



TIGER RAG

OCTOBER 2026 • VOLUME 49, ISSUE 10

SAME AS IT EVER WAS?

LSU'S OLE MISS LOSS EXPOSED
THREE FAMILIAR PROBLEMS

RUNNING QUARTERBACKS
SAM LEAVITT'S INACCURACY
THE OFFENSIVE LINE

THE \$50 MILLION QUESTION
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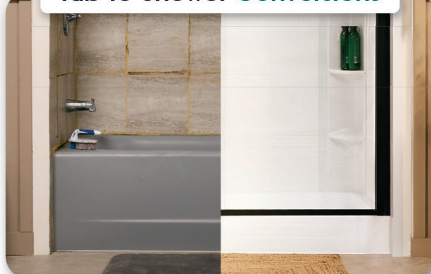
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Table of Contents

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ON THE COVER:
LSU has a brand new team, but the Tigers are dealing with the same old issues.



PUBLISHED BY
Kingfish Communications

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Baton Rouge, LA 70806
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Fax: (225) 297-7539

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Cover Design **JULIUS MCMAINS, JR.**
Cover Photo **MICHAEL BACIGALUPI**

Tiger Rag (USPS 447-970, ISSN 0477-7604) is published monthly by Kingfish Communications, LLC dba Tiger Rag Magazine, 10500 Coursey Boulevard, Suite 104, Baton Rouge, LA and additional mailing offices.
POST MASTER: Send address changes to TIGER RAG, 10500 Coursey Boulevard, Suite 104, Baton Rouge, LA 70816-4045

"First Class Permit Imprint #1866, please send returns to: TIGER RAG, 10500 Coursey Boulevard, Suite 104, Baton Rouge, LA 70816-4045"

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- 03** THE NO B.S. ZONE:
DAE'QUAN WRIGHT,
WHERE ARE YOU?
by Glenn Guilbeau
- 04** MAILBAG
- 05** FOR THE FAN ON THE FLY
Presented by the Baton Rouge Airport
- 06** TIGER TIDBITS
- 10** CALENDAR
- 12** NEXT LEVEL TIGERS:
PAUL SKENES'
FORGETTABLE SEASON
- 14** EYE ON THE SEC:
WHO'S YOUR TRINIDADDY?
Presented by Louisiana Lottery
- 16** FROM THE VAULT:
2016 LEONARD FOURNETTE
DOMINATES OLE MISS
Presented by Campus Federal Credit Union
- 18** THE SITDOWN:
DALTON HILLIARD
Presented by HUB International
- 20** THE ONLY JOB
JERRY STOVALL (1941-2026)
EVER WANTED
- 26** DILIN JONES:
LSU'S LONE WOLF BACK
- 28** MICHAEL BONNETTE:
LSU'S LEGENDARY SPORTS
INFORMATION DIRECTOR
- 32** LANE KIFFIN LEFT TOO
GOOD A TEAM AT OLE MISS
- 34** LSU: SAME AS IT EVER WAS?
- 36** MEN'S BASKETBALL
ROSTER UPDATE
- 40** WOMEN'S BASKETBALL
ROSTER UPDATE
- 42** KATE KOVAL: NOT YOUR
TYPICAL TRANSFER
- 44** JOE DEAN, JR. (1954-2026)
- 56** EXTRA POINTS:
WHAT DID LANE BUY?
by Todd Horne
- 57** MOTIVATIONAL MOMENTS
by Dale Brown
- 58** KLEINPETER DIARY:
KIFFIN TAKES A BIT
OF HIS OWN MEDICINE
by Jim Kleinpeter
- 59** STATISTICALLY SPEAKING
by Jim Engster

Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation This statement of ownership, management and circulation is being made pursuant to 39 U.S.C. 3685.		
Tiger Rag (publication number 447-970) is published monthly January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November, and December by Kingfish Communications, LLC, 10500 Coursey Blvd., Ste. 104, Baton Rouge, LA 70816. The publisher of Tiger Rag is Kingfish Communications, LLC. Address is 10500 Coursey Blvd., Ste. 104, Baton Rouge, LA 70816. The editor of Tiger Rag is Todd Horne. His address is 10500 Coursey Blvd., Ste. 104, Baton Rouge, LA 70816. Tiger Rag is owned by James Engster, President, address at 10500 Coursey Blvd., Ste. 104, Baton Rouge, LA 70816. There are no known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of the total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities. Information on the extent and nature of Tiger Rag's circulation is included in the accompanying chart. Issue Date for Circulation Data 10/05/2025.		
	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Month	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
Total No. of Copies Paid/Requested Outside-County Mail Subscriptions	381	359
1257	0	0
Paid In-County Subscriptions	0	0
Paid Distribution Outside the Mail (Sales through Dealers, Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, & Other Non-USPS Paid Distribution)	319	314
Other Classes Mailed through the USPS	0	0
Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation	9	4
2117	9	4
Free Distribution by mail, Outside-County	27	318
Free Distribution by mail, In-County	27	19
Free Distribution by mail, Other Classes through USPS	355	337
Free Distribution Outside the Mail	97.26%	98.74%
Total Free Distribution		
3459		
Copies Not Distributed		
75		
Total		
3525		
Percent paid and/or Requested Circulation		
The above information is signed and attested to by Robyn Dow, Office Manager on 09/10/2026.		



Glenn Guilbeau
Tiger Rag Editor

A popular, cute question leading up to and after LSU's 2026 season opener against Clemson on Sept. 5 centered on Lane Kiffin trying to get a pair of his former players at Ole Miss who "had a cup of coffee" with NFL teams during training camp.

"Was the squeeze worth the juice?" That was the question posed often as Kiffin's legal battle with the NCAA and Southeastern Conference commissioner Greg Sankey raged over former Ole Miss tight end Dae'Quan Wright, who practiced with the Cleveland Browns at camp before being cut, and former Ole Miss defensive tackle Zxavian Harris, who was with the Saints very briefly in camp.

After LSU's 51-10 win over Clemson, ESPN's Heather Dinich asked Kiffin, "Is it still worth pushing for it?"

Kiffin said, "I knew you'd have something like that ready. Appreciate it. I'm not getting into it. But I appreciate the question."

That was a good and timely question by Dinich, and I will answer it for Kiffin now several weeks later. YES, resoundingly.

LSU had the best tight end in America in 6-foot-7, 240-pound Trey'Dez Green, who led the Tigers in receiving yards at 222 on 14 catches through three games this season. But he injured his knee after 19-yard catch and run early in the fourth quarter of then No. 7 LSU's 32-24 loss at No. 8 Ole Miss on Sept. 19.

Lane Kiffin Was Not Recruiting "NFL" Tight End Dae'Quan Wright Just Because He Was There

Two trainers helped Green off the field, and he did not return. He was originally not expected back until possibly the road game at Kentucky on Oct. 10.

Green's replacements – redshirt junior transfer Zach Grace (6-2, 236) of Oregon and redshirt junior transfer Malachi Thomas (6-3, 242) – left a lot of juice to be desired. Neither caught a pass.

"THERE'S A REASON WHY WE HAD DAE'QUAN ON OUR ROSTER. NOT ON OUR ROSTER - PRACTICING, READY TO PLAY, KNOWING THAT THIS POTENTIALLY COULD BE AN ISSUE."
- LANE KIFFIN

Grace was targeted once. He was wide open in the end zone on third-and-goal from the Ole Miss 6-yard line with 1:03 to play and LSU down, 32-24. Sam Leavitt's pass was off target, but it could have been caught. Green likely would have had the reach to catch it. Dae'Quan Wright at 6-4 and 255 pounds probably would have as well.

Wright caught 39 passes for 635 yards and five touchdowns at Ole Miss last season.

"Well, you kind of saw what it looks like there," Kiffin said after the loss when asked about his tight end position without Green. "It's different obviously. We even used Roman Mothershed (6-5, 212 receiver) a little bit. So, it is what it is."

Kiffin wasn't just chasing Wright because he was there last summer and because Sankey told him not to. He wasn't just being a rebel to be a rebel,

or just being Lane to be Lane.

"There's a reason why we had Dae'Quan on our roster," Kiffin said after the Ole Miss game. "Not on our roster – practicing, ready to play, knowing that this potentially could be an issue."

Wright and Harris are both out of football as the NFL ruled no team can sign either until after the season. Each were part of one of the many lawsuits involving hundreds of college athletes around the country signed as freshman in 2022 who sued the NCAA for a fifth year of eligibility.

Tough break. But Kiffin has no excuse. He signed 41 portal players, including the two previously mentioned tight ends. He should've gotten a better one. Most of the nine portal receivers he signed also appear only average as well.

The depth issue Kiffin faces at tight end and at the star position with the loss of Dashawn Spears for the season with a knee injury proves again what has always been true.

The NCAA Transfer Portal is often fool's gold, no matter how large or expensive it is, such as Kiffin's in 2026.

If Kiffin wins national championships at LSU, it will largely be via traditional high school recruiting supplemented by the portal. That will show depth in more ways than one.

Glenn Guilbeau is the editor of Tiger Rag and a columnist. A member of the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame, he previously was a national columnist at OutKick.com/FOX News and covered LSU for USA Today Network and the Baton Rouge Advocate. Reach him at glenn@tigerrag.com.



LSU's Loss To Ole Miss Hit Hard; And How LSU Could Get Revenge Vs. Greg Sankey

By Glenn Guilbeau, Tiger Rag Editor

After LSU fell at Ole Miss on Sept. 19, a reader did not like Glenn Guilbeau's column that compared LSU coach Lane Kiffin's loss to his former school (Ole Miss) to Alabama coach Nick Saban's loss to his former school (LSU) back in 2007.

"Lane Kiffin conflicted after watching so much of what he built at Ole Miss come to fruition with his old team deconstructing his new one," Guilbeau tweeted about the column.

"So, we got beat on the road by one score, and we were deconstructed?" @micah-husser 24 tweeted. "Seems a little heavy."

There were obvious comparisons between LSU and Kiffin's 32-24 loss at Ole Miss to LSU's and then coach Brian Kelly's 24-19 loss at Ole Miss last year. In both losses, LSU's defense folded late.

"But this loss feels less hopeless than last year," tweeted @bearded1ndr.

An interesting comparison was made concerning SEC commissioner Greg Sankey's feud with LSU coach Lane Kiffin over eligibility lawsuits the NCAA and SEC.

In a tweet, @rouxdsla compared Sankey to the late NFL commissioner Pete Rozelle and Kiffin to the late Oakland Raiders owner Al Davis. Rozelle and Davis feuded in the 1970s and '80s over Davis' antitrust lawsuit against the NFL. Then the Raiders won Super Bowl XV in the 1980 season, which meant Rozelle had to present Davis with the Lombardi Trophy in an awkward moment.

"Can't wait to watch Greg Sankey have to give the SEC Championship Trophy to Lane Kiffin," @rouxdsla said.



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No he's not! The best RB is on the bench. Berry is the best RB. And these so-called offensive geniuses that got completely outcoached by Pete Golding whose defenses Brian Kelly put almost 800 yards on in 23 & 24 better figure that out soon.



Dennis Lorio
@dlorio1

SLeavitt missed a few throws & didn't see several "open" receivers. Preseason most were concerned about OLine effectiveness. SLeavitt made some plays on the run because he had to. Run game had some improvement but pass pro subpar. Hard for OLine to protect when QB takes off



A less refined gentleman
@bearded1ndr

Disagree to some extent. First half we were outcoached and outplayed. Second half: Good adjustments but just dug too deep of a hole in the first half. Also curious why we didn't use any timeouts for the defense to try to readjust. Sam has to learn to be patient. But this loss feels less hopeless than last year



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Greg Sankey
Photo by: SEC



SEC Self-Governance: LSU Crisis Exposes the Risk

The SEC's Crackdown On LSU Looked More Like Panic.

By TODD HORNE, Tiger Rag Executive Editor

The conference is presenting LSU's retreat as proof that SEC self-governance works. The past three weeks revealed something much less orderly—and considerably more troubling.

Now that LSU has filled its football roster without Dae'Quan Wright and Zxavian Harris, the Southeastern Conference has discovered a grander meaning for what it just did.

Apparently, this was self-governance.

Georgia president Jere Morehead, speaking Friday after a meeting of the university's athletic board, said SEC members increasingly support the conference

creating and enforcing its own rules rather than continuing to depend entirely upon the NCAA.

"I think the members of the SEC support the notion of self-governance. I remain a strong advocate of the Southeastern Conference creating its own rules, and governing itself, and I'm going to be a strong supporter of commissioner Greg Sankey as he works to develop that model."

Morehead has advocated SEC self-governance before, and there is little reason to doubt that he believes in it. The NCAA has spent years demonstrating that it is too slow, too fractured and too legally vulnerable to govern major college athletics effectively. The SEC and Big Ten have openly considered assuming greater control over eligibility, compensation and enforcement.

But presenting the LSU crisis as evidence that SEC self-governance works requires a remarkably polished retrospective view of what the conference has irresponsibly put on public display over the past three weeks.

The explanation is retrospective. The behavior was reactive.

The SEC did not calmly introduce a carefully constructed governance model. It reacted to LSU and LSU coach Lane Kiffin. It did not establish a prospective rule after months of open deliberation. It adopted an emergency policy as LSU explored adding two former players who had briefly signed NFL contracts and were seeking another season of college eligibility through the courts.

LSU abstained from the vote. The other 15 schools approved the policy.

The SEC attached extraordinary possible punishments to it: a coach's suspension for half a season, a fine worth as much as 50 percent of a sport's operating budget and the loss of an institution's conference voting rights.

When Louisiana District Judge William Jordan issued a preliminary injunction opening a path for Wright and Harris to join LSU, the conference did not simply appeal the order through the Louisiana court system.

