



# The Program

Raymond "Smoke" Laval begins his third season in 2004 as the head coach of the LSU Fighting Tigers. Last season, Laval guided LSU to its first College World Series appearance since 2000 and its first Southeastern Conference title since 1997, as the Tigers posted a 45-22-1 record and a No. 5 final national ranking. Laval, the 2003 SEC Coach of the Year, served as the legendary Skip Bertman's No. 1 assistant coach at LSU from 1984-93, helping lead the Tigers to two national championships (1991, 1993), six College World Series appearances and five Southeastern Conference titles in 10 seasons. Laval served as the head coach at Louisiana-Monroe from 1994-2000 before taking command of the LSU program prior to the 2002 season.

*Smoke Laval (right) took over as LSU's head coach in 2002, as Skip Bertman (left) has assumed the job of athletics director.*

# FIVE

NCAA Championships won  
by the LSU Tigers

LSU is one of only four  
schools to win five national  
titles in the 57-year history  
of the CWS. The other  
schools are Southern  
California, Arizona State  
and Texas.

LSU's success,  
however, has been more  
immediate, as the Tigers  
have claimed five CWS  
titles in the past 13 years.  
By comparison, Southern  
Cal has just one national  
title in the past 25 years;  
Arizona State has gone 22  
years without a CWS crown;  
and Texas has won two  
CWS titles in 21 seasons.

**1991, 1993,  
1996, 1997, 2000**



**In just his second season at the helm of the LSU program, coach Smoke Laval guided the Tigers to the 2003 Southeastern Conference title and an appearance in the College World Series.** The '03 Tigers posted a 45-22-1 overall record and completed the season ranked No. 5 in the nation by *Baseball America* magazine.

LSU played host to an NCAA Regional tournament for the 14th straight year and captured its eighth consecutive regional title. LSU won two of three games over Baylor in the NCAA Super Regional to advance to the CWS for the 12th time in school history.

Laval was named 2003 SEC Coach of the Year and Louisiana Coach of the Year.

**In the first season of the Laval era, the 2002 Tigers played host to an NCAA Regional at Alex Box Stadium for the 13th straight year.** LSU captured its seventh consecutive regional title with two wins over Louisiana-Lafayette on the tournament's final day to advance to the Super Regional at Rice University.

For his outstanding efforts in his inaugural LSU season, Laval was named the 2002 Louisiana Coach of the Year by the Louisiana Sportswriters Association.

Prior to his new tenure at LSU, Laval resuscitated the UL-Monroe program, as in seven seasons he guided the Indians to a 241-159 record, including NCAA Regional appearances in 1995, 1999 and 2000. The 2000 ULM club posted a 41-22 mark en route to the Southland Conference title, tying the school record for wins. Laval, the 1999 SLC Coach of the Year, also led the Indians to the 1999 regular-season league title and to the 1995 conference tournament crown.

**Skip Bertman is LSU's all-time winningest coach, as he compiled an 870-330-3 (.724) record in 18 seasons.** Bertman, the National Coach of the Year in 1986, 1991, 1993, 1996, 1997 and 2000, and the 1996 United States Olympic head coach, guided the Tigers to five national championships (1991, 1993, 1996, 1997, 2000) and 11 College

World Series appearances (1986, '87, '89, '90, '91, '93, '94, '96, '97, '98, '00). In a poll released by *Baseball America* in January, 1999, Bertman was voted the second-greatest college baseball coach of the 20th century, trailing only Rod Dedeaux of Southern California. Under Bertman, LSU finished no worse than seventh in the final national polls in 12 of his final 16 seasons.

Bertman is one of only two coaches to have won five College World Series titles in the 57-year history of the event (Southern Cal's Dedeaux won 10

CWS crowns in the 1950s, '60s and '70s). Bertman has the fifth-highest total of CWS victories (29) and the fourth-highest CWS winning percentage (29-13, .690).

Bertman's record in SEC games was 328-159-2 (.673). Under Bertman, LSU dominated the SEC from 1989-2001, registering a 654-235-2 (.734) overall mark (an average of 50 wins per year) with five national championships, nine CWS appearances, six conference titles and eight 50-win seasons.

Significantly, LSU was 146-149 overall (.495) in the six seasons prior to Bertman's arrival -- after eight years as an assistant coach at Miami (Fla.) -- in 1984.

**Bertman directed LSU to its fifth national title in 2000, as the Tigers recorded a 52-17 mark, including a perfect 13-0 post-season record.** LSU won the SEC Tournament with four straight wins, and the Tigers raced to a 9-0 mark in the NCAA Tournament. The Tigers captured the national title with a thrilling 6-5 win over Stanford in the CWS championship game, as LSU scored four runs in the last two innings to overcome a 5-2 deficit. Catcher Brad Cresse's RBI single in the bottom of the ninth inning drove home



*Skip Bertman (right) accepts the 1997 Louisville Slugger national championship trophy with LSU President Dr. William Jenkins.*

shortstop Ryan Theriot with the winning run. LSU became only the third school in NCAA baseball history to win five national championships, joining Southern California and Arizona State.

LSU's road to the NCAA crown was arguably the most difficult in CWS history, as the Tigers had to defeat perennial powers Texas (28 CWS appearances), Southern California (20), Florida State (18) and Stanford (12) in order to claim the national championship.

The 2000 squad was Bertman's most productive offensive team, setting a school record for team batting average with a .340 mark. The Tigers also established Southeastern Conference records for hits (864) and doubles (194). For the fifth time, Bertman was voted National Coach of the Year by *Collegiate Baseball* magazine.

