

LSU ALMA MATER

Where stately oaks and broad magnolias shade inspiring halls,
There stands our dear old Alma Mater who to us recalls
Fond memories that waken in our hearts a tender glow,
And make us happy for the love that we have learned to know.

All praise to thee our Alma Mater, molder of mankind,
May greater glory, love unending be forever thine.
Our worth in life will be thy worth we pray to keep it true,
And may thy spirit live in us ... Forever LSU.



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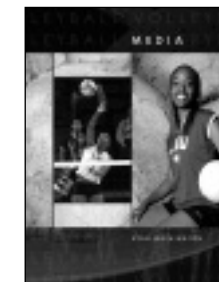
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After earning a share of the SEC Western Division title, the 2005 Tigers advanced to the NCAA Regional Tournament in Austin, Texas.

VOLLEYBALL INFORMATION

HEAD COACH:	Fran Flory
ALMA MATER, YEAR:	Texas, 1984
CAREER RECORD:	239-223 (15 years)
RECORD AT LSU:	129-109 (Eight years)
ASSISTANT COACHES:	Craig Bere (Morehead State, 1995) John Blackwell (Millsaps, 1992)

TEAM INFORMATION

2005 RECORD:	21-8
2005 SEC RECORD:	11-5 (Tied-1st - West)
2005 POSTSEASON:	NCAA Tournament
STARTERS RETURNING/LOST:	4 + Libero/2
LETTERWINNERS RETURNING/LOST:	9/4
NEWCOMERS:	7
ALL-TIME RECORD:	735-439 (.626, 32 years)
ALL-TIME SEC RECORD:	158-121 (.566, 23 years)
SEC TOURNAMENT APPEARANCES:	27
ALL-TIME SEC TOURNAMENT RECORD:	27-27 (.500)
SEC TOURNAMENT TITLES:	4 (1986, 1989, 1990, 1991)
NCAA TOURNAMENT APPEARANCES:	7
NCAA TOURNAMENT RECORD:	10-7 (.588)
FINAL FOUR APPEARANCES:	2 (1990, 1991)

UNIVERSITY INFORMATION

LOCATION:	Baton Rouge, La.
FOUNDED:	1860
ENROLLMENT:	30,584
NICKNAME:	Tigers or Fighting Tigers
COLORS:	Purple & Gold
MASCOT:	Mike V (live Bengal tiger)
HOME FACILITY (CAPACITY):	Maravich Center (13,425)
CONFERENCE:	Southeastern

UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION

PRESIDENT:	Dr. William L. Jenkins
CHANCELLOR:	Sean O'Keefe
FACULTY REPRESENTATIVE:	Kenneth E. Carpenter

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CREDITS AND COVERS

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INTRO

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HUNGRY FOR MORE

After winning their first Southeastern Conference Western Division Championship in school history and advancing to the NCAA Tournament for the first time in 13 years, the LSU volleyball team looks to build on that momentum as they enter the 2006 season with even higher hopes.

"The 2006 season will be an exciting season for us," said head coach Fran Flory. "We have a veteran team returning. We got a taste of what it was like to be in the NCAA Tournament and walked away wanting more. We're very excited."

With nine returning letterwinners and four seniors - Melody Clark (Colorado Springs, Colo.), Lauren Leaumont (New Orleans, La.), Kassi Mikulik (Flatonia, Texas) and Daniela Romero (Arlington, Texas) - who have started throughout their careers, the Tigers boast veteran leadership that complements their youth, which includes 2005 SEC Freshman of the Year Marina Skender.

"The team prepared very well in the spring and continues to prepare very well going into the fall," said Flory. "We feel the leadership that the senior class provides will allow us to take the step to not just to be in the NCAA Tournament, but compete and truly have an opportunity to play further into the tournament."

After coming in and carrying much of the load early in their careers, the four seniors have matured to lead the volleyball program to improving records in each of the last three seasons.

"The seniors have kind of run the gamut in terms of their experiences at LSU and they've gone through a great deal of adversity," said Flory. "I think that they have grown into a very strong group - a group that has outstanding leadership."

"Great teams have great leaders and I think that we have a number of people who will be able to step into that role at different times and in different areas and make sure that we succeed."

In much the same way as last year, the Tigers will not be dominated by any one element, but will spread their attack throughout the lineup. If LSU continues to improve on its serve receive and ball control, the Tigers will have the ability to run an offensive attack that sees LSU go at an opponent from many angles.