It sued LSU.

The SEC filed a federal lawsuit in Alabama against one of its own members, LSU president Wade Rousse, athletic director Verge Ausberry and Kiffin. It then amended the

lawsuit and raised the possibility of expelling LSU from the conference.

The escalation went from two football players to LSU's institutional control to the possible destruction of a conference relationship that has existed since 1932.

No former NFL player had appeared in a game for LSU. Wright and Harris were not on the active roster. LSU had not violated the new policy by using either man in competition. Yet the conference was prepared to convene its presidents and chancellors while asking a federal court to protect its power to throw LSU out.

That did not resemble a confident institution methodically testing a new governing structure. It resembled an institution that believed it was losing control and was willing to use every available weapon to recover it.

Once LSU filled its 105-player roster without Wright and Harris, Rousse wrote Sankey that the immediate issue was moot. The threatened expulsion vote did not occur. No punishment was imposed. The federal hearing was postponed.

Then came the intellectual explanation.

Morehead now says the LSU episode shows why the SEC should govern itself. The report from Athens went further, describing the controversy as an early test of whether a conference could make and enforce its own rules and concluding that, so far, the model appears to be holding up.

But what, exactly, has held up?

The SEC has not won an appeal of the Louisiana injunction. It has not obtained a federal ruling validating its new policy. It has not proved that LSU violated an existing rule. It has not established that the threatened punishments were reasonable or that expelling LSU would have been legally justified.

The SEC proved that it possesses enough economic power to make one of its members retreat. That is leverage. It is not yet a governing model.

LSU faced a choice that was hardly theoretical. It could continue pursuing two players and risk enormous financial penalties, the suspension of its first-year coach, the loss of its voice in conference decisions and, eventually, its SEC membership. Or it could fill the last two roster positions with other players and remove the immediate pretext for the conference's assault.

LSU chose institutional survival.

The SEC can call the result compliance. It should not confuse coerced obedience with proof that its system is fair, stable or worthy of greater legal protection.

Responsible governance requires more than the ability to make members surrender. It requires clear rules adopted before a controversy begins. It requires consistent enforcement, proportionate penalties and a legitimate process through which a member can challenge the authority of the people imposing them.

The LSU episode offered very little of that. Instead, the conference adopted a policy amid active litigation, directed it at an immediate competitive controversy, threatened penalties wildly disproportionate to anything LSU had actually done and escalated toward expulsion before either player participated in a game.

The emotional character of the response was difficult to miss. There was alarm that Kiffin had found an opening. There was fear that other schools would follow. There was resentment that a Louisiana state court had asserted authority over the NCAA and SEC. And there was unmistakable urgency to force LSU to close the door before the opening became a national entrance.

Now the SEC wants Congress to strengthen its hand.

The Protect College Sports Act could grant antitrust protection not only to the NCAA but also to conferences and individual schools enforcing compensation and eligibility rules. The SEC has separately discussed establishing its own salary cap, possibly through collective bargaining with players.

That makes the conduct of the past three weeks more important, not less.

If the SEC is asking Congress to shield conference rulemaking from litigation, the public has every reason to examine how the conference exercises power when challenged. If the LSU affair is the example, the answer is not reassuring.

The SEC responded to a disputed eligibility question by threatening the place of one of its oldest members in the league. It used the possibility of expulsion before obtaining a final ruling that its position was correct. It placed LSU under extreme

(continued next page)



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institutional pressure and then treated LSU's retreat as validation of the pressure itself.

Morehead is right about one thing: The LSU case revealed what SEC self-governance could look like.

It revealed a conference powerful enough to write its own rules, interpret its own rules, select the punishment for violating its own rules and threaten any member that asks a court whether those rules are lawful.

The question is not simply whether the SEC can govern itself. The question is who will govern the SEC.

Three weeks of escalation should not be rewritten as a calm and successful demonstration of conference leadership. The SEC did not unveil a governing model. It exposed an institutional instinct.

It felt its authority threatened, used overwhelming force and called the resulting surrender governance.



The Most Unpopular Heisman Trophy Winner In LSU History

Jayden Daniels' latest left-elbow dislocation arrives inside a rupture with LSU that cannot be reduced to fan ingratitude.

LSU promised No. 5 to DJ Pickett during his recruitment. Brian Kelly withheld it after Daniels objected, reasoning that Daniels' Heisman number should receive the same protection as Joe Burrow's No. 9. Lane Kiffin honored the promise to Pickett. Daniels, believing LSU had assured him No. 5 would remain protected, answered by withdrawing permission for the university to use his name, image and likeness through a cease-and-desist letter.

Tiger Stadium interpreted that defense of legacy as entitlement. When weekly NFL highlights show Daniels, the entire stadium boos.

That is why this injury lands differently. LSU's most unpopular Heisman winner is physically vulnerable while institutionally estranged: honored in the record book, displaced on the roster, rejected by the crowd and unable to control what his season means to a place where he produced it. **TR**

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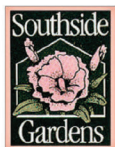
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Paul Skenes' Big Skid In 2026

After Winning Rookie Of The Year In 2024 And The Cy Young in 2025,
The Next Nolan Ryan Slowed Down

By GLENN GUILBEAU, Tiger Rag Editor

The Pittsburgh Pirates were eliminated from the Major League Baseball Playoffs entering the last week of the regular season in September. That is 11 straight seasons for the franchise and third straight with franchise pitcher

Paul Skenes – the No. 1 pick of the MLB Draft in 2023 from LSU.

The Pirates were better in 2026 than in Skenes' first two seasons as Pittsburgh was actually above .500 at 79-77 going into the final week. In 2025, the Pirates

finished 71-91 and 26 games out. In 2024, they were 76-86 and 17 out.

When Skenes won National League Rookie of the Year in 2024 at 11-3 with a 1.96 ERA and started the first of two straight All-Star games, Pittsburgh

averaged 1.35 runs a game with Skenes on the mound. In 2025 when Skenes took the National League Cy Young with a 10-10 mark and 1.96 ERA, he got 3.4 runs a game.

This season, Pittsburgh bats were providing 4.74 runs a game for Skenes, but he didn't keep up his end. Entering the season's last week, Skenes had a 3.91 ERA with a 10-11 mark.

"Their ace's struggles offered a reminder of one reason why a ticket won't be punched," Colin Beazley of the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette wrote as the season neared the end.

The main reason for Skenes' skid has been, according to most accounts, his drop in velocity from 98.8 as a rookie to 98.2 in 2025 and to 96.8 this season.

"It's been frustrating," Skenes told FOX Sports late in the season. "But the thing I've kind of realized is that I do everything I can. There's an answer there somewhere. The velo is down. We see all the numbers. We can try to address it. We can do all that. To some extent, it's kind of just how it is."

Skenes' speed has also been up and down. He would have a poor outing, then a good one. He had three consecutive quality starts in mid-June. But from June 26 through August 5, he had a 6.26 ERA in eight starts with an uncharacteristic 3.9 walks per nine innings when his career average for walks was 2.2 per nine.

"Everything is just having awareness of your hand at release," Skenes said. "It's amazing how small things can be up the chain to throw that off. But looking at my assessments, nothing crazy has happened. What has happened this year, probably for that stretch in June through the beginning of August, was the velocity went down."

That will obviously be what Skenes and the Pirates focus on before the 2027 season, which will be his first under the arbitration window. His contract runs out in the 2029 season.

"We'll try to address it," he said. "But you also have to understand what's in your control and what's not in your control. That was kind of not in my control. The velo goes up and down sometimes. Nothing has really explained my velocity drop. So, I'm not going to lose any sleep over it."

That may be because of a conversation Skenes had with Detroit Tiger Justin Verlander late in the season. Verlander, a 10-time All-Star, five-time strikeout leader and three-time Cy Young winner who was the 2006 rookie of the year, announced in 2026 that he would be retiring after the season at age 43.

Verlander told Skenes that his velocity mysteriously dropped in his third full season at Detroit in 2008 as Skenes did in his third year in 2026.

"He was like, 'My third year, I just lost my velo. I was completely healthy. It kind of just went away, and then it came back,'" Skenes said.

The Baseball Savant velocity tracker confirmed Verlander dropped to 94.3 in his third season in 2008, then rose to 96.3 in 2009 and remained up through most of his career.

"I was like, 'You know what? That's kind of good to hear,'" Skenes said he told Verlander. "It's not just me." **TR**

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Trinidad Chambliss
Photo by: Michael Bacigalupi



No Wonder Lane Kiffin Wanted Trinidad Chambliss At LSU So Badly

By GLENN GUILBEAU, Tiger Rag Editor

The best thing about LSU's 32-24 loss at Ole Miss on Sept. 19 is that LSU defensive coordinator Blake Baker will not have to see quarterback Trinidad Chambliss again – unless it's in the Southeastern Conference Championship Game on Dec. 5 in Atlanta or in the College Football Playoff.

Let the rest of the SEC deal with the elusive, whirling dervish, sixth-year senior quarterback from Ole Miss by way of Division II Ferris State in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Better be ready, No. 1 Texas on Oct. 24 in Austin, and watch and learn, Arch Manning. And good luck in Oxford, No.

2 Georgia on Nov. 7, No. 19 Missouri on Oct. 17 and No. 24 Mississippi State on Nov. 27.

Chambliss (6-foot-10, 185 pounds) riddled LSU on 33-of-48 passing for 363 yards and two touchdowns while rushing nine times for 36 yards with a naked, 14-yard boot leg TD untouched

for a 30-24 lead with 6:14 left before a two-point conversion.

“Out biggest fear every minute was the game at the end, and Trinidad has the ball in his hand,” said LSU coach Lane Kiffin, who brought him to Oxford from Ferris State before the 2025 season, but after spring drills when Kiffin was the coach at Ole Miss.

Chambliss and No. 13 Ole Miss shredded No. 4 LSU and Baker’s defense on Sept. 22, 2025, to the tune of 314 yards passing as Chambliss hit 23 of 39 and rushed 14 times for another 71 yards.

He didn’t even get the starting job until week three last year, but Chambliss finished third in the nation with 3,937 passing yards with 22 TDs, while rushing for 527 and eight touchdowns. He and Kiffin put Ole Miss in the playoffs before Kiffin left for LSU.

It must have been difficult for Kiffin to watch the guy he brought to Oxford beat him in Oxford.

“He made a lot of plays,” Kiffin said. “That’s why he’s the hardest player to play in America.”

And that’s why Kiffin tried so hard to get Chambliss to transfer to LSU – even while Chambliss was preparing for post-season games.

On the Sunday after the Ole Miss game, Kiffin couldn’t stop talking about Chambliss.

“We did pretty good on first and second downs, and he would just make either critical on-time throws with people on him or out-of-rhythm throws running backwards.”

About to be sacked, Chambliss flipped to a receiver for 19 yards. Kiffin threw up his hands in disgust.

“It was my first time on the other side of it,” Kiffin said. “And he’s even better now. I said to our staff, ‘Guys, you’re going to play a 24-year-old that the first guy never tackles. That’s like putting Caleb Williams back and having to defend him now in college.’”

Williams, the first pick of the 2024 NFL Draft out of USC, is 24 and in his third year as Chicago’s quarterback.

“And I’m not sure I wouldn’t rather go against Caleb – no disrespect to him,” Kiffin said.

And to think it was Kiffin who helped get Chambliss a sixth year after the NCAA said no to that request involving a missed year at Ferris State due to injury. Kiffin recommended noted sports attorney Tom Mars to Chambliss’ camp last December after Kiffin was at LSU.

Naturally, Kiffin wanted Chambliss at LSU for year six, but he still helped him. Ole Miss already had lawyers William Liston and Trey Byars on the job, and perhaps Mars was not needed.

But as Yahoo’s Ross Dellenger reported, Mars did receive a Chambliss No. 6 jersey in the mail after a Mississippi judge ruled last February for Chambliss’ sixth year.

“It’s really funny,” Mars told Dellenger. “Lane set this in motion.”

You’re welcome, Ole Miss.

And the rest of the SEC has yet another reason to cuss Kiffin. **TR**



Leonard Fournette

Photo by: Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame



2016:

Leonard Fournette's Record Night Powers LSU's 38-21 Win Over Ole Miss, Exacting Revenge For Coach O

(Reprinted from October 24, 2016, Tiger Rag Magazine)

By CODY WORSHAM

Buga is back.

And Ed Orgeron is 1-0 against his former school as LSU's head coach.

LSU running back Leonard Fournette shrugged off nagging ankle injuries and set a school record for rushing

yards with 284 as LSU (5-2, 3-1 SEC) rolled to a 38-21 win over Ole Miss (3-4, 1-3 SEC) on Saturday night in Tiger Stadium.

Fournette was in full-on, scary-good mode, as in his days at St. Augustine

High in New Orleans when he came up with his own moniker, Buga, and Buga Nation for his adoring family and fans migrating to LSU.

Buga broke Alley Broussard's LSU rushing record of 250 yards, also set against

Ole Miss, in a 27-24 win in 2004. But Fournette did it by carry number eight and scored three touchdowns on 16 carries – 10 fewer than Broussard.

Fournette plowed over and ran past defenders with frightening ease, looking faster and fresher than he has all season.

Scariest of all? He's still hurt.

And, "out of shape," he said. "I've got a bone bruise on my ankle, a high and low ankle sprain. I got it all. It's hard."

But he made it look so easy.

"I didn't know I had all those yards," Fournette said.

Neither did his head coach.

"I just knew we were up by 17," said Ed Orgeron, who picked up the win over the school that fired him nine years ago and moved to 3-0 as interim coach.