In addition to the five national titles, Bertman directed LSU to 13 NCAA Regional championships (1986, '87, '89, '90, '91, '93, '94, '96, '97, '98, '99, '00, '01), one NCAA Super Regional title (2000), seven Southeastern Conference regular-season titles (1986, '90, '91, '92, '93, '96, '97), six SEC Tournament crowns (1986, '90, '92, '93, '94, '00) and nine 50-win seasons (1986, 1989-93, 1996-97, 2000).

In its Jan. 19, 1997, issue, *Baseball America* magazine named LSU the "Team of the '90s." *Baseball America* listed the top 100 college baseball programs based upon a formula which encompasses the following categories: winning percentage, NCAA regional appearances, College World Series appearances, national championships, all-Americans, players who have been drafted, major league players and total attendance. LSU, which won four national championships (1991, '93, '96, '97) in the '90s, was No. 1 in the survey with 308 total points, easily outdistancing second-place Florida State with 257 points. Arizona State was third (247), followed by Texas (244), Cal State-Fullerton (240), Miami (236), Wichita State (227), Clemson (211), Stanford (209) and Oklahoma State (208).

LSU claimed its fourth NCAA title in June, 1997, as the Tigers overwhelmed Alabama, 13-6, in the College World Series final. LSU became the first school to win back-to-back national championships since Stanford in 1987-88. The Tigers completed the year with a 57-13 mark, setting the Southeastern Conference record for most single-season victories. The Tigers also established the NCAA record for single-season home runs, as LSU unloaded a remarkable 188 round-trippers en route to the national championship. LSU joined Southern California (six titles in the 1970s) as the only schools to win four CWS crowns in one decade.

LSU claimed its third national championship of the 1990s in 1996 when second baseman Warren Morris belted a two-run homer in the



Warren Morris' ninth-inning homer lifted LSU to the 1996 national championship.

bottom of the ninth inning to lift the Tigers to a thrilling 9-8 College World Series title game win over Miami (Fla.). The '96 Tigers were one of the most prolific offensive teams in Southeastern Conference history, establishing league records for home runs (131), runs scored (648), RBI (549) and total bases (1,331).

In 1993, LSU won its second NCAA title in three years with an 8-0 victory over Wichita State in the CWS final. The 1993 Tigers also captured the Southeastern Conference title, as LSU became the first SEC school to win the league championship in four consecutive seasons (1990-93).

In 1991, LSU captured its first national championship with a record-setting performance at the CWS in Omaha, Neb. The Tigers defeated Wichita State, 6-3, in the title game and established Series marks for home runs, runs per game, slugging percentage and fielding percentage.

In the 1990s, the Tigers posted a .737 winning percentage (503-179-2, an average of over 50 victories per year).

**LSU is one of only four schools to win five national titles in the 57-year history of the CWS.** The others are Southern California (12 titles), Arizona State (5) and Texas (5). LSU has claimed its five CWS titles in the past 13 years. By comparison, Southern Cal has just one national title in the past 25 seasons; Arizona State has played 22 seasons without a CWS crown; and Texas has won two CWS titles in the past 21 seasons.

LSU was one of just three schools in the country with seven College World Series appearances in the 1990s. Miami (Fla.) and Florida State also earned seven CWS trips in the last decade. All 12 of the Tigers' CWS appearances have come since 1986 -- LSU is one of only 10 schools to have made at least 12 CWS trips since the Series began in 1947. The Tigers have the third-highest all-time CWS winning percentage (minimum 20 games) -- LSU has a 29-15 (.659) CWS mark, trailing Southern California (74-26, .740) and Minnesota (17-7, .708).

**LSU has the highest all-time NCAA Tournament winning percentage (.728) with a 99-37 record.** Remarkably, LSU has a 26-5 record in championship rounds of

# 291,676

Number of fans who attended LSU baseball games in Alex Box Stadium during the 2003 season. LSU ranked first in the nation in attendance for the eighth straight year. LSU has placed among the top six schools in attendance each year since 1991.

*The 1975 Tigers earned LSU's first NCAA Tournament berth.*

# SIX

**Southeastern  
Conference  
championships  
claimed by LSU in  
the 1990s,  
including an  
unprecedented  
four in a row  
from 1990-93**

*Eddy Furniss claimed the 1998 Dick Howser Award as college baseball's most outstanding player.*



NCAA post-season play. The Tigers are 5-0 in CWS finals, 18-1 in NCAA Regional final rounds and 3-4 in NCAA Super Regional final rounds.

The Tigers have won more College World Series games (29) than any other Southeastern Conference school. South Carolina is second among league schools with 14 CWS triumphs. LSU is the only SEC squad with 12 CWS trips; Mississippi State and South Carolina are second with seven all-time CWS berths. Since 1986, while LSU has made 12 CWS appearances, no other SEC school has reached Omaha more than four times. Other league schools in the CWS since '86 are Florida (four appearances), Mississippi State (three), Alabama (three), Georgia (three), Arkansas (two), Auburn (two), Tennessee (two) and South Carolina (two).

**LSU captured its 13th Southeastern Conference title when the 2003 Tigers claimed the league crown.** The Tigers recorded a 20-9-1 conference mark to win the 13th league championship in school history. LSU claimed six Southeastern Conference championships in the 1990s, including an unprecedented four in a row from 1990-93.

LSU has finished either first or second in the overall conference standings in 12 of the past 15 years. LSU has won six SEC Tournament crowns (1986, '90, '92, '93, '94, 2000), and the Tigers are the only SEC team to have appeared in every conference tournament since 1985.