"I think that this team will be very balanced," said Flory. "I don't think there is going to be one area that is going to be an Achilles heel for us in terms of our offense. I think if we are able to ball control and pass and serve receive to a high enough level, then we will be a team that is very difficult to defend because we will be able to attack you in so many zones."

MIDDLE BLOCKERS

Despite losing honorable mention All-American Ivana Kuzmic to graduation, the middle blocker position should remain a solid strength for the Tigers in 2006. With the return of Clark, who ranked sixth in the SEC in blocks in conference games, and the addition of redshirt freshman Lauren DeGirolamo (Belleville, Ill.) and true freshman Brittnee Cooper (Houston, Texas), the middle will become more offensive minded this season.

"Obviously we have a void in the middle after losing an All-American in Ivana," said Flory. "Those are certainly big shoes to fill and her attributes were certainly numerous. However, Lauren

DeGirolamo had a tremendous spring and created an opportunity through her athleticism, as a different type of athlete than Ivana, and allows us to change our offense a little bit and become more offensive minded in the middle.

"Lauren's athleticism and attributes also allow us to match Melody, so it's going to be an easier system to set and an easier system to run. It allows us to be a little more versatile in the number of zones we can attack with our middles."

Having solidified her role in the middle last season after seeing time in both the middle and on the right side over the last two seasons, Clark has been a quiet contributor for the Tigers throughout her career.

"Mel has been a stabilizing force and probably one of the most important players in our program in her tenure here," said Flory. "The unsung hero just about every year but she hasn't ever really gotten a lot of credit other than from our staff, and we certainly know her value and we look for her to have a tremendous senior year."

A talented two-sport standout, Cooper joins the LSU squad after leading the Houston Juniors 16 Nationals club team to a fifth-place finish in the Junior Olympics in 2004.

"Brittnee is going to come in and be given the opportunity to work into a position," said Flory. "She will be a physical presence and shore up the front row defensively with her blocking, range and ability to reach over the net. She will eventually be the type of imposing blocker that Ivana was but she will need a little time to work into the speed and tempo of our offense, but she is certainly capable with her abilities."

OUTSIDE HITTERS

After an outstanding season in 2005, LSU returns experienced outside hitters this season. Sophomore Kyna Washington (Houston, Texas) made an immediate impact as a freshman in 2005, earning SEC All-Freshman team and honorable mention All-Louisiana honors. Washington moved into the starting lineup during the third week of the season and completed the year ranked second on the team in kills and kills per game.

"Kyna Washington had a great freshman year," said Flory. "We were able to bring her along slowly and mature her without putting a lot of pressure on her early in the season. We reaped the benefits of that throughout the latter part of the year. She has matured as a player, becoming more creative and becoming more of the terminating offensive threat that we need her to be for this team."

After earning SEC Freshman of the Year honors on the right side, sophomore Marina Skender (Zagreb, Croatia) played much of the spring on the outside and may see time on the court there this season. In her inaugural campaign, she ranked third on the team in kills, blocks and assists while ranking second in service aces.

"Marina developed into an outstanding left side this spring and that may be a possibility this fall," said Flory. "She has the most shots of any outside hitter I have ever coached. Her ability to place the ball, while being accurate and efficient are probably her biggest attributes. She can also be a ter-



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minating player on the left side.”

One of the stars of the 2006 Tiger signing class, Alaina Klarquist (Allen, Texas) is a two-time participant in the USA Volleyball High Performance camp. She also led Allen High School to a Class 5A runner-up finish in 2003 and will likely make an immediate impact on the court for LSU.

“Alaina Klarquist is a physical kid who hits a heavy ball,” said Flory. “She will probably have an opportunity to play fairly early. Our offense fits right into her ability and she fits into our system very well. I don’t think it will take her long to find a rhythm within the offensive game that we are playing.”

One of LSU’s emotional leaders on and off the court, Lauren Leamont (New Orleans, La.) returns for her final season with the Tigers. The senior saw action in all 29 matches a year ago and has always stepped up to the challenge to keep an LSU rally going when called upon.

“Lauren Leamont has a huge arsenal of shots,” said Flory. “She does a great job of keeping us in play. She isn’t a high error type of player and certainly provides a great balance to the rest of the outside hitters.”

A local recruit who is familiar with the Tigers, Shannon Balikowsky comes to LSU from Woodlawn High School across town in Baton Rouge. She was a 2005 first-team all-state selection and led the Panthers to the 2003 and 2004 district championships.

“Shannon is a physical player who comes in from high school,” said Flory. “She will need some time to adjust to the collegiate game but certainly has some great athletic ability and late in the season could have some opportunity to play.