"This is a very sweet win," said Orgeron, who was Ole Miss' coach from 2005-07. "Means a lot."

It was yet another dominant display from the new LSU of Orgeron. The Tigers outgained Ole Miss 515 to 325, including 229-104 in the second half as Dave Aranda's defense shut down Ole Miss.

"Dave Aranda is pretty sharp," Orgeron said. "He's a cool cucumber up there now. He's like a mad scientist. The way he prepares the defense is very impressive. He's a very talented football coach."

LSU trailed 10-0 early, as the Tigers' offense sputtered out of the gate with a pair of three-and-outs. Meanwhile, Ole Miss quarterback Chad Kelly led a six-play, 77-yard scoring drive, keyed by a 50-yard completion to Damore'ea Stringfellow on a busted LSU coverage and capped off by a 15-yarder to Van Jefferson for the touchdown. Gary Wunderlich's 46-yard field goal on the subsequent drive extended the lead to 10-0.

But Fournette, who has missed three games this season with injuries, responded with a 59-yard touchdown run to make it 10-7. He soon put LSU up 21-13 on a 76-yard touchdown run with 6:11 left before halftime.

"It was good to see 7 healthy and running again," tight end Colin Jeter said.

"He looked faster than he usually is," defensive end Arden Key said.

And he was just getting warmed up. The junior All-American took a toss sweep to the right, stiff-armed a defender at the Tiger 40 and raced past the rest over the next 60 yards for a 78-yard TD and 28-21 lead.

"I've never been associated with a player like Leonard, to be honest with you," said Orgeron, who was at USC with Heisman winner Reggie Bush. "He's the best player in the country."

But can Fournette and LSU beat Alabama for the first time since the 2011 season – a stretch of five straight losses, counting the 21-0 debacle in the national championship game in New Orleans on Jan. 9, 2012.

"We're going to be very excited to play a very good team," Orgeron said. "We're going to be up for the challenge. It's going to be a physical football game. They have very good athletes. They are very well-coached, but so are we." **TR**

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Dalton Hilliard
Tiger Rag File Photo

Dalton Hilliard

Took Jerry Stovall's Number Back In 1982, And Hilliard Didn't Even Know It

When LSU coach Lane Kiffin switched cornerback DJ Pickett's No. 3 to No. 5, it became a major controversy. Because No. 5 was the number of former LSU quarterback Jayden Daniels, who won the Heisman Trophy for the Tigers in 2023. But Kiffin was honoring a broken recruit-

ing promise by previous coach Brian Kelly, who had told Pickett he would get his high school number 5 from Zephyrhills High in Florida. Kelly changed his mind and gave him No. 3 instead for the 2025 season.

Before the 1982 season, LSU coach Jerry Stovall gave a blossoming running

back from Patterson High named Dalton Hilliard No. 21. Little did Hilliard know who had worn that.

Hilliard went on to become one of LSU's greatest running backs, gaining 1,268 yards in 1984 and 1,134 in 1985. The Saints took him in the second round of the 1986 NFL Draft. He was

one of the NFL's most versatile backs at the time, playing eight years and becoming a member of the Saints' and Louisiana Sports Halls of Fame.

Hilliard was on Tiger Rag Radio on Sept. 1 after Stovall, an All-American running back/kick returner at LSU who was the Heisman runner-up in 1962 and LSU's coach from 1980-83, died on August 31 at age 85 in Baton Rouge.

TIGER RAG: How did you come to get the No. 21?

DALTON HILLIARD: Coach Stovall called me into his office the week of the first game my freshman season in 1982 against Oregon State. And I really did think I did something wrong, or something took place I didn't know about. He brought me in and told me I would be starting. I was very surprised. I was about seventh team tailback early in camp. Very few people know that story.

TIGER RAG: What did coach Stovall say after naming you the starter?

HILLIARD: He asked me what would make me feel comfortable going into the opener. I asked him if I could wear number 21. That was my number in high school and junior high. I had been given number 26 at LSU. So, he made that happen, and that was something very pleasing, very relaxing and made me feel comfortable about the situation.

TIGER RAG: Did coach Stovall tell you that he wore No. 21 at LSU?

HILLIARD: He never told me. He basically let me find out on my own. That was how coach Stovall was. He's one of those guys who never put pressure on anyone. He just gave you the tools and information or advice to succeed. Later in the season, I found out.

TIGER RAG: It worked. You rushed 18 times for 133 yards and three touchdowns as LSU beat Oregon State, 45-7. You finished the season with 901 yards and 11 touchdowns with 31 catches for 368 yards and five TDs as LSU went 8-3-1 and reached the Orange Bowl. What was that season like?

HILLIARD: I had a great time my freshman year. Everything came together with that team. Coach Stovall was a great leader and coach. No matter how things went good or bad, he always had that same attitude. Always upbeat, always inspiring.

TIGER RAG: How did you find out that LSU planned to put Stovall's name and his No. 21 in the Tiger Stadium rafters in 2018 next to Billy Cannon's 20 and Tommy Casanova's 37?

HILLIARD: Coach called me one day after he found out. He said, "Hey, Dalton, that's our number." I really appreciated him letting me know personally as an individual who also wore number 21. He knew that I played the game with the same type attitude he had – giving every effort you can each play, each game and being a team player. The atmosphere that he provided as a coach really molded me in that same direction as him. **TR**

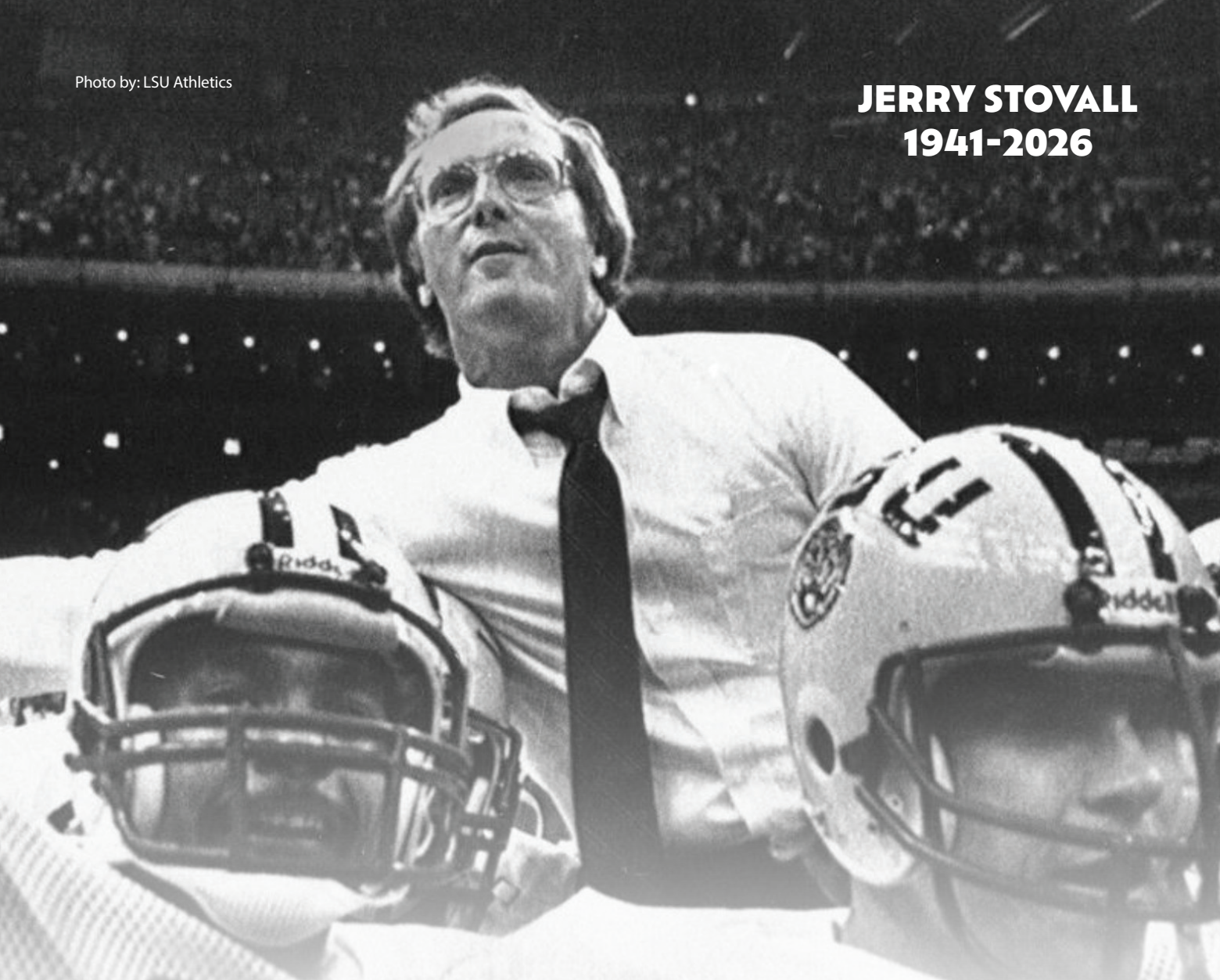
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JERRY STOVALL
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The Only Job **JERRY STOVALL** Ever Wanted

Stovall arrived at LSU as the final scholarship in a class of 52. Twenty-one years later, the university turned to him after Bo Rein disappeared over the Atlantic. Four years after that, LSU fired him. None of it changed what the university meant to him.

By TODD HORNE, Tiger Rag Executive Editor

The Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame preserved the contrast in its account of Jerry Stovall's career. When LSU hired Stovall as its head football coach in January 1980, the family's home filled with well-wishers and the telephone rang throughout the night.

When LSU fired him four years later, no one came.

The telephone rang twice.

The distance between those two days contains much of Jerry Stovall's LSU story. He received the only job he ever wanted because another man had died. He lost it 11 months after completing one of the finest coaching seasons in school history. LSU celebrated him, wounded him and eventually placed his name above the field in Tiger Stadium.

Stovall died Monday in Baton Rouge at 85. His LSU life lasted 67 years, beginning when the university found one more scholarship for a player who was not certain he belonged and ending with Stovall recognized as one of the most accomplished and respected figures in the history of the athletic department.

"They gave out 52 scholarships that year," Stovall once said, "and I was number 52."

He came to LSU from West Monroe in 1959, one year after the Tigers won the national championship and during the season Billy Cannon won the Heisman Trophy. LSU's freshman class was filled with players who had attracted more attention. Paul Dietzel called Stovall "that skinny little runt from West Monroe."

For a while, Stovall believed he had made a mistake. He packed his belongings and called his father to tell him he was coming home. William Stovall did not argue. He said he would find his son a job. Jerry Stovall considered the kind of job his father might find, unpacked his belongings and stayed.

More than 50 years later, while discussing leadership in a 2011 interview, Stovall described the approach to life that had kept him at LSU.

"It's not okay just to sit down and let life go by," he said. "You have to be active. You have to prioritize what you're going to do, but you have to really know what to stand for and who you stand beside."

Dietzel soon discovered that the last player in the recruiting class could perform almost every assignment LSU gave him. In Stovall's first varsity game against Texas A&M in 1960, he carried the ball, returned punts and kickoffs, played defense and punted 11 times. When an Aggie returner appeared headed for a touchdown, Stovall ran him down.

By the end of that season, he had led LSU in rushing, intercepted three passes and averaged more than 42 yards per punt. The player who had nearly gone home was becoming "Mr. Everything."

The nickname was accurate. Stovall played half-back and defensive back. He caught passes, punted, returned kicks and blocked. LSU did not build its offense around giving him the football 25 times a game because the Tigers needed him everywhere else. Charles McClendon later called him "the most complete football player I've ever seen."

In 1961, LSU lost its opener at Rice and then won 10 consecutive games. The defining play came against No. 2 Ole Miss in Tiger Stadium. LSU trailed 7-3 late in the first half when Stovall broke a 57-yard run to the Rebels' 23-yard line. The drive ended with the decisive touchdown in a 10-7 victory.

LSU shared the Southeastern Conference championship, defeated Colorado in the Orange Bowl and finished fourth nationally. Stovall rushed for 405 yards on only 65 carries while continuing to punt and play defense.

Dietzel left for Army after the season, and McClendon became LSU's head coach. Stovall's senior year moved him into the Heisman Trophy race.

At Georgia Tech, he took the second-half kickoff at the LSU 2-yard line and ran 98 yards for a touchdown in a 10-7 victory. Stovall refused to claim much credit.

"Nobody touched me," he said. "The blocking was perfect. All I had to do was run."

Against Florida, Stovall rushed, caught passes, blocked and played defense as LSU won 23-0. McClendon said Stovall's blocking and defensive play were the most vicious he had seen from one of his backs that season.

In his final two games against Ole Miss, Stovall rushed for 190 yards on 13 carries, although the Rebels handed LSU its only loss of the 1962 season.

(continued next page)

“I would give up any job, I would give up my right arm if it meant Bo Rein could come back. I love LSU, but the loss of Coach Rein makes the conditions sorrowful.”

- JERRY STOVALL, JANUARY 1980

Oregon State quarterback Terry Baker won the Heisman Trophy with 707 points. Stovall finished second with 618. He carried the South in the voting, but Baker drew support from both coasts and won by 89 points.

Stovall still had one college game remaining. LSU faced unbeaten and fourth-ranked Texas in the Cotton Bowl. The Longhorns held him to 36 rushing yards, so he contributed somewhere else. Stovall intercepted Texas' final offensive pass to preserve LSU's 13-0 victory.

His LSU career ended the same way it had unfolded: with Stovall performing whatever job the Tigers needed at that moment.