In 1993, LSU became the first team in Southeastern Conference history to win four straight league titles. The '93 Tigers, who registered an 18-8-1 SEC mark, clinched the overall championship by winning the SEC Western Division Tournament title in Alex Box Stadium. LSU defeated Mississippi

State, 7-3, in the final game after battling out of the tournament losers' bracket. In 1992, LSU became the first league team to win three straight championships since Alabama in 1940, '41 and '42. Alabama also won three straight from 1934-36 and is the only other school with three consecutive titles since the SEC began recognizing a champion in 1933.

**LSU has reached the 50-win plateau eight times in the past 14 years.** LSU posted five consecutive 50-win seasons from 1989-93. No other Southeastern Conference team has had more than two consecutive 50-win campaigns. LSU in 1997 established the SEC record for most wins (57) in a season, breaking its own previous league mark of 55 set in 1986, 1989 and 1991. While LSU has nine 50-win seasons in its annals, no other SEC school has more than four 50-win campaigns in its history.

**LSU made its first-ever CWS appearance in 1986,** when the Tigers finished fifth with a 1-2 record. LSU lost its CWS debut, 4-3, to Loyola-Marymount before rebounding with its first Series win, an 8-4 triumph over Maine. The Tigers were then eliminated by defending CWS champion Miami (Fla.), 4-3.

LSU returned to Omaha in 1987, marking the first time a Southeastern Conference team made back-to-back CWS appearances. The Tigers placed fourth in '87 with a 2-2 mark, as LSU was eliminated when Stanford's Paul Carey sent a Ben McDonald pitch over the left-field wall with the bases loaded in the 10th inning to give the Cardinal a 6-5 win.

After an incredible two-game sweep of top-ranked Texas A&M -- the Aggies entered the regional final round with a 58-5 record -- in the NCAA Central Regional at College Station, Texas, LSU joined the 1989 CWS field, placing in a tie for third with a 2-2 record. In 1990, the Tigers again emerged from an NCAA regional tournament losers' bracket to earn a CWS berth, as LSU captured the South I Regional at Baton Rouge with two scintillating one-run wins over Southern California. LSU finished in a tie for third at the '90 CWS, recording a 2-2 mark in the summer classic.

**LSU claimed its first NCAA championship in 1991 as the Tigers decimated the CWS field, outscoring their opponents 48-15 in four games.** LSU, which won the SEC regular-season title for the second straight year, became the first team since 1982 to win the national championship without a loss in the NCAA Tournament -- the Tigers won four consecutive games in both the NCAA South Regional and the College World Series. LSU's domination in Omaha was evidenced by the fact that the Tigers set CWS team records for most runs per game (12), highest fielding percentage (.993), highest slugging percentage

(.603) and most home runs (nine).

LSU returned to Omaha in 1993 for another national championship crusade as the Tigers posted a 4-1 CWS mark, including an 8-0 victory over Wichita State in the final. Perhaps more memorable than the championship contest was LSU's 6-5 victory over Long Beach State in the CWS semi-finals, as the Tigers scored three runs in the bottom of the ninth inning for the win. LSU, which won the SEC for an unprecedented fourth straight year, advanced to the CWS by capturing the NCAA South Regional championship at Alex Box Stadium, which played host to a regional tournament for the fourth consecutive year.

In 1994, LSU became the first defending national champion to return to the CWS since Stanford accomplished the feat in 1988. The Tigers earned the CWS berth with four straight wins in the NCAA South Regional at Baton Rouge, including a thrilling 12-10 triumph over Southern California in the regional final. However, for the first time in its CWS history, LSU went "two-and-out" in Omaha, as the Tigers dropped consecutive decisions to Florida State and Cal State-Fullerton.

In 1996, LSU played host to an NCAA regional tournament for the seventh straight year, and the Tigers swept to four wins over Austin Peay, Nevada-Las Vegas, New Orleans and Georgia Tech to advance to the CWS. LSU also won four straight in Omaha, defeating Wichita State, Florida (twice), and Miami (Fla.). The championship game versus Miami provided the greatest finish in the 50-year history of the CWS as LSU second baseman Warren Morris launched a two-out, two-run homer in the bottom of the ninth inning to give the Tigers an electrifying 9-8 triumph.

In 1997, the Tigers played host to the NCAA South I Regional, defeating North Carolina-Greensboro and Oklahoma in their first two games before suffering a third-round loss to South Alabama. The Tigers rebounded for a thrilling 14-7, 11-inning triumph over Long Beach State before posting a doubleheader sweep over South Alabama (14-4 and 15-4) to claim the regional crown. For the second straight year, the Tigers went 4-0 in the College World Series, defeating Rice (5-4), Stanford (10-5 and 13-9) and Alabama (13-6). LSU became the first team to win back-to-back national titles without losing a CWS game. The only other teams to win consecutive national championships are Stanford (1987-88), Southern California (1970-71-72-73-74) and Texas (1949-50).

The 1998 LSU squad earned the Tigers' seventh CWS berth of the '90s by capturing the NCAA South II Regional title in Baton Rouge with victories over Nicholls State (18-4), Southwestern Louisiana (15-6) and Cal State-Fullerton (13-11 and 14-3). LSU defeated Southern California (12-10) and Mississippi State (10-8) in its first two CWS games, increas-



*Ben McDonald received the 1989 Golden Spikes Award as the nation's best amateur baseball player.*

# 188

Home runs by the  
Tigers in their  
1997 National  
Championship  
season

The total is an NCAA  
record, shattering the  
previous mark of 161  
set in 1988 by  
Brigham Young. LSU  
hit at least one home  
run in all 70 of its  
1997 games.

ing the Tigers' Series winning streak to 10 games over three years. However, LSU suffered back-to-back losses to Southern Cal (5-4 and 7-3), and the Trojans advanced to the national championship game, where they defeated Arizona State.