A transfer from St. Edwards University in Austin, Texas, Kristie Dugas was a 2004 all-state selection at Pius X High School in Lincoln, Neb. She led the Thunderbolts to a state runner-up finish in 2004 and a third place finish in the state in 2003.

“Kristie Dugas is a bit smaller but does a nice job of being a ball-control outside,” said Flory.

RIGHT SIDE

Junior Vanessa Freeman (Granger, Texas) returns to action after a great spring. The powerful right side is one of the most athletic players on the court for the Tigers and has continued to develop each year she has been at LSU.

“Vanessa developed into a terminator on the right side over the spring and can terminate at any point in a rally,” said Flory. “She developed a great number of shots and creates great angles with her arm and athleticism, and certainly is a blocking force on the right side.

In addition to action on the outside, Skender may also return to play on the right side, where she starred as a freshman last season. She became the first freshman at LSU to earn All-SEC honors since Daniela Reis in 1989.

“There is not much you need to say about Marina,” said Flory. “She was the Freshman of the Year playing the right side. She has pinpoint accuracy and can hit shots that everyone in the gym looks around and asks how she did that. She is one of the most deceptive offensive players I have ever coached.”

SETTERS

After running both a 6-1 and a 5-2 last season, Romero returns for her senior season with a renewed leadership. Ranked fourth in career assists in school history, she will finally be able to run her type of offense for the first time.

“As a senior, Dee certainly will lead this team,” said Flory. “She has matured into a very positive leader on the court. She is finally being allowed to run the type of offense that best fits her abilities and that she most enjoys running.

“She does a great job of set selection and set location. I think the biggest improvement we will see with her this year is set location. She worked really hard this past spring to become more consistent at that and I think she was very successful.”

The Tigers bring in freshman Maggie Lonergan (Antioch, Ill.), who may figure into playing time. An experienced setter, she led the Sky High Volleyball Club to back-to-back third place finishes nationally in the 15 Club National Division and 16 Club National Division in 2003 and 2004 while being named to the all-tournament teams both years.

“Maggie is a very well-trained setter,” said Flory. “She set for a high-level club her entire career and has enjoyed a high level of success. She has nice speed and delivery. She has run a faster offense so she should fit right into the type of offense that we run.”

Renee Zeringue (Prairieville, La.) also joins the program after success at Germantown (Tenn.) High School, where she led her team to 2003 and 2005 Tennessee state championships.

“Renee will need some training and some time to adjust, but certainly has some outstanding abilities,” said Flory. “She is a fierce competitor and has shown some very positive leadership skills.”

LIBERO/DEFENSIVE SPECIALIST

After making the transition from outside hitter to libero last season, Mikulik returns to the defensive role again in 2006. The senior ranked ninth in the SEC in digs per game, recording the 10th most single-season digs in school history.

“Kassi was probably last year’s most valuable player in the opinion of the staff,” said Flory. “She was the true stabilizing force on the court consistently. She is the backbone of the defense and our

ball control. She became a very solid serve receive person and her defensive range increased significantly. She will once again be a vital part of this team and our success.”

After seeing limited action as a freshman due to an injury suffered during the summer before coming to LSU, Elena Martinez (New Orleans, La.) returns for her sophomore season healthy and in a position to compete for the starting libero role.

“Elena developed very well throughout the spring,” said Flory. “She has finally healed from her injuries and has had an opportunity to play on an international tour and train with the national team this summer. She will come in and certainly challenge for the libero spot this year with Kassi. I think competition will be very heated in this position.”

After seeing action as a defensive specialist and for her serving last season, Michelle Hensgens (Morgan City, La.) returns for her junior season with the Tigers after showing progress and development during the spring.

“Michelle had an outstanding spring,” said Flory. “She probably showed the most improvement of any player on the team. Her hand speed and foot speed were tremendously improved and her ball control defense took huge step up.

SCHEDULE

In 2006, the SEC has made the first dramatic alteration of the volleyball format in 15 years, since the addition of Arkansas and South Carolina to the league. Gone is the SEC Tournament, which had been a staple of the postseason since 1979, and in its place is a double round-robin regular season league format which will see each of the conference’s 11 teams play one another twice to determine the league champion and who earns the SEC’s automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament.

“The SEC is going to a double round for the first time in its history,” said Flory. “We’re excited about that. We like the idea that we will play everyone home and away.”