LSU's original season sheets credit him with 1,071 rushing yards and 462 receiving yards. He intercepted seven passes, punted 165 times and handled extensive return duties. The numbers show the range of his work without fully explaining it. Stovall played in an era before specialization separated those responsibilities among several players.

He also remembered something beyond the games. Stovall and Judy married in February 1962 after his junior season and lived in married-student housing during his senior year.

“I probably enjoyed that one year more than any I have ever had in athletics,” he later said.

Judy had known him before LSU did. They were West Monroe high school sweethearts and later raised two children, Jay and Jodi.

The St. Louis Cardinals selected Stovall with the second overall pick of the 1963 NFL Draft. The New York Jets chose him third in the competing AFL draft. He signed with St. Louis and became primarily a safety, playing beside Hall of Famer Larry Wilson.

Stovall remained in the NFL for nine seasons, played 97 games, intercepted 18 passes and returned two for touchdowns. He also punted when the Cardinals needed him. He made the Pro Bowl in 1966, 1967 and 1969.

Near the end of his playing career, Stovall called Dietzel, who was coaching South Carolina. NFL salaries did not allow most players of that era to stop working permanently in their early thirties, and Stovall had a family to support. Dietzel gave him his first college coaching job.

Stovall returned to LSU in 1974 to coach McClendon's running backs. He told Coach Mac that he had not come back merely to learn more football. He wanted to make at least one young player feel the way McClendon had once made him feel before a game.

Charles Alexander became one of those players. Stovall continued recruiting Alexander after repeated rejection and built the relationship that eventually brought him to LSU. Alexander became the first Tiger to rush for more than 4,000 career yards and later joined Stovall in the College Football Hall of Fame.

Stovall's coaching philosophy was not complicated. He believed instruction began with the example established by the person in charge.

“Before you can lead, you have to know what your principles are,” he said in 2011, “and you can't lead somebody where you haven't been.”

Stovall left McClendon's staff before the 1979 season to direct LSU's Varsity Club, a predecessor of the Tiger Athletic Foundation. He wanted to become a head coach, but his interest was specific. LSU was the only head-coaching job he wanted.

By then, the university had already decided McClendon would not continue. McClendon had not resigned when Dietzel returned to LSU as athletic director before the 1978 season. Coach Mac worked both the 1978 and 1979 seasons under Dietzel, who had been brought back to find LSU's next football coach.

Dietzel permitted McClendon to remain for 1979 because McClendon was serving as president of the American Football Coaches Association. The additional season changed the timing, not the decision. Dietzel forced McClendon out.

LSU hired North Carolina State coach Bo Rein on Nov. 30, 1979, before McClendon coached his final LSU game in the Tangerine Bowl. Rein was 34 and regarded as one of the rising coaches in college football. He assembled a staff, began recruiting and prepared to move his family to Baton Rouge.

On Jan. 10, 1980, Rein boarded a private plane in Shreveport for the return flight to Baton Rouge. Assistant coach Greg Williams later said Rein had spent that evening speaking with his parents, his daughters and his wife before leaving.



“Bo talked to everybody he loved before he died,” Williams recalled.

The plane veered far off course and continued over the Atlantic Ocean. The widely accepted explanation is that a loss of cabin pressure caused Rein and pilot Louis Benscoter to lose consciousness, although investigators never established an official cause. The aircraft disappeared into the ocean, and no wreckage was recovered.

Rein had been LSU's head coach for 42 days. He never coached a game. LSU no longer needed someone merely capable of replacing McClendon. It needed someone who understood the university, could hold Rein's staff together and would accept the job immediately.

In the aftermath of Rein's death, Dietzel considered returning to coaching himself. Paul Manasseh, LSU's longtime SID, later recalled walking into Dietzel's office and finding the athletic director watching film as he contemplated taking over the team. Manasseh objected immediately. “You can't do this!” he told Dietzel.

Dietzel then turned to Stovall.

Dietzel described him as young, tough, aggressive, articulate and a gifted recruiter with exceptional integrity. He then summarized the choice more directly: **“Jerry Stovall is LSU through-and-through.”**

The only job Stovall had ever wanted was finally available. The circumstances left no room for celebration. Stovall later called Rein's death a tragedy that had changed many lives. If LSU needed him, he said, he was prepared to help however he could.

He accepted without selecting his assistant coaches and without having met some of them. Stovall said it would have been unfair to Rein's staff for him to take the job and immediately dismiss the coaches Rein had hired.

At his introductory press conference, Stovall did not talk about fulfilling a career ambition. He talked about the man who should have been standing there.

LSU Board member Jerry McKernan later described the sequence to magazine writer Dave Kindred: “The only thing in life Jerry Stovall ever wanted was to be the LSU football coach.” Now he had it, but only because Rein was gone.

The Tigers finished 7-4 in 1980, a credible result for a program shaken by Rein's death. LSU fell to 3-7-1 the following season. Dietzel was removed as athletic director, and Bob Brodhead replaced him.

Stovall entered 1982 working for an administrator who had not hired him and knowing another losing season would probably end his tenure. LSU responded with a season few expected.

The Tigers won 24-13 at No. 4 Florida. In November, they traveled to Birmingham to face No. 8 Alabama. LSU had not beaten a Bear Bryant team since 1970.

Stovall's defense held Alabama to 119 total yards. LSU won 20-10 in Bryant's final game against the Tigers.

The victory placed LSU in position to reach the Orange Bowl, but the Tigers still had to defeat No. 7 Florida State in Tiger Stadium. Freshman Dalton

(continued next page)



Hilliard produced 233 rushing and receiving yards and scored four touchdowns.

LSU won 55-21. Oranges began flying from the stands before the game ended. Fans threw so many onto the field that officials stopped play while workers cleared them away. LSU was headed to a major New Year's bowl for the first time in nine years.

The Tigers led Nebraska 17-7 in the third quarter of the Orange Bowl before losing 21-20. LSU finished 8-3-1. Stovall was named SEC Coach of the Year and Walter Camp National Coach of the Year. **Eleven months later, LSU fired him.**

The 1983 Tigers went 4-7 and became the first LSU team to finish winless in SEC play. After LSU defeated Tulane in the final game, the players lifted Stovall onto their shoulders and carried him from the field.

One week later, Brodhead recommended his dismissal. On Dec. 2, the LSU Board of Supervisors voted 13-5 to remove Stovall. He was 42 years old. His record was 22-21-2, and his college coaching career was finished.

On the night LSU hired him, the Stovalls' house had been packed and the telephone had rung continuously. On the day the university fired him, there were no visitors and two calls.

Jim Engster later described Stovall's career as a succession of near misses: a possible national championship in 1961, the Heisman Trophy in 1962 and a

coaching career that ended one season after reaching the Orange Bowl.

Stovall never pretended the firing had not hurt him. He also refused to allow it to determine his relationship with LSU.

Rein's death was beyond his control. So were the conditions under which Stovall became LSU's coach, the narrow losses of 1982 and the Board vote that ended his career. His response remained his own.

The clearest evidence came in 1996, when Brodhead died at 59. LSU figures largely stayed away from the funeral. Stovall attended.

Engster later wrote that Stovall possessed an intensity that could recall his playing days but had repeatedly demonstrated "immense class and dignity."

Going to Brodhead's funeral did not undo the Board vote or return the coaching career Stovall had lost. It showed that Stovall would not allow another man's decision to determine the kind of man he became afterward.

In the 2011 interview, Stovall returned repeatedly to that question: "What kind of man do you really want to be?"

Stovall entered banking, later served as athletic director at Louisiana Tech and helped establish what became the Baton Rouge Area Sports Foundation. For more than two decades, he worked to bring sporting events and visitors to Baton Rouge. He also served organizations addressing hunger, hospice care, health, disabilities and senior athletics.

His Christian faith remained central to that work.

“God has a plan for each person’s life,” Stovall said, “and we need to offer that plan up to Him and ask His advice.”

He believed leadership started at home. Stovall called marriage the most difficult job he had ever undertaken because it never stopped.

“Even while that job is going on, I’m still being married 24/7,” he said, “and trying to make sure that I’m sensitive to and meet the needs of my wife.”

He spoke about listening, patience and the example a father established for his children. A son, Stovall said, often learned how to treat his mother by watching how his father treated her. “It’s foolish to ask your children to do something you’re not doing,” he said.

Judy moved through all of it with him: LSU, professional football, coaching, Rein’s death, the 1982 revival, the firing and the public-service career that followed. The public record belonged heavily to football. The endurance behind it was built at home.

LSU placed Stovall in its Athletics Hall of Fame in 1977. The Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame followed in 1981 and the College Football Hall of Fame in 2010. In 2018, the university announced that his No. 21 jersey would be retired.

“This is the most humbling honor that you can ever imagine,” Stovall said.

The ceremony took place on Oct. 13 during LSU’s game against Georgia. His name joined those of Billy Cannon and Tommy Casanova on the Tiger Stadium façade.

Stovall again directed the honor toward everyone else. He credited the players who blocked for him, the coaches who demanded more from him and the trainers who kept him on the field.

Nearly six decades had passed since Stovall packed his belongings and called his father from LSU. He had arrived as the final scholarship in a class of 52, unsure whether he belonged. Now his No. 21 was above the field.

Asked late in life how he wanted to be remembered, Stovall did not mention the Heisman race, the Pro Bowls, the Orange Bowl season or the retired jersey.

“I would like someone to say, ‘He was a man of God.’ And he was not ashamed of it. And he spoke of it when he had the chance.”

- JERRY STOVALL

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SPORTS PHYSICALS: WHAT TO EXPECT

RUBIN PATEL, MD | PATIENT PLUS URGENT CARE

With fall sports and a new school year, many kids and their parents will be heading to the doctor’s office for their yearly physical. Here is what you need to know about physicals, including why you should get one, what to expect, and how to prepare.

The Benefits of Physicals

Physicals help ensure your body is developing normally and catch issues before they become a real problem. Sports physicals differ from regular physicals because they are usually more limited and specific to athletics. However, they help ensure that you or your teen is healthy and fit enough to participate in sports.

Physicals also give you the chance to discuss any health concerns that you may have. Your health practitioner can consider your health history to provide more specific advice and support for any concerns.

A sports physical can help you avoid any issues that might keep you from participating in your chosen sport. Your doctor can evaluate you for any conditions, such as an old or minor injury, so that it won’t be exacerbated or result in a re-injury.

Physicals also give your health practitioner a chance to recommend medication or remedies that can help keep conditions under control, such as asthma. It also gives them a chance to ensure your vaccinations are up to date and that you meet all eligibility requirements.

What to Expect at a Sports Physical

When you go in to get your physical, your doctor will review your history

and perform any necessary tests to ensure you are fit and healthy. During your visit, you should expect to:

- Review medical history, including family history
- Discuss any dietary supplements, medication, or prescriptions you are taking
- Check ears, nose, throat, lungs, heart, etc.
- Perform a vision test
- Take height and weight
- Take blood pressure and pulse
- Evaluate flexibility, joints, posture, and strength
- Take a urine test

Depending on any concerns you have, the entire process should take anywhere from 15 to 30 minutes.

How to Prepare for Your Physical

Some of the ways you can prepare for your physical include:

- Write down any concerns or questions you have ahead of time. It is easy to forget to ask something at the moment
- Make a note of any supplements, medications, or prescriptions you are currently taking
- Verify your vaccinations to see if any are overdue. If this is your first time visiting, you may want to bring your vaccination records

An annual physical is a critical part of staying healthy. If you or your children participate in sports, walk in or book online at any of our locations so we can help you stay in top shape!

LSU's **Dilin Jones** became the Tiger's No. 1 running back in the spring and has not let go.
Photo by: Michael Bacigalupi



No Running Back By Committee For LSU This Season

Wisconsin Transfer Dilin Jones Has Taken Over The Position With Power

By GLENN GUILBEAU, Tiger Rag Editor

For some reason, there are always a few media members who feel like LSU should have a running back by committee.

Perhaps because LSU has not had a lone wolf running back for the most part since Ty Davis-Price in 2021 when he carried 211

times for 1,003 yards. The next most-used back that season was Corey Kiner with 79 rushes for 337 yards.

In 2022 and '23, quarterback Jayden Daniels did most of the running and won the Heisman Trophy in '23 with 1,134 yards

rushing and 3,812 passing. Caden Durham led LSU in rushing the last two seasons, but Harlem Berry nearly equally shared the carries last season. And Josh Williams had only 23 fewer carries than Durham in 2024.

But now LSU has a lone wolf back - Dilin Jones. He won the starting job in spring after LSU coach Lane Kiffin found him at Wisconsin. The redshirt sophomore signed with LSU as the No. 944 prospect in the portal and No. 75 running back after missing half the '25 season with a foot and toe injury.

Most figured Jones to be the No. 3 running back at best at LSU behind Durham and Berry. And few thought anyone but those two would get the tiger's share of the carries.

"I'm really competitive. I like competition," Jones said when asked why he came to a program with two established backs. "I thought it would drive me to be the best player I could be. And I'd say the other guys in the running back room pushed me to be better."

And inadvertently pushed themselves out of any rotation.

Through the first three games of 2026, Jones had 64 rushes for 285 yards for 95 yards a game that was fourth in the Southeastern Conference and 25th nationally. Stacy Gage, a redshirt sophomore transfer from Central Florida, is another surprise at the No. 2

back slot. But a distant No. 2 with 15 carries for 56 yards through three games.

Berry, who gained 491 yards on 104 rushes last season, had just five carries for 13 yards in two games. And Durham, who gained 753 yards on 140 rushes in 2024 and 505 on 111 in 2025, had all of one net yard on four rushes in two games. Neither played in game three at Ole Miss.