LSU earned its 11th CWS trip in 15 seasons in 2000, as the Tigers played host to and won both an NCAA Regional and NCAA Super Regional. The Tigers defeated Jackson State and Louisiana-Monroe (twice) in the regional before sweeping two super regional games from UCLA to claim the ticket to Omaha. LSU then posted four straight victories in the CWS, securing the national title with wins over Texas (13-5), Southern California (10-4), Florida State (6-3) and Stanford (6-5). The Tigers completed the year with a perfect 13-0 post-season mark, as LSU also won four straight games in capturing the SEC Tournament crown.

LSU's 2003 SEC Championship club played host to an NCAA Regional for the 14th straight year, as the Tigers won the tournament with a thrilling 9-8, 11-inning victory over North Carolina-Wilmington in the final game. LSU then entertained Baylor in NCAA Super Regional play, defeating the Bears in two of three games to advance to the CWS.

For just the second time in 12 CWS appearances, LSU failed to win a game in Omaha as the Tigers were defeated by Cal State Fullerton (8-2) and South Carolina (11-10).

**The Tigers were 89-29 (.754) in NCAA post-season play during coach Skip Bertman's 18-year tenure and have won 71 of their last 92 tournament games, including 22 of their last 29 CWS contests.** LSU has won 69 of its last 87 games in NCAA Regional/Super Regional play. LSU has advanced to the NCAA Tournament in 15 consecutive seasons and in 18 of the past 19 years.

LSU first qualified for NCAA regional play in

# .728

LSU has the nation's  
highest  
all-time NCAA  
Tournament  
winning percentage  
(.99-.37, .728) and the  
third-highest all-time  
College World Series  
winning percentage  
(.29-.15, .659).

1975, when the Tigers posted a 1-2 mark at the South Regional in Starkville, Miss. In 1985 -- the Tigers' first NCAA appearance under Skip Bertman -- LSU dropped two consecutive games at the Central Regional in Austin, Texas, before advancing to its first College World Series a year later with a four-game sweep through the 1986 South I Regional field in Baton Rouge, La. The Tigers returned to Omaha in 1987 after taking four straight games at the South II Regional in New Orleans, La. After failing to receive an NCAA bid in 1988, LSU won five of six games at the 1989 Central Regional in College Station, Texas, to secure its third CWS berth in four years. LSU earned its fourth berth to the CWS in 1990 as the Tigers took five of six games at the South I Regional in Baton Rouge.

In 1991, LSU posted four straight victories at the South Regional in Baton Rouge to set the stage for its national title drive in Omaha. In 1992, LSU played host to an NCAA Regional for the third straight year; however, the Tigers were eliminated in the South I semifinal by Cal State-Fullerton. The loss marked the first time since 1985 LSU did not win a regional after receiving an NCAA Tournament bid. In 1993, after a second-round loss to Kent State University, LSU won three straight NCAA South Regional games to earn its sixth CWS trip. The Tigers defeated South Alabama, 9-4, in the regional final.

The Tigers played host to an NCAA Regional for the fifth straight season in 1994, as LSU defeated Southeastern Louisiana, Fresno State and Southern California (twice) to earn another trip to Omaha. Alex Box Stadium again served as the host site for an NCAA tournament in 1995, as the Tigers participated in the South Regional, finishing third behind champion Cal State-Fullerton and runner-up Rice. In 1996, LSU captured the South II Regional crown in Alex Box Stadium, defeating Georgia Tech, 29-13, in the championship game. The contest featured a record-set-

ting seventh inning in which LSU scored 18 runs on 13 hits with 17 consecutive Tiger batters reaching base.

In 1997, the Tigers claimed the South I regional title in Baton Rouge, defeating South Alabama twice (14-4 and 15-4) on the tournament's final day. LSU hit .339 (82-for-242) in its six regional games, outscoring the opposition 76-29 while unloading 20 home runs. In 1998, the Tigers swept four games in the NCAA South II Regional at Baton Rouge, including two wins over former post-season nemesis Cal State-Fullerton. LSU hit .406 in the tournament while launching 20 homers in regional play for the second straight year.

In 1999, LSU claimed the NCAA Baton Rouge Regional as the Tigers emerged from the losers' bracket and posted consecutive victories over East Carolina. LSU advanced to the NCAA Super Regional in Tuscaloosa, Ala., where the Tigers dropped consecutive decisions to Alabama to end their post-season drive.

The 2000 Tigers played host to both a regional and super regional, marking the 11th straight year Alex Box Stadium served as a site for NCAA post-season play. The Tigers blitzed Jackson State (19-1) and Louisiana-Monroe (21-0, 5-3) to win the regional, and LSU overwhelmed UCLA (8-2, 14-8) in the super regional. In its five regional/super regional games, the Tigers hit .366 (70-for-192) with 18 doubles, one triple and 11 homers.

The 2001 Tigers captured LSU's sixth straight NCAA Regional championship with a 14-9 title-game victory over Virginia Commonwealth in Alex Box Stadium. The Tigers advanced to NCAA Super Regional play against Tulane at Zephyr Field in Metairie, La., where the teams played three games before sell-out crowds of nearly 12,000 per contest. LSU won a 13-inning thriller, 4-3, in Game 1, before the Green Wave rebounded for consecutive victories (9-4 and 7-1) to earn Tulane's first trip to the CWS.

