



# 2003 LSU BASEBALL

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2003 LSU Baseball Notebook  
Monday, February 10  
Overall Record: 3-0

#### Last week's results:

Friday—def. Northwestern St., 2-1  
Saturday—def. Northwestern St., 10-5  
Sunday—def. Northwestern St., 5-3

#### This week's games (all times CST):

Tuesday—at Centenary (Fair Grounds Field, Shreveport), 7 p.m.  
Friday—Kansas, 6:30 p.m.  
Saturday—Kansas, 2 p.m.  
Sunday—Kansas, 1 p.m.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK NOMINEE: Soph. 1B/2B Blake Gill (5-10, 200, Bradenton, Fla.—Manatee HS)

- Finished the three-game series vs. Northwestern St. as the Tigers' leading hitter at .462 (6-for-13).
- Went 2-for-4 with runners in scoring position and 3-for-9 in all situations with runners on base.
- Handled 29 chances without an error in the field.
- Collected two hits in all three games of the series, which LSU swept to start 3-0 for the third time in the last four years.
- His RBI double in the eighth inning was the only extra base hit of the game for either team and scored Aaron Hill with the winning run in a 2-1 victory.
- Scored two runs and collected an RBI single in the Tigers' five-run first inning on Saturday.
- Started at second base on Sunday, where he helped turn two of LSU's three double plays in the game. Gill also scored the game's first run in the fourth inning.
- Last year, Gill did not get a hit until the Tigers' seventh game on February 17,

PITCHER OF THE WEEK NOMINEE: Sr. RHP Jake Tompkins (6-1, 195, Auburn, Calif.—Sacramento City College)

- Struck out a career high 11 batters in 5 2/3 innings in Friday's season opener vs. Northwestern St.
- At one point, Tompkins struck out five consecutive batters over the second and third innings, fanning the side in order in the third.
- Struck out batters in the second, fourth and fifth inning with two out and runners in scoring position.
- Previous career high for Ks came in his last start, fanning 10 in 4 2/3 innings last April 30 at New Orleans.
- Tompkins did not allow an earned run in his stint, throwing 58 of 89 pitches for strikes.
- Has allowed just one hit in 15 at-bats with the bases loaded in his career.



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- Tompkins, a second team All-SEC selection in 2002, has lost just once in 26 career outings, falling last May 25 in the SEC Tournament to South Carolina.

Notes on the Week:

- Although the Tigers got off to a slow start at the plate on Friday, LSU finished the weekend with a .312 batting average, and all nine position players who got an at-bat collected at least one hit.
- The Tigers were at their best in the clutch, batting a stellar .412 (12-for-29) with runners in scoring position. Seven of the nine position players who saw action had at least one RBI. LSU batted .301 last year in RISP situations.
- Eight of those nine players had at least two hits, and four players had three or more hits. Along with Blake Gill (see above), outfielders Bruce Sprowl and Jon Zeringue also hit safely in every game.
- LSU also proved quite adept at answering whenever Northwestern St. scored. In four of the six innings in which LSU scored runs, the Demons had scored in the top half of the same frame.
- LSU pitchers stymied Northwestern St. in the clutch, limiting the Demons to a .118 average (4-for-34) with runners in scoring position.
- The Tigers continued to be stingy in allowing extra base hits, giving up just two in 27 innings over the weekend, or one every 13.5 innings. Last year, LSU led the SEC by giving up 145 extra base hits, one every 4.06 innings.
- LSU swept Northwestern St. to start 3-0 for the third time in the last four seasons and for the sixth time in the last eight years. The Tigers failed to start 3-0 in 1999 (1-2) and 2001 (2-1).
- In four of the Tigers' five national championship seasons, LSU has started 3-0. The only season in which LSU won the final game in Omaha without a 3-0 start was 1993, when the Tigers began 2-1.
- For the third consecutive year, LSU played a one-run game in the season opener. The Tigers lost 9-8 to Kansas St. in 2001 and defeated Birmingham-Southern in 2002.
- LSU has now won 18 of its last 21 season openers, dating back to Jack Lamabe's last year in 1983. Skip Bertman was 15-3 in openers in his 18 seasons (1984-2001), and Smoke Laval is 2-0.
- LSU scored its fewest runs in a season opener since dropping a 3-1 decision to Auburn in the 1994 Winn-Dixie Showdown.
- The 2-1 game was the lowest scoring season opener for LSU since a 2-1 loss to Rice in 1971.
- When LSU scored two runs in the eighth inning of the season opener, it ended a drought of 25 1/3 scoreless innings. The Tigers were shut out in back-to-back games in last year's super regional at Rice, and hadn't scored since the eighth inning of the regional championship game vs. Louisiana-Lafayette.
- Junior RHP Billy Sadler, a transfer from Pensacola Junior College, pitched 1 2/3 scoreless innings of relief to pick up the victory on Friday. Sadler struck out four and gave up three hits.
- Junior RHP Brandon Nall made a solid debut as the Tigers' closer, picking up saves on Friday and Sunday and pitching a total of 2 2/3 scoreless innings.
- Nall retired the final two batters on ground balls on Friday, then worked out of an eighth inning jam on Sunday by inducing an inning ending double play before working a 1-2-3 ninth.
- The Tiger bullpen had a generally solid weekend, allowing just one run in 18.2 innings pitched.
- On Saturday, LSU wasted little time in busting loose, scoring five runs in the first inning. In 66 games in 2002, LSU scored five or more runs in the first inning once, and that was a seven-run first inning on February 10 vs. Birmingham-Southern. In 2002
- LSU added another five-run frame in the fifth inning, giving the Tigers two innings of five or more runs in the same game for the first time since last May 4 in the second game of a doubleheader at Tennessee. That game against the Volunteers was the only time LSU had two innings of five or more runs in 2002.
- Zeringue hit LSU's first home run of 2003, a three-run shot to left field in the first inning. IN 2002, LSU did not hit its first home run until Sean Barker hit one vs. Southeastern Louisiana in the ninth inning of the fourth game, a span of 37 1/3 innings (LSU played a 13-inning game in its second contest vs. Birmingham-Southern).