And there is no real reason to play anyone else, considering how powerful the significantly more physical Jones (5-foot-11, 211 pounds) is compared to LSU's other backs. Jones has also shown a tendency to run stronger as the game goes on. He had 64 of his 106 yards against Ole Miss in the second half.

But someone still asked Kiffin, "Would you like to get more people involved to keep Dilin healthy throughout the whole season?"

Kiffin didn't say this isn't Little League. There are no rules that everyone has to play. But he could have. And Jones is not hurt.

"Dilin's doing really well," Kiffin said. "Both of the last two games, he ran really well in the second half. Makes people miss, extends

runs. So, yeah, we'd obviously like to play more (backs), if that's the situation. But at the same time, too, you get in a game, and sometimes the situations dictate what they dictate."

In other words, Dilin's the man. But he praises new LSU strength coach Nick Savage, who followed Kiffin from Ole Miss.

"I'm just a big, physical back, but the strength staff got me faster," Jones said. "The extra speed helped my game a lot."

New running backs coach Kevin Smith, another former Ole Miss assistant who came with Kiffin, also improved Jones. Smith should know. He gained 4,864 yards at Central Florida and played five years in the NFL with Detroit.

"The decision making from coach Smith - when to make a cut and when to hit the hole," Jones said.

But it's not just running that keeps him on the field.

"It's what you do without the ball in your hands," Jones said. "Being able to block and run routes keeps me out there, too." **TR**



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Michael Bonnette has been LSU football's Sports Information Director since 2000.
Photo by: LSU Athletics



Dream Fulfilled

LSU's Michael Bonnette Heads Into 27th Consecutive Year
As Football Sports Information Director

By WILL SENTELL, Tiger Rag Contributor

Maybe it should not be surprising that Michael Bonnette has been director of communications for LSU, specializing in football, for more than a quarter of a century.

After all, his dad Louis held the same job at McNeese State University for 46 years. The elder Bonnette set a national record by working 527 consecutive football games before retiring in 2012.

No wonder the McNeese football field is named after the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame member.

"It was a dream of mine to do this type of work," said Michael Bonnette, who

became LSU football's Sports Information Director in the summer of 2000 just in time for the debut of new football coach Nick Saban.

"But I always thought it would be following my dad at McNeese," he said. "Never in my wildest dreams did I think I would end up at LSU."

Bonnette did not succeed his dad at McNeese.

His younger brother Matthew did, and the threesome have been sports information directors for a combined 93 years.

"They are kind of the first family of Louisiana SIDs," said Scooter Hobbs, who has covered LSU for the Lake Charles American Press since the late 1970s.

Bonnette, who grew up in Lake Charles, succeeded Herb Vincent as sports information director in 2000. Vincent had been SID since 1988. Bonnette had been an assistant SID for six years and spent five years before that as a student worker and intern.

The fact that he has held the pressure-cooker job for 26 years, and is working for his fifth head coach, means he is a survivor in the often nasty world of internal LSU politics.

"People don't realize that for him to be able to stay at LSU is pretty amazing," said former LSU quarterback Matt Mauck, who helped lead LSU to its first national championship since 1958 in the 2003 season.

"It just shows how good of a job he does," Mauck, a former Denver Bronco quarterback who is a dentist in suburban Denver.

Bonnette's seven-member staff oversees communications for LSU football, baseball, basketball and other sports. Building the LSU brand is the daily mantra.

"Nationally, we are trying to educate and get people to understand how powerful LSU is," Bonnette said.

Workers compile statistics, issue press releases and help athletes get used to talking to reporters. When controversy erupts, like former quarterback Jayden Daniels' recent complaint about his old jersey No. 5 at LSU being worn by defensive back DJ Pickett, the sports information office is ground zero for media demands.

Social media has made LSU football a round-the-clock topic.

"It has really changed the profession," Bonnette said. "Fans want this information immediately."

Bonnette also helps coaches with media interviews, which means he is the point person for the coach who is one of the most controversial in college football – Lane Kiffin.

"Everyone wants to talk to him," Bonnette said. "Filtering those requests, helping him decide what he wants to do, what he does not want to do."

Kiffin has been blasted nationally by sportswriters and sportscasters for leaving Ole Miss last year just ahead of the team's playoff appearance to take the LSU job, even though Kiffin wanted to stay and coach the Rebels through the playoffs.

"We are trying to change the narrative on that," Bonnette said.

Supporters say Kiffin simply made a career decision. And his detractors ignore the fact that he was more a victim of college football's new schedule with the 12-team playoff that just started in the 2024 season. Before that, there was a large gap between the end of the regular season in early December and the beginning of the postseason in early January. Coaches routinely took new jobs in the past during this period with no issues.

But any appearance by Kiffin can spark a media whirlwind.

"It is energizing," Bonnette said. "Pressure is fun. It keeps you young."

Friends said Bonnette, 56, is well suited for the job serving big personality coaches.

"You have to be flexible. You have to be resilient," said Vincent, who hired Bonnette as a student worker at LSU. "He has worked with a lot of different football coaches, who have their own personalities and demands. He has done a good job of riding that wave and managing."

While Bonnette has been part of three national championships (2003, '07 and '19) under three coaches as football SID and suffered through only one losing season in 2021 at 6-7, Vincent went through eight losing seasons from 1988-1999 under three coaches.

"That is a very stressful job," said Vincent, who has been SEC's associate commissioner for communications the last 13 years after serving as LSU's associate athletic director for communications from 2006-13.

(continued next page)



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Dan Borne, who served as public address announcer at Tiger Stadium for 38 years, called Bonnette smart, competent and responsive.

"In the entire time we never had an issue that could not be resolved," Borne said. "He has just been a tremendous help to me and the university as a whole."

Hobbs said the job of sports information director – or communications director to use the modern term – has changed drastically in an era where coaches enjoy long-term contracts in the \$90-\$100 million range and far less access from media than 15 or 20 years ago.

"It is not near as easy as it used to be," he said. "I don't blame the Bonnettes and the SIDs. I blame the coaches. Coaches used to really consult and seek input from SIDs. Now the coaches just order the SIDs."

Bonnette's two key lieutenants at LSU are Bill Franques, who has been the baseball sports information director since 1988, and Kent Lowe, who has been the men's basketball SID since 1988 as well.

"With Michael and with Kent Lowe and with Bill Franques, you have what is essentially the corporate memory of LSU Athletics," Borne said.

The threesome have worked at LSU for a combined 109 years.

"We have been here all these years, so we are more like a family than we are co-workers," Franques said.

And family members care for one another during stressful times. Bonnette and Franques each have grappled with prostate cancer in recent years.

Bonnette said he started feeling bad in late 2024, but ignored the symptoms for a while. He got a call from his urologist in February, 2025, after undergoing a biopsy.

"He told me 'You have cancer,'" Bonnette said. "That is a punch in the gut."

Bonnette underwent surgery in April of 2025, missed part of four weeks of work, but is now doing well.

"The surgery went great," he said. "I am doing everything I was doing before."

He credits his wife Robin, whom he met at LSU.

"She was a rock," Bonnette said.

The couple have three sons: Peyton, 28, Grant, 27 and Max, who just turned 21.

Bonnette decided to go public with his cancer battle after concluding that talking about it might help someone.

"I don't want it to be about me," he said. "I want it to be about spreading awareness."

Franches is also healthy now after his bout with prostate cancer in 2019.

Bonnette has worked for five football head coaches in all – Nick Saban, Les Miles, Ed Orgeron, Brian Kelly and now Lane Kiffin.

"Nick was driven," Bonnette said. "I remember the first few weeks with him, I couldn't sleep. It was a stressful time. But it helped me get better."

Miles was more fun.

"He was great, but frustrating at times," Bonnette said.

Orgeron?

"LSU through and through," Bonnette said.

As far as Kelly, Bonnette feels he got a bad rap because he grew up on the northeast as a Boston area native who coached in the Midwest.

"For whatever reason it just didn't work," he said.

All those years in the McNeese athletic department as a kid played a big role in where Bonnette is today.

"I spent a lot of time with my dad in his office," he said. "It is kind of how I got to this point."

Michael and Matthew Bonnette watched games, attended meetings, and knew most everyone in the athletic department.

"I think just watching what he did, the impact he had on the players and how they would gravitate toward him and liked him," Bonnette said of his father. "That is the one thing about this job that hasn't changed."

A close friend from Bonnette's early days as the football SID is Derek Dooley, who was on Saban's first LSU staff from 2000-04 and was later head coach at Louisiana Tech and Tennessee and had assistant stops with the Dallas Cowboys and Missouri Tigers.

Dooley said Bonnette was part of a special bond forged starting in 2000 when coaches and staff at LSU were expected to meet Saban's exacting standards or face a withering dressing down. Bonnette went through that. Their friendships often extended to wives and children.

That inner circle included Kirby Smart, who was Saban's defensive backs coach at LSU in 2004 before he became Georgia's coach and won national championships in 2021 and '22, and Will Muschamp, a defensive coordinator at LSU who became head coach at Florida and South Carolina.

Bonnette also became close with Tommy Moffitt, who was LSU's strength coach from 2000-21.

"To develop relationships and to continue to talk to players and coaches from 20 years ago," Bonnette said. "That is what makes this job fun." **TR**

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A photograph of Lane Kiffin, head coach of the LSU Tigers, on the sidelines during a football game. He is wearing a white LSU polo shirt, a white visor with the LSU logo, and a headset with a microphone. He is looking off to the side with a serious expression. In the background, there is a blurred crowd of spectators and other people on the sidelines, including one person in a yellow shirt and another in a blue shirt holding a football.

Lane Kiffin
Photo by: Michael Bacigalupi

Lane Kiffin Has 2 Teams Close To His Heart To Monitor This Season

Former Ole Miss Coach Had Mixed Emotions Watching What He Built Deconstruct His New Team

By GLENN GUILBEAU, Tiger Rag Editor



LSU head coach Lane Kiffin lost 32-24 in his return to Ole Miss on September 19
Photo by: Michael Bacigalupi

OXFORD, Mississippi – When former LSU coach Nick Saban coached against LSU for the first time in 2007 as Alabama’s coach, a wide receiver he recruited and signed – Early Doucet – caught the winning touchdown from a quarterback he recruited and signed – Matt Flynn – in a 41-34 win for LSU and new coach Les Miles over Saban’s new Alabama team at Bryant-Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa.

When former Ole Miss coach Lane Kiffin coached against Ole Miss for the first time on Sept. 19 here, a quarterback he recruited – Trinidad Chambliss – destroyed his team with the help of a wide receiver he recruited and signed – Deuce Alexander – in a 32-24 win for Ole Miss and new coach Pete Golding over Kiffin’s new LSU team at Vaught-Hemingway Stadium in Oxford.

And it happened in front of a fan base Kiffin energized through winning consistently at Ole Miss from 2021-25 like no coach before him with the Rebels since Johnny Vaught in the 1950s and ’60s. A fan base that broke the attendance record at Vaught-Hemingway with 70,033.

Saban, a mentor of Kiffin, did much the same thing at LSU from 2000-04. In the 2003 season, he won the program’s first national championship since 1958 before leaving for the Miami Dolphins (2005-06), then returned to college at Alabama – LSU’s daddy. That was LSU’s worst nightmare. At last, LSU had found its Bear

Bryant, and he ended up at Alabama to be the next Bear and continue Bama’s domination of LSU (58-27-5, five of last six).

“I think you walk into a storm,” Kiffin said of the tremendous atmosphere, noise and toxic hate for him emanating from Vaught-Hemingway, where he coached for the first time since leaving Ole Miss within range of its first undisputed national title.

But before the playoffs, Kiffin left to coach Ole Miss’ daddy – LSU. And that was Ole Miss’ worst nightmare. At last, it found another Vaught, and he went to the hated border rival that has dominated the Rebels (66-45-4), but not recently as Ole Miss has won four of the last six.

“The stadium’s full an hour early,” Kiffin said.

And that doesn’t happen at Ole Miss – even under Kiffin reeling off four 10-win-or-more seasons in his six years.

“So, I guess I had to leave to get them to do that,” Kiffin laughed. “So, you’re welcome.”

And they should thank him. But they won’t for years. Same thing happened to Saban. LSU fans hated him for years until realizing he put LSU in position to win national championships after him.

“Emotion bonds people together and creates that atmosphere,” Kiffin said of the fervor he created from 2020-25 at Ole Miss and on Sept. 19, 2026, whether it admits it or not.

“They did a good job,” Kiffin said.

They should also thank Kiffin for much of Ole Miss’ talented roster, particularly Chambliss.

And credit Golding, whom Kiffin hired as defensive coordinator away from Saban at Alabama after the 2023 season. Kiffin brought other coaches to Ole Miss who remain, and they are still Kiffin’s coaches, period, just like LSU assistants who remained after Saban left.

And the conflicted Kiffin was happy for them.

“Six years here, and a lot of things and a lot of life-changing experiences,” Kiffin said. “A lot of really good people who helped me through some really hard times.”

And no one can take that away no matter how much Ole Miss hates Kiffin.

“I know that sometimes I don’t act like it, but I’m human, too,” Kiffin said. “But I’ll just close up saying congrats to those guys. They played really well. They deserved to win. I know it sounds weird. As much as I dislike the losing, there is a part in there of you. A lot of those coaches and players – I wouldn’t say excited – but I’m glad for them.”

And no matter how the newborn Ole Miss-LSU rivalry plays out, Kiffin set up Ole Miss for success after decades of mostly mediocrity ... as Saban set up LSU for national titles after decades of not quite.

You’re welcome, Ole Miss. **TR**

LSU's defensive tackle **Stephiyan Green** and the Tigers struggled again at Ole Miss in a 32-24 loss on September 19th.
Photo by: Michael Bacigalupi



Same As It Ever Was?