The 2002 Tigers claimed LSU's seventh consecutive NCAA Regional crown, defeating Louisiana-Lafayette twice (by identical 12-2 scores) on the tournament's final day in Alex Box Stadium. LSU advanced to the NCAA Super Regional at Rice University, where the Owls blanked the Tigers twice (6-0 and 3-0) to capture the CWS bid.

LSU won its eighth straight regional in 2003, as the Tigers defeated Northeastern (11-8), Tulane (13-5) and UNC-Wilmington (9-8, 11 innings). Right fielder Jon Zeringue's solo homer in the bottom of the 11th inning propelled the Tigers to victory over UNCW. LSU faced Baylor in a Super Regional series at Alex Box Stadium, and, after dropping the opener to the Bears (4-1), the Tigers came back to record 6-5 and 20-5 victories to earn another trip to Omaha.

**Former LSU pitcher Ben McDonald, a right-hander from Denham Springs, La., capped a magnificent 1989 season by receiving the Golden Spikes Award, given by the United**



*LSU has earned 12 CWS trips to Omaha's Rosenblatt Stadium.*



States Baseball Federation to the nation's most outstanding amateur player. McDonald, the consensus College Player of the Year, was the first player chosen in the free-agent amateur draft and made his major league debut with the Baltimore Orioles in September, 1989.

McDonald, who set an LSU career mark with 373 Ks, established Southeastern Conference standards for single-season strikeouts (202), innings pitched (152.1) and consecutive scoreless innings (44.2). A two-time All-American and a 1988 Olympic gold medalist, he finished his LSU career with a 29-14 record and a 3.24 ERA.

**Lloyd Peever, a right-handed pitcher from Stonewall, Okla., was named the 1992 National Player of the Year by *Collegiate Baseball* magazine.** Peever, one of nine finalists for the 1992 Golden Spikes Award, was named first-team All-America by *Collegiate Baseball*, *Baseball America* and the American Baseball Coaches Association. He finished the season with a 14-0 record and a 1.98 ERA in 104.2 innings, and he became the first SEC pitcher to post 14 straight wins in one year. Peever signed with the expansion Colorado Rockies in 1992 after being selected in the fourth round of the major league draft.

**LSU first baseman Eddy Furniss culminated a sterling four-year career by receiving the 1998 Dick Howser Trophy as college baseball's most outstanding player.** Furniss finished his career as the SEC's all-time leader in hits (352), home runs (80), RBI (308), doubles (87) and total bases (689). He is also No. 1 on the LSU career list for slugging percentage (.727) and walks (191). In NCAA annals, Furniss finished his career No. 3 all-time in total bases, No. 4 in home runs and doubles, and No. 5 in RBI. The Nacogdoches, Texas, native -- who posted a .371 lifetime batting average -- hit .403 in 1998 with 27 doubles, three triples, 28 homers, 85 runs and 76 RBI, earning First-Team All-America and all-SEC honors. He was also voted a second-team Academic all-American with a 3.5 gpa in zoology.



*Lyle Mouton (21), catcher Gary Hymel and the Tigers won LSU's first NCAA championship in 1991 with a victory over Wichita State in the CWS.*



*Ray Wright's brilliant catch prevented a Stanford home run in the 2000 College World Series.*

## 26-5

**LSU has a 26-5 record on championship day in NCAA post-season play (regional, super regional and CWS combined), including a 5-0 mark in CWS final games.**

In 1997, Furniss helped lead LSU to its second straight NCAA title, earning second-team all-America and all-SEC recognition and first-team Academic all-America honors. He batted .377 with 25 doubles, 17 homers and 77 RBI.

Furniss, a 1996 consensus first-team all-American, was voted the '96 Southeastern Conference Player of the Year after batting .374 (89-for-238) with a school-record 26 homers and an SEC-record 103 RBI. Furniss, whose home run and RBI totals were the best in the nation, also was named a second-team Academic all-American with a 3.7 gpa in zoology. Furniss became the third LSU player in four years to be named SEC Player of the Year (Todd Walker was the '93 recipient and Russ Johnson was the '94 honoree).

**Todd Walker was voted in 1996 as the second baseman on the College World Series All-Time Team by the readers of the *Omaha World-Herald*.** Walker completed a brilliant three-year LSU career in 1994 as he became the SEC's all-time leader in hits (310), runs (234), RBI (246) and total bases (557). Walker, a native of Bossier City, La., was a 1994 finalist for the Golden Spikes Award and the Smith Award, as he batted .393 with 18 homers and 68 RBI. A consensus '94 All-American, he was also named the Most Outstanding Player of the NCAA South Regional, and he was selected to the College World Series All-Tournament team. Walker finished his career as LSU's all-time leader in hits, runs, RBI, total bases, home runs (52), doubles (61), triples (15) and batting average (.396).

In 1993, Walker led LSU to the national championship as he was named the Most Outstanding Player of the College World Series and the SEC Player of the Year. Walker batted .350 in the CWS with three homers and 12 RBI. On the year, he hit .395 with 22 homers while establishing single-season SEC records for RBI (102), total bases (214) and hitting streak (33 games). Walker, a 1993 consensus first-team All-American and a finalist for the Golden Spikes Award, also set the LSU career RBI mark with 178 in only two seasons.