Last season, the SEC emerged on the national scene as a volleyball force with the league recording a record six teams earning bids to the NCAA Tournament, with Tennessee advancing to the Final Four for the first time and Florida advancing to the Elite Eight. With this type of success, SEC teams are now able to validate their national standing with conference victories rather than relying upon non-conference wins.

“I think that throughout the conference every program has raised the level of success to the point that we will be able to be successful by playing each other and kind of protecting each other within the conference,” said Flory. “I think that was illustrated last year with teams getting into the NCAA Tournament based on conference wins. That was one of the first years that happened in the SEC.

“Certainly we know as a conference, and as a program, that we have got to beat some non-conference opponents to create that opportunity,” Flory continued. “We’ve scheduled our pre-conference schedule with that in mind, so that we will have a strong enough winning percentage and hopefully some significant wins pre-conference to lend some additional credibility to the SEC schedule.”

LSU has an outstanding non-conference schedule in 2006, with four teams that advanced to the 2005 NCAA Tournament. The slate includes three pre-conference tournaments and one post-conference tournament.

After playing only six matches in the Maravich Center a year ago due to circumstances beyond their control, the Tigers begin the season at home with the Tiger Invitational and are scheduled to play in the Maravich Center 13 times in 2006. As part of the season-opening tournament, LSU will host 2005 Sweet Sixteen participant Penn State, along with 2004 NCAA Tournament participant Rice and in-state rival Nicholls State.

“We are excited about the opportunity to have Penn State on our home floor opening weekend,” said Flory. “It’s not often do you get a top 10 program to come in and play you on your home court and I think it’s a tribute to what we have been able to accomplish in the last few years that people are willing to do that.”

Following the Tiger Invitational, the Tigers travel to St. Louis for the Billiken Invitational. LSU will face perennial powers Minnesota and Texas A&M, along with host St. Louis.

“Certainly the St. Louis tournament is one of the top tournaments in the country in terms of competition,” said Flory. “Texas A&M will be very solid. Minnesota will be among the top in the Big 10 and St. Louis will have a chance to be successful in their conference as well.”

The Tigers close out the pre-conference schedule in the Marriott Flyer Invitational. LSU will take on 2006 NCAA Tournament participant Dayton, along with Indiana and Wake Forest.

“The Dayton Tournament is a very solid tournament with teams that will be challenging for their conference tournaments or will be the front runner for that championship,” said Flory.

Following the SEC season, the Tigers will travel for the SEC/Big East Challenge at Disney’s Wide World of Sports Complex. LSU will face St. John’s and Marquette to close out the regular season.

“The schedule is catered towards having an opportunity to play in the NCAA Tournament and having an opportunity to play teams that are going to be in the tournament as well,” said Flory. “It’s a tough schedule both home and away.”

“We got a taste of what it was like to be in the NCAA Tournament and walked away wanting more.”



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NUMERICAL

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT.	CL./EXP.	HOMETOWN/PREVIOUS SCHOOL
1	Lauren Leaumont	OH	5-9	Sr./3L	New Orleans, La./Mount Carmel Academy
2	Vanessa Freeman	RS	6-1	Jr./2L	Granger, Texas/Granger HS
3	Maggie Lonergan	S	5-8	Fr./HS	Antioch, Ill./Antioch Community HS
4	Lauren DeGirolamo	MB	6-1	Fr./RS	Belleville, Ill./Belleville West HS
7	Kyna Washington	OH	5-11	So./1L	Houston, Texas/Westfield HS
8	Kristie Dugas	OH	6-0	Fr./TR	Lincoln, Neb./St. Edward's University
10	Alaina Klarquist	OH	6-1	Fr./HS	Allen, Texas/Allen HS
11	Elena Martinez	DS/L	5-8	So./1L	New Orleans, La./Newman School
12	Marina Skender	RS/OH	5-11	So./1L	Zagreb, Croatia/First Economic School
13	Michelle Hensgens	DS/L	5-3	Jr./2L	Morgan City, La./Central Catholic HS
14	Renee Zeringue	S	5-8	Fr./HS	Germantown, Tenn./Germantown HS
16	Melody Clark	MB	6-1	Sr./3L	Colorado Springs, Colo./Colo. Springs Christian HS
24	Kassi Mikulik	L/DS	5-10	Sr./3L	Flatonina, Texas/Flatonina HS
25	Brittnee Cooper	MB	6-3	Fr./HS	Houston, Texas/Thurgood Marshall HS
28	Shannon Balikowsky	OH	5-11	Fr./HS	Baton Rouge, La./Woodlawn HS
31	Daniela Romero	S	5-8	Sr./3L	Arlington, Texas/James Martin HS