If Lane Kiffin's Tigers Are Going To Reach The CFP In 2026,
They Need To Start Being "Just Different" Quick

By GLENN GUILBEAU, Tiger Rag Editor

OXFORD, Mississippi - There was nothing “just different” about that 32-24 loss to Ole Miss, and it showcased some issues new coach Lane Kiffin and LSU will likely be dealing with all season.

We have heard that “just different” phrase ad nauseum about LSU since last December from Kiffin. It was one reason he left Ole Miss for LSU. It is a catchy slogan that has stuck even more than Gerry DiNardo’s “Bring Back The Magic” in 1995.

And at least Kiffin’s lasted two games before a loss, which is when the “Magic” went poof the first time in ’95.

But the worst thing about LSU’s loss to Ole Miss was it was not very “different” from former coach Brian Kelly’s 24-19 loss in Oxford last September.

-LSU fell behind 17-0 in the second quarter on Sept. 19, 2026. ... LSU fell behind 17-7 in the second quarter on Sept. 22, 2025.

-LSU came back in the second half last year, but had to settle for field goals. ... LSU stormed back in the second half this year but had to settle for a field goal.

-LSU couldn’t finish, which continued to plague the Tigers in 2025.

Same as it ever was? Here are three issues that have bubbled to the surface and must be squashed as the season develops:

RUNNING QUARTERBACKS PLAGUE LSU

Just like last year, LSU defensive coordinator Blaker Baker’s unit got flat dominated by Trinidad Chambliss.

And there are more dangerous dual threats ahead – Mississippi State’s Kamario Taylor, Auburn’s Byrum Brown, Alabama’s Keelon Russell, Tennessee’s Faizon Brandon and Arkansas’ KJ Jackson.

“At the end, we didn’t finish,” Kiffin said. “Our biggest fear every minute was when the game’s at the end and Trinidad has the ball in his hand. That’s why he’s the hardest player to play in America.”

LSU won’t face anyone as good as Chambliss again this regular season, but its defense must get better against that ilk. We thought they would be with fast and talented additions such as edge Princewill Umanmielen, line-backer TJ Dottery and safety Ty Benefield. They need to show up more.

SAM LEAVITT IS INACCURATE

Leavitt has not played as advertised. At times he has thrown as inaccurately as Garrett Nussmeier last year, and Nussmeier was hurt all last season. Leavitt is healthy, despite an injury report or two.

Leavitt has been a better runner than passer as misfires and happy feet have plagued him.

“One possession game, and we go all the way down there,” Kiffin said of the sorry end at Ole Miss. “We got a guy open (tight end Zach Grace with injured starter Trey’Dez Green out) to try to tie it. And we miss him.”

Leavitt was not under a heavy rush

on that play, but at times he feels the rush from previous plays.

“I know people will watch and see the receivers open and say, ‘Well, Sam missed him, and he’s running around too much,’” Kiffin said. “But when you get rushed like that early that makes the quarterback move around early.”

Through his first three games, Leavitt’s numbers belied his portal rankings, which had him as the No. 1 overall prospect and top quarterback. He was 97th nationally and 14th in the SEC in passing efficiency with a 127.3 rating, including just 7.8 yards per attempt.

“He’s very competitive,” Kiffin said. “We’ve got to play better around him.”

OFFENSIVE LINE PUSHED AROUND

-Which brings us to the offensive line, which like last year has been often dominated. A lot of new faces, but same results. Even after LSU’s impressive, 41-10 win over Clemson in the opener, Kiffin said starting guards Bo Bordelon and Aliou Bah needed to get better. They have continued to struggle. Even No. 1 portal tackle Jordan Seaton couldn’t handle Ole Miss defensive tackle Will Echoles.

“Yeah, we’re going to look at some different things up front,” Kiffin said. “Because we need to play better and more consistent up there.” **TR**

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Will Wade begins his second term as LSU's men's basketball coach on November 3 against LSU-New Orleans at the PMAC.
Photo by: LSU Athletics



Will Wade's Roster Grows To 15, But Officially It Remains At 4

LSU Still Working On Finalizing Eligibility of Several Players

By GLENN GUILBEAU, Tiger Rag Editor

The LSU basketball program's official roster count is expected to remain officially at four players through October.

But coach Will Wade said his actual roster has 15 players on it at a press conference on Sept. 23 at the Pete Maravich Assembly Center in the Courtside Club room.

"Well, we've been practicing two-on-two the last couple months, so that's been good," Wade cracked to open his first press conference since his grand opening one on March 30.

"No, we've got a full roster," he said. "We've got 15 guys. We've been that way since right after Labor Day (Sept. 7)."

Wade could not explain why he and LSU have not publicized the other 11 players on his unwritten roster, but it has to do with several overseas players getting the proper eligibility paperwork done. He also can't discuss St. John's transfer RJ Luis, the Big East Player of the Year in the 2024-25 season who has been practicing with the Tigers since

receiving a local court ruling on Aug. 24 allowing him to play related to a lawsuit against the NCAA.

"I can't get into it for a variety of different reasons," Wade said. "I know there are some frustrations about that. But we're going to protect our kids. It has taken on a life of its own. There are other teams in the same spot we are that have four people on their roster and no people on their roster."

Wade has been practicing with 15 players.

"We have a full roster," he said. "We have everybody here. We have everybody in school. We're still working through eligibility with three or four of them. We're going to have a really good team. We're going to have all the guys that we can get eligible and need eligible by the first game. We may have to work through some stuff with some of these exhibitions, which is fine."

LSU plays its first exhibition game on Oct. 8 in Lake Charles at McNeese State, where Wade coached in the 2023-

24 and 2024-25 seasons after LSU fired him in March of 2022 because of a bevy of NCAA recruiting violations.

"We feel good about where we are," Wade said. "Excited about the season, excited to be back."

The official four are Kansas State senior transfer guard Abdi Bashir Jr., Kentucky senior transfer forward Mouhamed Dioubate, Texas-San Antonio senior transfer guard Austin Nunez and Michigan State junior transfer guard Divine Ugochukwu.

He did discuss highly ranked UCLA guards Donovan Dent and Skyy Clark, who transferred to LSU last month.

"Skyy can shoot the ball, shoots it really, really well from three-point range," Wade said. "Skyy's got great leadership. He's got great command of what we're doing."

He said Dent reminded him of former LSU point guard Tremont Waters, who led the Tigers to the SEC title and NCAA Sweet 16 in 2019.

(continued next page)

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LSU fifth-year transfer guard **Skyy Clark**, formerly of UCLA, is expected to be one of the Tigers' best portal additions. Photo by: UCLA Athletics



LSU Men's Basketball 2026-27 Roster

ABDI BASHIR JR.

6-5, 170, Guard, Senior,
Kansas State
Phoenix Prep
Phoenix, Arizona
Age: 22

JORDAN BENDER

6-8, 200, Forward, Freshman
Northside Christian School
St. Petersburg, Florida,
Age: 18

SKYY CLARK

6-3, 210, Guard, Senior
UCLA
Montverde Academy
Montverde, Florida
Age: 23

DONOVAN DENT

6-2, 185, Guard, Senior
UCLA
Centennial High
Corona, California
Age: 22

BRICE DESSERT

6-11, 247, Center, Freshman
Andalou Efes pro team
Istanbul, Turkey
Age: 23

MOUHAMED DIOUBATE

6-8, 235, Forward, Senior
Kentucky
Putnam Science Academy
Queens, New York
Age: 22

***RJ LUIS**

6-7, 215, Guard/Forward, Senior
St. John's
Christopher Columbus High
Miami
Age: 23

SALIOU NIANG

6-6, 190, Forward, Freshman
Virtus pro team
Bologna, Italy
Age: 22

AUSTIN NUNEZ

6-2, 175, Guard, Senior
Texas-San Antonio
Wagner High
San Antonio, Texas
Age: 23

MICHAEL RUZIC

7-0, 160, Forward, Freshman
Joventut pro team
Catalonia, Spain
Age: 19

DIVINE UGOCHUKWU

6-3, 200, Guard, Junior
Michigan State
Clements High, Sugar Land, Texas,
Age: 20

**RJ Luis received a temporary restraining order from a Baton Rouge judge against the NCAA on Aug. 24 that has allowed him to practice and potentially play for LSU this season, which begins on Nov. 3 against LSU-New Orleans. That was even though he signed contracts with two NBA teams after going undrafted in 2025 following his junior season at St. John's. Luis will soon have to clear other legal hurdles, however. Alabama's Charles Bediako also received a temporary restraining order from a Tuscaloosa judge, allowing him to play last season, despite previously playing in the NBA developmental league. But the same judge later sided with the NCAA and reversed the ruling after Bediako played in only five*

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A Roster of Returning Stars & Redefining Transfers

LSU Women's Basketball Coach Kim Mulkey Finalizes Her 2026-27 Roster, And It Has A Bit Of Everything

By KACE KIESCHNICK, Tiger Rag Staff Reporter

LSU coach Kim Mulkey has reloaded her women's basketball roster to compete for a sixth straight NCAA tournament appearance and the Tigers' first Final Four since 2023.

The team features returning stars, decorated transfers and impact signees that will help against a difficult non-conference schedule:

Mikaylah Williams #12

G | 6-0 | Senior

A two-time All-SEC first-team selection, Williams returns for her fourth season in Baton Rouge. The Bossier City native

averaged 14.2 points, 5.3 rebounds and 3.6 assists a game last season and will be a focal point of the offense again this year.

"She has really worked on conditioning and just understands that we don't have the depth this year, and she'll have to play a lot of minutes," Mulkey said in her opening press conference. "She wants to be a top draft pick, and should be."

Jada Williams #8

G | 5-6 | Senior

Williams transferred to LSU from Iowa State and will take over as the Tigers' true

point guard. She averaged 15.3 points, 7.7 assists and 3.5 rebounds during her first-team All-Big 12 campaign last season.

"She's like an Energizer Bunny out there," Mulkey said. "She just really passes well. Sometimes you have to tell her to shoot, instead of pass."

MiLaysia Fulwiley #23

G | 5-9 | Senior

Fulwiley is entering her second season at LSU after transferring from South Carolina. She was named the SEC Sixth Woman of the Year after leading the Tigers with

14.6 points and 2.8 steals per game to go with her 3.6 rebounds and 3.5 assists.

Mulkey said Fulwiley will be more comfortable as an off-ball guard next to Jada Williams. "We expect her to give us more," she said.

Laila Reynolds #00

G | 6-0 | Senior

The Florida transfer averaged 12.1 points, 3.4 boards and 1.9 assists per game as a Gator last year.

"She never gets tired," Mulkey said. "I like that she's got that athleticism and speed."

ZaKiyah Johnson #11

G | 6-0 | Sophomore

Johnson started 23 games last year, earning All-SEC freshman honors after averaging 9.7 points and 5.6 rebounds. Mulkey said she hopes to use her more on the perimeter but may need her to slide down to the post again for extra depth.

Chloe Larry #21

G | 5-6 | Junior

Larry is a Tennessee Tech transfer who averaged 13.6 points per game en route to an All-Ohio Valley Conference selection last season. She was named OVC Newcomer of the Year as a freshman.

Lola Lampley #1

G | 6-2 | Freshman

A five-star signee from Indianapolis, Lampley is expected to have an immediate impact for the Tigers. She was named a McDonald's All-American.

Grace Knox #2

F | 6-3 | Sophomore

Knox played in 33 games and started 11 as a freshman. She averaged 8.8 points and 4.6 rebounds and could become a starter.

Noa Morro #3

F | 6-3 | Senior

Morro, a former Spanish professional, signed with LSU in the spring and could take over a starting spot in the inside with the departure of Kate Koval. She will miss the start of the season after having a rod put in her shin for a stress fracture in early September but could return as soon as the end of November.

Anna Minaeva #5

F | 6-5 | Freshman

The 17-year-old ex-Russian pro has earned the nickname "Baby Jokic" from Mulkey for her 6-5 frame, footwork and play making ability. She averaged 11.2 points and 9.6 rebounds in 29 games with MBA Moscow.

"Her body is very mature, and she's fundamentally sound," Mulkey said.

Meghan Yarnevich #15

F | 6-0 | Sophomore

Yarnevich averaged six minutes an outing over her 20 appearances as a freshman. The former four-star out of Potomac, Maryland, needs more experience. **TR**



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Bigger Than Basketball

Ukrainian Center Kate Koval Leaves LSU Women's Basketball Program After Signing Of Russian Anna Minaeva

By KACE KIESCHNICK, Tiger Rag Staff Reporter

Kate Koval looked like a breakout star in the making for Kim Mulkey's LSU women's basketball team this season.

The 6-foot-5 center was due for a full time starting role after starting 17 of 35 games last season. She averaged 8.3 points, 6.3 rebounds, 1.1 steals and 1.2 blocks per game while shooting 56 percent from the floor after transferring from Notre Dame last season. But instead of taking the next step with

the Lady Tigers, Mulkey announced she departed from the program and withdrew from LSU on Aug. 24, the day classes began.

Why? Because Mulkey signed 17-year-old Russian pro Anna Minaeva just 10 days prior.

Koval, 20, was born in Kyiv, Ukraine, and her father, Oleksandr Koval, is a drone operator and soldier in the Ukrainian military. And the Russia-Ukraine War that

began with a Russian invasion in 2022 and persists still today is not "distant or abstract," Koval said. It is a deeply personal conflict that has forever impacted the lives of her, her family and her people and scarred her homeland.

"People close to me have been killed and wounded in Russian attacks, and places where I grew up and first began playing basketball have been destroyed by missile

strikes,” Koval wrote in an Instagram post on her decision to leave the team and withdraw from LSU.