Walker was named the 1992 National Freshman of the Year by *Collegiate Baseball* and by *Baseball America*. He enjoyed a

# 32

LSU has produced 32 major leaguers over the past 19 years, including former all-star outfielder Albert Belle. Among the Tigers' current big leaguers are Paul Byrd of the Atlanta Braves, Todd Walker of the Chicago Cubs, Armando Rios of the Chicago White Sox, Warren Morris of the Detroit Tigers, Mark Guthrie of the Chicago Cubs and Kurt Ainsworth of the Baltimore Orioles.

phenomenal rookie season, batting .400 with 12 homers and an SEC-high 76 RBI. Walker also led the conference in runs (72) and total bases (163), and he became the first player in LSU annals to hit .400 in a single season. Along with being a first-team Freshman All-American, Walker was named second-team All-America by *Collegiate Baseball* and *Baseball America*.

**Shortstop Russ Johnson was named the 1994 Southeastern Conference Player of the Year after enjoying one of the best seasons in LSU annals.** Johnson, a native of Denham Springs, La., batted .410 -- the highest single-season average in school history -- with 17 homers and 74 RBI. He led the SEC in doubles (26 - an LSU record), walks (67) and on-base percentage (.532), and he completed his three-year career with a .367 lifetime batting average.

Johnson was named a 1994 first-team All-American by the National Collegiate Baseball Writers Association, and he was voted Louisiana Collegiate Player of the Year by the La. Sportswriters Association. He was also selected as the Most Outstanding Player of the SEC Western Division Tournament, and he was named to the NCAA South Regional All-Tournament team. A Freshman All-America selection in 1992, Johnson finished his career in second place on the all-time LSU lists for runs (216), RBI (181), batting average (.367), doubles (60) and total bases (445).

**Pitcher Brett Laxton was named the 1993 National Freshman of the Year by *Baseball America* and the National Co-Freshman of the Year by *Collegiate Baseball*,** marking the second straight season an LSU player received such an honor (Todd Walker was the 1992 recipient). Laxton posted a 12-1 record and an SEC-best 1.98 ERA with five complete games, 98 strikeouts and 47 walks in 109 innings. He pitched a three-hit shutout in the CWS title contest against Wichita State, establishing a World Series championship game record by fanning 16 Shockers. A native of Audubon, N.J., Laxton earned first-team All-America and first-team All-Southeastern Conference recognition.

**Shortstop Brandon Larson in 1997 became only the fourth player in NCAA history to hit 40 home runs.** The consensus all-American from San Antonio, Texas, enjoyed a phenomenal season, batting .381 with SEC-record totals of 40 homers, 118 RBI and 250 total bases. Larson was named the Most Outstanding Player of the '97 CWS, leading LSU to the national title by hitting .368 (7-for-19) with three homers, eight RBI and six runs. Larson, a first-round draft choice of the Cincinnati Reds, established the LSU mark for most hits in a season (110), and he was named the Louisiana Collegiate Player of the Year.

**Catcher Brad Cresse was a 2000 first-team all-America selection, as he led the nation in home runs (30) and RBI (106).** Cresse, a native of Seal Beach, Calif., was



*Former LSU pitcher Paul Byrd (1989-91) was named to the 1999 National League All-Star team.*

named the 2000 recipient of the Johnny Bench National Collegiate Catcher of the Year award, and he was a finalist for the 2000 Golden Spikes Award.

Cresse, the fifth-round selection by the Arizona Diamondbacks in the 2000 major league draft, helped lead LSU to the 2000 national title by hitting .388 (106-for-273) with 21 doubles, 30 homers, 106 RBI, 73 runs, 217 total bases and a .790 slugging percentage. He provided the game-winning RBI in the 2000 national championship game versus Stanford, as his single in the bottom of the ninth inning scored shortstop Ryan Theriot from second base to give LSU a 6-5 win.

Cresse completed his career in second place on the SEC all-time HR list with 78 round-trippers, trailing Eddy Furniss, who hit 80 homers for LSU from 1995-98. Cresse ranked No. 2 in LSU career RBI with 257; Furniss was No. 1 with 308 RBI.

**Second baseman Mike Fontenot was named 2000 National Freshman of the Year by *The Sporting News* and by *Collegiate Baseball*.** Fontenot, a Slidell, La., native, became the third LSU player to earn freshman of the year accolades, following second baseman Todd Walker (1992) and pitcher Brett Laxton (1993). Fontenot, who was also voted the Southeastern Conference Freshman of the Year by the league's coaches, helped lead LSU to the 2000 national championship, as he batted .353 (103-for-292) with 13 doubles, three triples, 17 homers, 93 runs (SEC leader) and 64 RBI. He posted a .452 on-base percentage and stole eight bases in nine attempts. His 17 homers set the LSU freshman HR record formerly held by Blair Barbier (15 HR in 1997).



Fontenot was LSU's leading hitter in the 2000 College World Series, as he batted .462 (6-for-13) with two doubles, one homer, two RBI, six runs and five walks, earning CWS all-tournament honors.

He was also the Tigers' top hitter in nine NCAA Tournament games, batting .432 (16-for-37) with four doubles, two homers, nine RBI, eight walks and 13 runs.

**Pitcher Lane Mestepey was voted the 2001 National Co-Freshman of the Year by Collegiate Baseball.** Mestepey, a left-hander from Zachary, La., shared the honor with Wake Forest first baseman Jamie D'Antona. Mestepey emerged as the Tigers' No. 1 pitcher during the 2001 season, posting an 11-3 record and a 3.75 ERA with 79 strikeouts and 37 walks in 139.1 innings. He was voted first-team all-SEC and SEC Freshman of the Year by the league's coaches.