ALPHABETICAL

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT.	CL./EXP.	HOMETOWN/PREVIOUS SCHOOL
28	Shannon Balikowsky	OH	5-11	Fr./HS	Baton Rouge, La./Woodlawn HS
16	Melody Clark	MB	6-1	Sr./3L	Colorado Springs, Colo./Colo. Springs Christian HS
25	Brittnee Cooper	MB	6-3	Fr./HS	Houston, Texas/Thurgood Marshall HS
4	Lauren DeGirolamo	MB	6-1	Fr./RS	Belleville, Ill./Belleville West HS
8	Kristie Dugas	OH	6-0	Fr./TR	Lincoln, Neb./St. Edward's University
2	Vanessa Freeman	RS	6-1	Jr./2L	Granger, Texas/Granger HS
13	Michelle Hensgens	DS/L	5-3	Jr./2L	Morgan City, La./Central Catholic HS
10	Alaina Klarquist	OH	6-1	Fr./HS	Allen, Texas/Allen HS
1	Lauren Leaumont	OH	5-9	Sr./3L	New Orleans, La./Mount Carmel Academy
3	Maggie Lonergan	S	5-8	Fr./HS	Antioch, Ill./Antioch Community HS
11	Elena Martinez	DS/L	5-8	So./1L	New Orleans, La./Newman School
24	Kassi Mikulik	L/DS	5-10	Sr./3L	Flatonina, Texas/Flatonina HS
31	Daniela Romero	S	5-8	Sr./3L	Arlington, Texas/James Martin HS
12	Marina Skender	RS/OH	5-11	So./1L	Zagreb, Croatia/First Economic School
7	Kyna Washington	OH	5-11	So./1L	Houston, Texas/Westfield HS
14	Renee Zeringue	S	5-8	Fr./HS	Germantown, Tenn./Germantown HS

HEAD COACH	Fran Flory (Texas, 1984)
Record at LSU	129-109/Eight seasons
Overall Record	239-223/15 seasons

ASSISTANT COACHES

Craig Bere (Morehead State, 1995)
John Blackwell (Millsaps, 1993)

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

SHANNON BALIKOWSKY	bah-lee-COW-ski	KASSI MIKULIK	CASS-see MICK-uh-lick
KRISTIE DUGAS	do-gahs	DANIELA ROMERO	Dan-YELL-a Ro-MER-o
MICHELLE HENSGENS	HENS-gins	KYNA WASHINGTON	KY-nuh
ALAINA KLARQUIST	uh-lan-uh klar-qwist	RENEE ZERINGUE	zuh-RANG
LAUREN LEAUMONT	la-mont	FRAN FLORY	Floor-ee
ELENA MARTINEZ	E-LANE-uh mar-teen-ez	CRAIG BERE	Berry

ROSTER BREAKDOWN

BY STATE

COLORADO (1):

Melody Clark

ILLINOIS (2):

Lauren DeGirolamo

Maggie Lonergan

LOUISIANA (4):

Shannon Balikowsky

Michelle Hensgens

Lauren Leaumont

Elena Martinez

NEBRASKA (1):

Kristie Dugas

TENNESSEE (1):

Renee Zeringue

TEXAS (6):

Brittnee Cooper

Vanessa Freeman

Alaina Klarquist

Kassi Mikulik

Daniela Romero

Kyna Washington

BY CLASS

SENIORS (4):

Melody Clark

Lauren Leaumont

Kassi Mikulik

Daniela Romero

JUNIORS (2):

Vanessa Freeman

Michelle Hensgens

SOPHOMORES (3):

Elena Martinez

Marina Skender

Kyna Washington

FRESHMEN (7):

Shannon Balikowsky

Brittnee Cooper

Kristie Dugas

Lauren DeGirolamo

Alaina Klarquist

Maggie Lonergan

Renee Zeringue

BY POSITION

MIDDLE BLOCKER (3):

Melody Clark

Brittnee Cooper

Lauren DeGirolamo

OUTSIDE HITTER (5):

Shannon Balikowsky

Kristie Dugas

Alaina Klarquist

Lauren Leaumont

Kyna Washington

RIGHT SIDE (2):

Vanessa Freeman

Marina Skender

SETTER (3):

Maggie Lonergan

Daniela Romero

Renee Zeringue

DEFENSIVE SPECIALIST (3):

Michelle Hensgens

Elena Martinez

Kassi Mikulik