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- LSU used the exact same starting lineup in the first two games of the Northwestern St. series, something the Tigers did not do last year until games 25 and 26 at Ole Miss.
- Sunday's game was highlighted by the performance of junior RHP Nate Bumstead, a transfer from Southern Idaho. The Las Vegas native was forced into an emergency start when scheduled starter Bo Pettit was sidelined with the flu, and he went seven innings, giving up five hits and two runs. Bumstead did not allow a run until giving up a two-run home run in the seventh, but thanks to a two-run rally by LSU in the bottom of the same inning, Bumstead picked up the win.
- Five LSU position players saw their first action for the Tigers: Sprowl, Ivan Naccarata, Matt Liuzza, Quinn Stewart and Ryan Patterson.
- Prior to Friday night's season opener, a special tribute was held to honor the memory of the late Wally Pontiff, who died of a heart abnormality last July 24. Pontiff's family was presented with his jersey number 31 encased in glass, third base with Pontiff's number 31 painted on it, and the bat that Pontiff used in his last game of the 2002 season.
- Pontiff's number 31 was unveiled on the center field Wall of Fame at Alex Box Stadium, along with the number 19 worn by former LSU pitchers Robbie Smith and Ben McDonald. Pontiff's number is also painted behind the third base coaches' box and his image is part of the new design of "The Intimidator", the billboard behind the right field fence.

The week ahead:

- LSU plays its first road game of 2003 when the Fighting Tigers head to Shreveport to take on Centenary at Fair Grounds Field, the home of Shreveport's former Double-A Texas League franchise. The Tigers have won 20 consecutive games over the Gents, LSU's longest active streak against any opponent, but it needed a two-out, two-strike, two-run double by David Raymer in the ninth inning to escape with a 7-6 victory in 2002.
- The Centenary game is the second of a five-year agreement between LSU and the Shreveport Regional Sports Foundation. The game is one of five in-state road trips scheduled for 2003; LSU will also visit Northwestern St., New Orleans (at Zephyr Field) and Tulane (both at Zephyr Field and the Superdome).
- The Tigers welcome Kansas to Alex Box Stadium for a three-game weekend series beginning on Friday. LSU swept KU in a three-game series in 1990 in the teams' only previous meetings. This marks the second time in the last three years a Big XII team from the Sunflower State has invaded Baton Rouge; Kansas St. lost two of three to the Tigers to open the 2001 season.
- LSU and Kansas were in the same bracket of the 1993 College World Series, but the Jayhawks were eliminated in two games by losing to Texas A&M and Long Beach St., while the Tigers went on to win the national championship.
- LSU and KU are the only two schools to reach a football bowl game, the men's basketball Final Four and the CWS in the same academic year, with LSU accomplishing the feat in 1985-86 and KU doing it in 1992-93.



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