Mestepey also earned third-team all-America honors from *Collegiate Baseball*, and he was voted to the NCAA Baton Rouge Regional all-tournament team.

Mestepey became the fourth LSU player to earn National Freshman of the Year recognition. The others are second baseman Todd Walker (1992), pitcher Brett Laxton (1993) and second baseman Mike Fontenot (2000).

**Shortstop Aaron Hill was named 2003 SEC Player of the Year, and he earned first-team all-America recognition from Baseball America.** Hill, a native of Visalia, Calif., was also named a second team All-American by Collegiate Baseball newspaper, the American Baseball Coaches Association and *ESPN/USA Today Sports Weekly*.

Hill, who signed a contract with the Toronto Blue Jays as the club's first round selection (13th overall) in the '03 Major League Baseball draft, batted .358 on the year with nine home runs, 68 runs scored, 67 RBI and 27 doubles, the second-highest single-season total in LSU history.

Hill, who went 5-for-5 and hit for the cycle in an April 5 game versus South Carolina, was also voted to the SEC all-Tournament team and to the NCAA Baton Rouge Regional all-Tournament squad.

Hill batted .335 for his three-year career with 23 home runs, 150 RBI, 141 runs scored and 208 hits. His 50 doubles ranked him seventh on the LSU career list.

**Forty-six former LSU players have played major league baseball, including 32 big-leaguers since 1985.** During his 18 years at LSU, Skip Bertman produced 111 players who signed professional contracts. Sixteen Bertman-coached LSU products played major league baseball in 2003, including Mark Guthrie (Cubs), Russ Springer (Cardinals), Todd Walker (Red Sox), Keith Osik (Brewers), Paul Byrd (Braves), Curtis Leskanic (Royals), Jeff Reboulet (Pirates), Armando Rios (White Sox), Warren Morris (Tigers), Brandon Larson (Reds), Randy Keisler (Padres), Kurt Ainsworth (Orioles), Brian Tallet (Indians), Trey Hodges (Braves), Roy

Corcoran (Expos) and Todd Linden (Giants).

**LSU has established an outstanding international reputation with representatives on each of the last four U.S. Olympic squads (1988, '92, '96, 2000).** Skip Bertman served as the head coach of the United States Olympic team in 1996, directing the Americans to the bronze medal in Atlanta. As the USA Baseball head coach for two summers (1995 and '96), Bertman guided the U.S. to an incredible 71-11 record (.866 winning percentage), culminating his tenure with a victory over Nicaragua for the 1996 Olympic bronze medal.

In 1995, Bertman led the United States to an unprecedented four-game sweep of Cuba, the reigning World and Olympic champion, and the squad ended its summer tour on a 21-game win streak, the longest in the history of USA Baseball. The '96 U.S. team added to the streak by winning its first 18 games before dropping a 5-1 decision to Cuba on June 29.

In the fall of '96, USA Baseball presented Bertman with its annual Achievement Award, which is given to an individual who has participated in amateur baseball and has gone on to excel in his professional endeavors.

LSU second baseman Warren Morris and shortstop Jason Williams were two of the '96 Olympic team's brightest stars as the starting middle infielders. Morris was the Americans' leading hitter in the Olympics, batting .409 in nine games with five homers, one double, 11 RBI and 10 runs. Williams batted .367 in the Olympics with three homers, nine RBI and 10 runs.

Bertman served as the pitching coach of the 1988 U.S. Olympic team which captured a gold medal in Seoul. The '88 squad featured LSU pitcher Ben McDonald, who posted two Olympic victories. LSU pitcher Rick Greene was a member of the '92 Olympic team which competed in Barcelona, but fell short of earning a medal. LSU pitcher Kurt Ainsworth helped lead the U.S. to the gold medal at the 2000 Olympics in Sydney. Ainsworth pitched the Americans to wins over Holland and Australia en route to the Olympic title.



**LSU has nine 50-win seasons since 1986, including six in the 1990s. No other Southeastern Conference team has more than four 50-win seasons in its history. LSU won an SEC-record 57 games in 1997.**

*Alex Box Stadium has played host to an NCAA Regional Tournament for 14 straight years.*



*LSU's Kurt Ainsworth pitched the United States two wins over Holland and Australia en route to the 2000 gold medal in Sydney.*

# USA

LSU has established an outstanding international reputation with representatives on each of the last four U.S. Olympic squads:

Ben McDonald - 1988  
Rick Greene - 1992  
Skip Bertman - 1988, 1996  
Warren Morris - 1996  
Jason Williams - 1996  
Kurt Ainsworth - 2000

*LSU has led the nation in attendance in each of the past eight seasons. The Tigers drew an average of 7,478 fans to Alex Box Stadium in 2003.*



**LSU set an NCAA total attendance record in 2003, as 291,676 fans purchased tickets for games in Alex Box Stadium,** which played host to an NCAA Regional tournament for the 14th consecutive year. LSU placed first in total attendance for the eighth year in a row, as an average of 7,478 fans witnessed Tiger baseball in 2003. The Tigers have finished among the top six nationally in attendance in each of the past 13 seasons. Over three million fans have seen LSU baseball over the past 20 seasons. A total of 3,150,304 patrons have experienced "Baseball at the Box" during that period.

LSU also helped to establish the NCAA sin-

gle-game attendance mark, as the Tigers and Tulane played before an actual crowd of 25,101 (27,673 paid) on April 10, 2002, in the Louisiana Superdome. LSU won that contest, 9-5.

LSU's single-game attendance mark at home was established in 2000 when 8,622 fans jammed "The Box" for an April 11 game against Louisiana-Lafayette.