Koval said Mulkey informed her of her decision to recruit Minaeva, a native of Moscow, Russia, in late April after the transfer portal window had already closed. Mulkey detailed that conversation and her hopes of the good that could come from the situation to Reed Darcey of the Baton Rouge Advocate.

“I think she made a decision to recruit Anna Minaeva, because she thought that would be what was best for the program and made sure that Kate Koval stayed in the loop because she understood that it was a sensitive issue for her,” Darcey told Tiger Rag. “It was a personal issue for her. I think she wanted Kate to know before anyone else, and then they moved forward.”

The months that followed were a difficult decision process for Koval as she questioned whether LSU was the right place for her.

“While I understand and respect that roster decisions are a part of college basketball. I have to remain true to myself, my values, and my country,” Koval’s statement read. “I felt I had found a home at LSU, and I am incredibly grateful for my teammates who became family, as well as my coaches, staff, professors, and the entire LSU community. I will always cherish the relationships, experiences, and memories I made there.”

Koval went on to express her desire to find a new home for the upcoming season. Two weeks after releasing that statement, she was granted a legislative relief waiver by the NCAA to enter the transfer portal. She then signed with Baylor, where Mulkey coached for 21 seasons and won three national titles from 2000-2021.

In Mulkey’s announcement of Koval’s departure, at the time for unnamed personal reasons, she said she respected her decision and wished her the best. Darcey said that Mulkey obviously knew this was a possible outcome, but felt safe both Koval and Minaeva would be on the team this season.

The decision to recruit Minaeva despite any geopolitical roster conflicts was a risk Mulkey and her staff were willing to take because of their belief in the 6-5 Minaeva. She played in 29 games in the Russian Premier League and Superleague during the 2025-2026 season and averaged 11.2 points and 9.6 rebounds per game.

“I’m thrilled to welcome Anna to our LSU family,” Mulkey said in LSU’s announcement of the signing. “She has the experience, skill set, and size to make an immediate impact in our front court. It takes tremendous courage to leave home at just 17 years old and travel across the world to pursue a dream. I’m excited to support and guide Anna as she begins this next chapter at LSU.”

That advertised immediate impact could become crucial for the Lady Tigers this season. Koval’s absence leaves a glaring absence in the front court. Minaeva is the only player on the roster that can match Koval’s size, but at just 17 years old, she has nowhere near the same experience.

Spanish professional signee Noa Morro looks to be the next up in the LSU front court. The 6-3, 21-year-old forward averaged 8.0 points, 7.4 rebounds and 1.6 assists per game in the EuroLeague before signing with LSU in April. While she may not be quite the rim protector Koval is, her 36.5 percent three-point percentage adds another wrinkle to the LSU offense. **TR**



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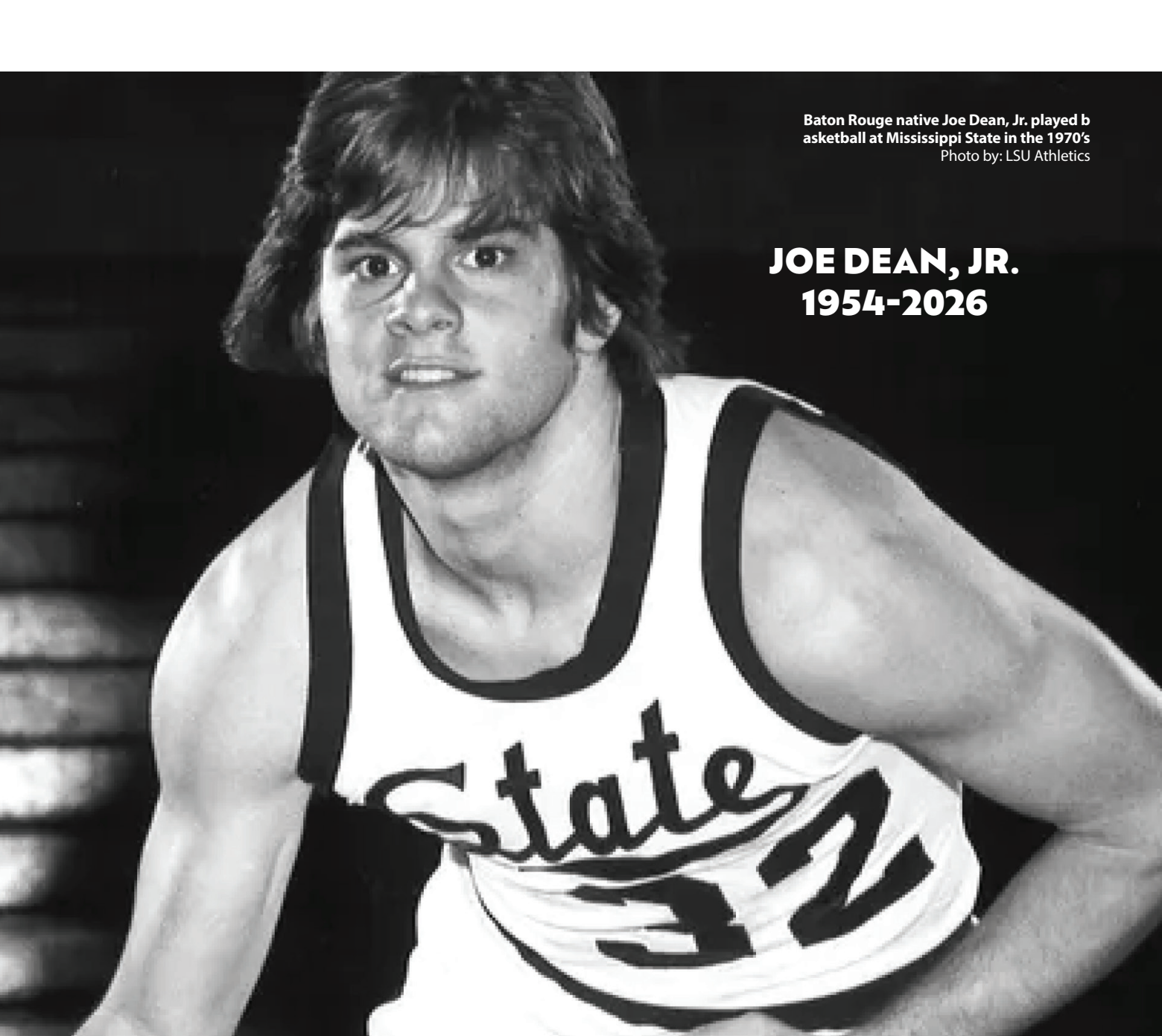
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A black and white photograph of Joe Dean, Jr. He is a young man with dark, wavy hair, looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. He is wearing a white basketball jersey with black trim and the word "State" in a cursive font across the chest, with the number "32" below it. The background is dark and out of focus.

Baton Rouge native Joe Dean, Jr. played basketball at Mississippi State in the 1970's
Photo by: LSU Athletics

JOE DEAN, JR. 1954-2026

In His Father's Footsteps

Joe Dean, Jr. Made His Dad
And Baton Rouge Proud

By GLENN GUILBEAU, Tiger Rag Editor

Joe Dean Jr., son of Baton Rouge and the former LSU athletic director Joe Dean Sr., died on Sunday, August 16, at age 71 after prolonged health issues.

Dean Jr.'s father came from Brazil, Indiana, to play basketball at LSU from 1948-52 and later became a marketing kingpin for Converse athletic shoes in the 1970s. He settled

in Baton Rouge and coined the iconic phrase "String Music" while announcing SEC games on television. Dean Sr. moved on to be LSU's athletic director from 1987-2000.

Dean Jr. played basketball at Baton Rouge High in the early 1970s as a guard with childhood friend Jay Dardenne, who went on to become Lieutenant Governor and Secretary of State in Louisiana.

"We were the guards," Dardenne told Tiger Rag. "He didn't play much defense. He played a lot of offense. Joe could shoot. He was really a great high school player and had a good college career at Mississippi State. We were literally lifelong friends, and our families traveled together on vacations while our kids were little. We were just inseparable."

Dardenne gave one of the eulogies at Dean Jr.'s funeral on August 24 in Birmingham, where Dean Jr. eventually settled and lived and worked for decades.

"We saw each other regularly and stayed in touch," Dardenne said. "I grew up with the Dean family, just like Ron Higgins."

Higgins, a Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame sportswriter, grew up on College Drive near the Dean home by the Webb golf course and also played basketball at Baton Rouge High in the 1970s.

"We all grew up together," Dardenne said. "Joe Jr. was the most upbeat, positive personality type I've ever known in my life. He was never down, always confident, so gregarious and outgoing."

Dean Jr. played at Mississippi State from 1974-76 and became a graduate assistant coach there along with John Brady. The two became fast friends. This eventually led to the elder Dean becoming Brady's chief reference for coaching jobs that ended up with Dean hiring Brady to be LSU's basketball coach in 1997.

"It's hard to explain what the Dean family has meant to me and how Joe Dean Jr. impacted my life," Brady told Tiger Rag. "And it all started when Joe Jr. and I were graduate assistants at Mississippi State. We maintained a wonderful friendship all these years. Joe was one of the most positive, most fun and encouraging people I've ever been around. Every time I saw him, I felt better about myself."

Dean Jr. became an assistant coach at Kentucky from 1977-83 under Joe B. Hall and was on the other side of some famous games between Hall and LSU coach Dale

Brown's Tigers. Kentucky won the 1977-78 national championship at 30-2 record (16-2 SEC), but it lost at LSU, 95-94, in overtime on Feb. 11, 1978, even though LSU's five starters fouled out.

Dean Jr. was Birmingham Southern's basketball coach from 1983-89 and at Central Florida from 1989-93. From 1993-1999, Dean Jr. directed sales and marketing for the Colonnade Group in Birmingham and was an SEC basketball TV analyst just like his dad. At this time, Brady was the basketball coach at Samford in Birmingham from 1991-97 and stayed close to Dean Jr.

"He always inspired me to be the best I could possibly be," Brady said. "He truly cared about people and was the best friend, husband and father one could possibly be."

From 1999-2016, Dean was Birmingham Southern's athletic director.

"Joe Dean Jr. influenced many and had a positive impact on everyone he met," Brady said. "Loved life, his family and friends. I am grateful to have been one of those, but I do know he is in a better place now. And he and his dad are having a String Music happy reunion!" TR



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LSU FALL SPORTS

2026 SCHEDULES & ROSTERS

LSU BASEBALL 2026-27 ROSTER

No.	Name	Class	Hgt	Wgt	Pos	Hometown	High School	Previous School
0	Cade Arrambide	JUNIOR	6-1	217	Catcher	Tomball, Texas	Tomball HS	
1	Nate Davis-Cleary	FRESHMAN	6-0	175	Outfield	Orlando, Fla.	Bishop Moore HS	
4	Steven Milam	SENIOR	5-7	183	Infield	Las Cruces, N.M.	Centennial HS	
5	Malachi Washington	FRESHMAN	6-1	195	Infield / Outfield	Stone Mountain, Ga.	Parkview HS	
6	Dawson Park	JUNIOR	5-10	180	Infield	Magnolia, Texas	Magnolia West HS	Texas State
7	Cade Kurland	5TH-YEAR SENIOR	5-11	193	Infield	Tampa, Fla.	Berkeley Prep HS	Florida
8	Landon Hood	SOPHOMORE	6-3	224	Right-Handed Pitcher	Goodyear, Ariz.	Canyon View HS	Gonzaga
9	William Schmidt	JUNIOR	6-4	206	Right-Handed Pitcher	Baton Rouge, La.	Catholic HS	
10	Cooper Moore	REDSHIRT JUNIOR	6-0	200	Right-Handed Pitcher	Bixby, Okla.	Bixby HS	Kansas
11	John Pearson	JUNIOR	5-11	229	Infield	West Monroe, La.	West Monroe HS	
13	Edward Yamin IV	5TH-YEAR SENIOR	6-4	208	Catcher / Utility	West Sand Lake, N.Y.	La Salle Academy	Dayton
14	Coletton Brady	FRESHMAN	6-5	227	Right-Handed Pitcher	Buffalo, N.Y.	TNXL Academy	
16	Dylan Minnatee	FRESHMAN	5-11	201	First Base / Outfield	Elk Grove, Calif.	Franklin HS	
17	Parker Loew	FRESHMAN	6-0	175	Infield	Jacksonville, Fla.	Trinity Christian Academy	
18	Mason Braun	SOPHOMORE	5-11	216	First Base / Outfield	South Bend, Ind.	Penn HS	
20	Casan Evans	JUNIOR	6-3	200	Right-Handed Pitcher	Houston, Texas	St. Pius X HS	
22	Jason Wachs	JUNIOR	6-2	194	Outfield	Pembroke Pines, Fla.	West Broward HS	Tulane
23	William Patrick	SOPHOMORE	6-1	206	Outfield	Monroe, La.	St. Frederick HS	
24	Braydon Wisener	FRESHMAN	6-2	213	Right-Handed Pitcher	Huffman, Texas	Hargrave HS	
25	Bino Watters	JUNIOR	6-2	218	Outfield / First Base	Rochester Hills, Mich.	Adams HS	Notre Dame
26	Omar Serna Jr.	SOPHOMORE	6-0	242	Catcher	Houston, Texas	Lutheran South Academy	
27	Logan Schmidt	FRESHMAN	6-3	210	Left-Handed Pitcher	Aliso Viejo, Calif.	Ganeshia HS	
28	Danny Lachenmayer	JUNIOR	6-2	215	Left-Handed Pitcher	Eagan, Minn.	Eagan HS	North Dakota State
29	Cooper Williams	JUNIOR	6-4	208	Left-Handed Pitcher	Alvin, Texas	Alvin HS	
30	Bradyn Cupit	FRESHMAN	6-0	222	Left-Handed Pitcher	West Monroe, La.	West Monroe HS	
32	Jack Ruckert	SOPHOMORE	6-0	196	Infield / Utility	Baton Rouge, La.	Catholic HS	
33	Jordan Martinez	FRESHMAN	6-0	201	Infield / Right-Handed Pitcher	Jacksonville, Fla.	Trinity Christian Academy	
34	Dominic Santarelli	FRESHMAN	6-1	237	First Base / Outfield	Pleasant Prairie, Wisc.	St. Joseph Catholic Academy	
35	Reagan Ricken	SOPHOMORE	6-5	202	Right-Handed Pitcher	Temecula, Calif.	Great Oak HS	
38	Ethan Plog	JUNIOR	6-0	194	Left-Handed Pitcher	Green Bay, Wisc.	Bay Port HS	Iowa Western CC
39	Jonah Aase	REDSHIRT FRESHMAN	6-0	207	Left-Handed Pitcher	Ferndale, Wash.	Meridian HS	
40	Cooper Sides	FRESHMAN	6-5	231	Right-Handed Pitcher	Red Bluff, Calif.	Orange Lutheran HS	
41	Kolby Stringer	FRESHMAN	6-4	234	Right-Handed Pitcher	Foxworth, Miss.	West Marion HS	
44	Kaden Smith	JUNIOR	6-2	193	Right-Handed Pitcher	Ocala, Fla.	Forest HS	South Florida
52	Zion Theophilus	SOPHOMORE	6-0	197	Right-Handed Pitcher	Cincinnati, Ohio	Moeller HS	
53	Angel Laya	SOPHOMORE	6-2	211	Outfield	San Diego, Calif.	Eastlake HS	Oregon
55	Braxton Beaty	FRESHMAN	5-11	177	Left-Handed Pitcher	Angleton, Texas	Angleton HS	
61	Lucas Nawrocki	FRESHMAN	5-11	201	Left-Handed Pitcher / Outfield		Aledo, Texas	Aledo HS
95	Diego Velazquez	SOPHOMORE	6-1	218	Right-Handed Pitcher	Reseda, Calif.	Crespi Carmelite HS	USC

