it scored 10 or more runs, and under



Laval, LSU is 31-1 when scoring 10 or more runs and has won 27 consecutive games dating back to a 12-11 loss last February 24 at Houston.

- The Tigers' leading hitter in the Arkansas series was, fittingly, sophomore RF Jon Zeringue, who has been LSU's hottest hitter in the second half of the regular season. Zeringue batted .462 (6-for-13) in the three-game series this past weekend, going 3-for-5 on Saturday and 2-for-3 on Sunday.
- In the second half of the regular season, Zeringue led the Tigers by batting .411 (44-for-107) with 19 RBI and 27 runs scored. Zeringue, who was hitting .204 when he returned to the starting lineup on March 22, enters the SEC Tournament with a .346 season average, 11 home runs and a .599 slugging percentage, along with a .383 batting average with runners in scoring position.
- In SEC games, Zeringue batted .375 with eight home runs.
- Sophomore OF/DH Ryan Patterson, who is currently on an eight-game hitting streak, has swung the Tigers' hottest bat entering the post-season. Patterson, who is batting .400 (14-for-35) during the streak, leads LSU with 13 home runs on the year and is hitting a solid .417 (25-for-60) with runners in scoring position. Patterson also leads LSU in slugging percentage at .633 while his .362 batting average is second on the club.
- Patterson batted an even .400 (6-for-15) with a home run in the Arkansas series, giving him a .391 final average in conference games. Patterson also hit .421 with RISP in conference play while hitting .409 with 12 RBI with two out.
- Junior SS Aaron Hill was 5-for-13 (.385) in the Arkansas series, but more importantly, showed his power stroke by hitting a pair of home runs in the final two games of the series. Like Patterson, Hill begins the post-season on an eight-game hitting streak, posting a .421 average (16-for-38) with 10 runs scored and 12 RBI during the streak.
- Hill leads the Tigers in overall batting average (.365), runs scored (55), RBI (51) and on-base percentage (.473) in the full season, while batting .398 with 30 RBI and 32 runs scored in SEC games.
- Hill is batting .378 (17-for-45) with 12 RBI in the Tigers' last 10 games, overcoming a 4-for-26 slump that he suffered through in late April. Hill continues to come through in the clutch, batting .368 with runners in scoring position and .404 with 18 RBI with two out on the year.
- The return to the starting lineup on a full-time basis has agreed with junior 3B Ivan Naccarata, who laced a pair of doubles and scored twice on Sunday. Naccarata is batting .385 (15-for-39) in the Tigers' last 10 games, raising his season average 18 points in that span to .314.
- Freshman catcher Matt Liuzza enters the post-season with a seven-game hitting streak, batting .375 (9-for-24) during the run. Liuzza was 4-for-12 in the Arkansas series to allow him to finish with an even .300 average during SEC games.
- One player who is looking for redemption this post-season will be sophomore 1B Clay Harris. Harris is batting just .216 (8-for-37) with 14 strikeouts in the Tigers' last 10 games, dropping his average from .384 to .346. Harris was 3-for-14 with a home run in the Arkansas series.
- LSU struggled with strikeouts on Saturday, as the Tigers fanned a season high 14 times, going down seven times each against Arkansas pitchers Jay Sawatski and Scott Roehl. The 14 strikeouts were the most for LSU batters since 15 at Houston last February 22.
- In all, LSU batters struck out 29 times in three games, the most by the Tigers in a single three-game series under Laval.
- On the mound, junior RHP Nate Bumstead made a successful conversion to Friday night starter by giving up just one earned run over eight innings to clinch the SEC championship. Bumstead is a team best 9-2 on the year and is 8-1 with a 3.61 ERA in his SEC starts.
- Bumstead has gone at least seven innings in eight of his nine SEC starts, failing only on May 11



- against Auburn when he gave up seven runs in 2/3 of an inning.
- Senior RHP Bo Pettit struggled with his control again on Saturday, walking six batters in six innings. Pettit gave up five earned runs on five hits in his stint, but thanks to an LSU rally that tied the game in the ninth inning, he took his third consecutive no-decision against Arkansas.
 - Freshman LHP Greg Smith took the loss in extra innings on Saturday, but pitched well nevertheless, giving up just two hits and no walks in three-plus innings.
 - For junior RHP Billy Sadler, it was a rough weekend. Sadler walked in the winning run on Saturday night, and then on Sunday, gave up a two-run double to Arkansas' Clay Goodwin with two out in the bottom of the ninth to break up the shutout. Sadler leads the Tigers with 22 relief appearances and 23 overall games, but has given up three runs on three hits with six walks in his last 3 1/3 innings.
 - LSU's loss in extra innings on Saturday dropped the Tigers to 0-4 in overtime contests this year. The Tigers also lost at home in 10 innings to Kansas on February 14, at Tulane in 11 innings on March 11 and at Vanderbilt in 10 on April 19.
 - LSU is now 6-4 in one-run games this season and 18-12 under Smoke Laval in the closest of games.

On deck for this week:

- The SEC Tournament kicks off in Birmingham on Wednesday, and for LSU, it will be a case of same song, second verse as the Tigers open with their fourth game against Arkansas in a six-day span. The Tigers have never opened the SEC Tournament against the team they closed the regular season against until this year.
- The Tigers hold a 4-2 edge in all-time meetings with the Hogs in the SEC Tournament, although Arkansas has won both meetings in Birmingham, 8-4 in 1998 and 9-8 in 1999. LSU defeated Arkansas 8-1 at the Superdome in New Orleans in 1992 and then won meetings in the SEC West division tournament in 1993, 1994 and 1995.
- LSU is the top seed in the tournament for the first time since 1997, when the Tigers finished second to Alabama. LSU has won the tournament five times as the top seed (1986, 1990, 1992, 1993 and 1994).
- The Tigers' second game on Thursday will be against either Ole Miss or Mississippi St., who reprise their Egg Bowl battle for the fifth time in the other bracket two game on Wednesday. LSU beat the Rebels 2-1 this year in Baton Rouge and has won all three SEC Tournament meetings, including 13-2 and 12-6 victories in 2001. Meanwhile, the Tigers lost two of three to State in Starkville three weeks ago and are just 5-6 in SEC Tournament meetings, including a 4-1 loss in the 2001 championship game.
- The other half of the tournament draw has Vanderbilt taking on Auburn and Alabama battling South Carolina. The two four-team brackets will play in the double elimination Omaha format until Sunday's single championship game.
- LSU is 46-27 (.630) in its 19 SEC Tournament appearances, holding the conference records for wins, winning percentage and championships with six. The Tigers have appeared in 19 consecutive SEC tournaments, holding the conference record. LSU has also won at least one game in 18 consecutive tournaments, going two-and-out only once, in 1985.
- LSU has also submitted a bid to host an NCAA regional and super regional. The 16 regional host sites will be named on a Sunday conference call, and the Tigers are expected to be named a regional host for the 14th consecutive year, which would continue LSU's NCAA record streak. To have a chance to host a super regional, LSU will need to be a national seed when the NCAA reveals the 64-team field on Memorial Day.