Innovative promotional schemes, record-breaking crowds and increasing revenues characterize LSU's baseball program. In 1983, the year before Skip Bertman's arrival as head coach, LSU drew only 10,002 fans for 22 dates at Alex Box Stadium, an average of 454 per game.

**First-class is an appropriate description for LSU's playing and practice facilities, which are among the nation's finest.** A recent improvement at Alex Box Stadium was the installation in 1999 of bleachers in left-center field, increasing capacity by about 800 seats. The stadium scoreboard was moved in the fall of 1998 from left-center field to right-center to make room for the new bleachers. Another major renovation project was completed at Alex Box Stadium in 1997, as four of the facility's light towers were moved behind the seating areas, providing all fans with an unobstructed view of the playing field.

In 1995, a squad meeting room was constructed which is also utilized for press conferences and receptions. The 1995 campaign also marked the debut of the "Home Run Village," a seating/picnic area behind the outfield fence. In 1994, the players' locker room and lounge were renovated and expanded, additional chair-back gold seats were installed, and the press box was



refurbished. In 1993, Alex Box Stadium featured a new, advanced outfield drainage system. In 1992, the facility included a new umpires' locker room behind the visiting team dugout, terrace-level seating just above third base and bleachers behind the left-field wall.

Other improvements completed in recent years include the installation of a new grandstand roof; the insertion of chair-back seats in the grandstand and adjacent to the first-base dugout; and the addition of playground/picnic areas behind the outfield-line bleachers.

Alex Box Stadium also features a modern scoreboard and message center, an underground field sprinkler system, modernized restroom and concessions facilities and a beautifully landscaped entranceway. Other significant projects include the installation of luminous field lighting and a state-of-the-art public address system, and construction of a coaches' office building.

**The coaching staff's influence on LSU Baseball goes beyond the Tigers' achievements on the playing field. The primary ingredient in the Tigers' winning formula is a commitment to the education and emotional development of the players.** LSU's steadfast emphasis on academics has produced exceptional results. Nearly 100 percent of the players who competed for at least four years at LSU have received their degrees. In addition, student-athletes who leave the university early to play professional baseball often return at a later time to earn their degrees. For example, pitcher Clay Parker, who completed his athletic eligibility in 1984, received his LSU degree in 1995 after enjoying a lengthy major league career. Chicago Cubs second baseman Todd Walker, who signed a pro contract in 1994, received a business degree from LSU in the fall of 1998.

**Forty-four former baseball players have earned LSU degrees over the past four years.**

In December, 1999, five Tigers became LSU graduates -- pitchers Doug Thompson and Kevin Shipp, outfielders Danny Higgins and Wes Davis, and infielder Mike Neal. Twelve more former Tigers earned degrees in the 2000 calendar year -- pitchers Matt Colvin, Trey Hodges, Jeremy Loftice and Ben Saxon, outfielders Tom Bernhardt, Mike Koerner, Jeremy Witten, Christian Bourgeois and Antoine Simon, and infielders Mike Daly, Josh Dalton and Eddy Furniss. Infielder Trey McClure, a three-time team captain (1997-99), received his LSU degree in May, 2001.

Former Tigers earning degrees from May-December, 2002 include: infielders Blair Barbier and Jeff Leamont; outfielders David Raymer, Bryon Bennett, Johnnie Thibodeaux, Tommy Morel and Christian Bourgeois (master's degree);



*Major leaguer Warren Morris a 1995 Academic All-American, was one of 16 former LSU players appearing on 2003 major league rosters.*

## SEVEN

LSU placed seven players on the 2003 SEC Academic Honor Roll. The honorees

included pitcher David Miller, third baseman Wally Pontiff, pitcher Justin Hill, pitcher Chad Vaught, infielder Rocky Scelfo, pitcher Lukas Guidroz and pitcher Weylin Guidry.

catchers Jamin Garidel, Courtney Hernandez and Kevin Ward (MBA); and pitchers Billy Brian, Justin Hill, Weylin Guidry, Tim Nugent, Patrick Coogan, Barry Manuel, David Miller, Chucky Son and Bhrett McCabe (Ph.D in psychology).

Graduates from May-December, 2003 include: pitchers Rick Greene, Bo Pettit, Chad Vaught and Jake Tompkins; outfielders Billy McBride and Matt Heath; and catcher Shawn French.

**LSU placed seven players on the 2003 SEC Academic Honor Roll.** The honorees included pitcher David Miller (3.17 gpa in civil engineering), third baseman Wally Pontiff (3.73 gpa in biology), pitcher Justin Hill (3.70 gpa in general studies), pitcher Chad Vaught (3.31 gpa in zoology), pitcher Lukas Guidroz (3.11 gpa in general studies), pitcher Weylin Guidry (3.33 gpa in marketing) and infielder Rocky Scelfo (3.16 gpa in general studies). Pontiff was also a member of the 2002 GTE/CoSIDA District VI Academic all-America team.

Former LSU first baseman Eddy Furniss was named a 1997 first-team Academic all-American by GTE-CoSIDA, and he received second-team Academic all-America recognition in 1996 and 1998. LSU's other Academic all-America selections include pitcher Chris Demouy (third-team, 1996), second baseman Warren Morris (first-team, 1995) and catcher Tim Lanier (third-team, 1994).

The scholastic progress of the players is closely monitored by both the coaching staff and by the counselors in LSU's Academic Center for Athletes. Monthly reports are sent to the players' parents detailing the athletes' educational and social advancement. Study sessions and exams always take precedence when conflicting with a baseball practice schedule.