LSU BASEBALL 2026 FALL SCHEDULE

Sat, Oct 31
vs. Samford
Biloxi, Miss. (Keesler Federal Park)
3:00 PM CT
Exhibition

Sun, Nov 1
vs. Samford
Biloxi, Miss. (Keesler Federal Park)
1:00 PM CT
Exhibition

Sun, Nov 8
vs. Troy
Baton Rouge, La. (Alex Box Stadium, Skip Bertman Field)
1:00 PM CT
Exhibition

Fri, Nov 13
vs. Southeastern Louisiana
Baton Rouge, La. (Alex Box Stadium, Skip Bertman Field)
TBA

LSU SOCCER 2026 SCHEDULE

Wed, Aug 12
at Wake Forest University
Winston-Salem, N.C. (Spry Stadium)
Loss 0-2

Sun, Aug 16
vs. Northwestern State
Baton Rouge, La. (LSU Soccer Stadium)
Win 5-0

Thu, Aug 20
vs. UCF
Baton Rouge, La. (LSU Soccer Stadium)
Loss 1-2

Sun, Aug 23
vs. Florida Gulf Coast
Baton Rouge, La. (LSU Soccer Stadium)
Loss 2-3

Thu, Aug 27
at Arizona State
Tempe, Ariz. (Sun Devil Soccer Stadium)
Loss 0-1

Sun, Aug 30
vs. Arizona
Tempe, Ariz. (Sun Devil Soccer Stadium)
Tie 1-1

Thu, Sep 3
vs. Baylor
Baton Rouge, La. (LSU Soccer Stadium)
Loss 0-2

Sun, Sep 6
at Miami (Ohio)
Oxford, Ohio (Bobby Kramig Field)
Win 3-2

Fri, Sep 11
vs. Tennessee
Baton Rouge, La. (LSU Soccer Stadium)
7:00 PM CT

Fri, Sep 18
vs. South Carolina
Baton Rouge, La. (LSU Soccer Stadium)
7:00 PM CT

Thu, Sep 24
at Oklahoma
Norman, Okla. (John Crain Field at the OU Soccer Complex)
7:00 PM CT

Sun, Sep 27
vs. Georgia
Baton Rouge, La. (LSU Soccer Stadium)
6:00 PM CT

Fri, Oct 2
at Florida
Gainesville, Fla. (Donald R. Dizney Stadium)
5:00 PM CT

Fri, Oct 9
vs. Arkansas
Baton Rouge, La. (LSU Soccer Stadium)
7:00 PM CT

Thu, Oct 15
at Texas
Austin, Texas (Mike A. Myers Stadium)
7:00 PM CT

Sun, Oct 18
at Texas A&M
Bryan-College Station, Texas (Ellis Field)
2:00 PM CT

Sun, Oct 25
vs. Mississippi State
Baton Rouge, La. (LSU Soccer Stadium)
2:00 PM CT

Sun, Nov 1
at Missouri
Columbia, Mo. (Audrey J. Walton Stadium)
12:00 PM CT

Sun, Nov 8 - Sun, Nov 15
SEC Tournament
Pensacola, Fla. (Ashton Brosnahan Soccer Complex)
TBA

Fri, Nov 20 - Sun, Dec 13
NCAA Tournament
Sites TBD
TBA

LSU SOCCER 2026 ROSTER

NO.	NAME	CLASS	HGT.	POS	HOMETOWN	HIGH SCHOOL	PREVIOUS SCHOOL
0	Katelyn Holt	REDSHIRT SOPHOMORE	5-11	Goalkeeper	Waterford, Va.	St. Paul VI Catholic HS	
00	Rylie Kuyper	REDSHIRT FRESHMAN	5-8	Goalkeeper	Madisonville, La.	Northlake Christian School	Texas Tech
1	Audur Scheving	SENIOR	5-10	Goalkeeper	Reykjavik, Iceland	Menntaskólinn við Sund	Reykjavik University
2	Emma Alvord	SENIOR	5-8	Defender	Argyle, Texas	Denton Guyer HS	Oklahoma State
3	Rakel Sigurðardóttir	FRESHMAN	5-6	Defender	Kópavogur, Iceland	Fjölbrautaskólinn í Garðabæ	
4	Ryleigh Albin	FRESHMAN	5-7	Defender	Flower Mound, Texas	Marcus HS	
5	Alexia Hansen	FRESHMAN	5-5	Forward	West Palm Beach, Fla.	Somerset Academy Charter HS	
6	Maud Ferrière	SOPHOMORE	5-5	Midfielder	Sainta-Étienne, France	Tezenas du Montcel	
7	Ryann Denecour	SOPHOMORE	5-3	Forward	Charlestown, R.I.	Chariho HS	
8	Ella Kate Johnston	FRESHMAN	5-8	Midfielder	Baton Rouge, La.	Parkview Baptist HS	
9	Amy Smith	JUNIOR	5-11	Defender	Fort Collins, Colo.	Fossil Ridge HS	
10	Berglind Hlynisdóttir	FRESHMAN	5-11	Forward	Hafnarfjörður, Iceland	Verzlunarskóli Íslands	
11	Sariyah Bailey	SOPHOMORE	5-3	Forward	Edmonton, Canada	Mount Kelly	
12	Ava Villapando	FRESHMAN	5-3	Midfielder	Brampton, Ontario	St. Martin HS	
14	Annaleigh Bruser	REDSHIRT SOPHOMORE	5-6	Defender	Baton Rouge, La.	IMG Academy	
15	Jocelyn Ollivierre	5TH-YEAR SENIOR	5-7	Defender	Colorado Springs, Colo.	Air Academy HS	
16	Mia Conard	FRESHMAN	5-7	Midfielder	Pompano Beach, Fla.	Cardinal Gibbons HS	
18	Kelsey Major	5TH-YEAR SENIOR	5-5	Defender	New Orleans, La.	St. Mary's Dominican HS	
19	Lila Jaillet	SOPHOMORE	5-6	Defender	Marietta, Ga.	George Walton HS	
20	Ava Galligan	SENIOR	6-0	Forward	Ashburn, Va.	Independence HS	
21	Jaya Dern	FRESHMAN	5-8	Defender	Castle Rock, Colo.	Castle View HS	
22	Ava Amsden	JUNIOR	5-6	Midfielder	Colorado Springs, Colo.	Pine Creek HS	
23	Allie Fryer	5TH-YEAR SENIOR	5-7	Forward	Spanish Fork, Utah	Maple Mountain HS	BYU
24	Kylee Rocha	FRESHMAN	5-10	Defender	Elk Grove, Calif.	Pleasant Grove HS	
25	Senai Rogers	REDSHIRT SOPHOMORE	5-7	Forward	Elk Grove, Calif.	Franklin HS	
27	Marie Pues	FRESHMAN	5-9	Goalkeeper	Leuven, Belgium	Sint Angela Tildonk	
28	Brielyn Knowles	REDSHIRT JUNIOR	5-8	Defender	Orlando, Fla.	Windermere Preparatory School	
32	Linka Ono	JUNIOR	5-5	Midfielder	Tokyo, Japan	Sakuyo Gakuen HS	Arizona Western
44	Jazmin Ferguson	5TH-YEAR SENIOR	5-9	Defender	Conyers, Ga.	Heritage HS	East Carolina

LSU SWIMMING & DIVING 2026 SCHEDULE

Sat, Sep 19
Purple & Gold Intrasquad
Baton Rouge, La. (LSU Natatorium)
10:00 AM CT

Fri, Oct 9
at Navy w/ Loyola (Md.)
Annapolis, Md. (Lejeune Hall)
3:00 PM CT

Fri, Oct 23
vs. Texas A&M
Baton Rouge, La. (LSU Natatorium)

Thu, Nov 5
vs. Auburn
Baton Rouge, La. (LSU Natatorium)
12:00 PM CT

Thu, Nov 19
at Georgia Invitational (Day 1)
Athens, Ga. (Gabrielsen Natatorium)

Fri, Nov 20
at Georgia Invitational (Day 2)
Athens, Ga. (Gabrielsen Natatorium)

Sat, Nov 21
at Georgia Invitational (Day 3)
Athens, Ga. (Gabrielsen Natatorium)

Sat, Jan 9
at Missouri
Columbia, Mo. (MizzouRec)
10:00 AM CT

Fri, Jan 22
at Eddie Reese Texas Showdown (Day 1)
Austin, Texas (Lee & Joe Jamail Texas Swim Center)
10:00 AM CT
10 a.m. CT (prelims); 6 p.m. CT (finals)

Sat, Jan 23
at Eddie Reese Texas Showdown (Day 2)
Austin, Texas (Lee & Joe Jamail Texas Swim Center)
10:00 AM CT
10 a.m. CT (prelims); 6 p.m. CT (finals)

Sat, Jan 30
vs. SMU
Baton Rouge, La. (LSU Natatorium)

Mon, Feb 15
at SEC Championships (Day 1)
Austin, Texas (Lee & Joe Jamail Texas Swim Center)
9:30 AM CT
9:30 a.m. CT (prelims); 5:30 p.m. CT (finals)

Tue, Feb 16
at SEC Championships (Day 2)
Austin, Texas (Lee & Joe Jamail Texas Swim Center)
9:30 AM CT
9:30 a.m. CT (prelims); 5:30 p.m. CT (finals)

Wed, Feb 17
at SEC Championships (Day 3)
Austin, Texas (Lee & Joe Jamail Texas Swim Center)
9:30 AM CT
9:30 a.m. CT (prelims); 5:30 p.m. CT (finals)

Thu, Feb 18
at SEC Championships (Day 4)
Austin, Texas (Lee & Joe Jamail Texas Swim Center)
9:30 AM CT
9:30 a.m. CT (prelims); 5:30 p.m. CT (finals)

Fri, Feb 19
at SEC Championships (Day 5)
Austin, Texas (Lee & Joe Jamail Texas Swim Center)
9:30 AM CT
9:30 a.m. CT (prelims); 5:30 p.m. CT (finals)

Sat, Feb 20
at SEC Championships (Day 6)
Austin, Texas (Lee & Joe Jamail Texas Swim Center)
9:30 AM CT
9:30 a.m. CT (prelims); 5:30 p.m. CT (finals)

Fri, Feb 26
at Auburn Last Chance Invitational (Day 1)
Auburn, Ala. (James E. Martin Aquatics Center)

Sat, Feb 27
at Auburn Last Chance Invitational (Day 2)
Auburn, Ala. (James E. Martin Aquatics Center)

Mon, Mar 8
at NCAA Zone D Diving Regional (Day 1)
Austin, Texas (Lee & Joe Jamail Texas Swim Center)

Tue, Mar 9
at NCAA Zone D Diving Regional (Day 2)
Austin, Texas (Lee & Joe Jamail Texas Swim Center)

Wed, Mar 10
at NCAA Zone D Diving Regional (Day 3)
Austin, Texas (Lee & Joe Jamail Texas Swim Center)

Wed, Mar 17
at NCAA Women's Championships (Day 1)
Austin, Texas (Lee & Joe Jamail Texas Swim Center)
10:00 AM CT
10 a.m. CT (prelims); 6 p.m. CT (finals)

Thu, Mar 18
at NCAA Women's Championships (Day 2)
Austin, Texas (Lee & Joe Jamail Texas Swim Center)
10:00 AM CT
10 a.m. CT (prelims); 6 p.m. CT (finals)

Fri, Mar 19
at NCAA Women's Championships (Day 3)
Austin, Texas (Lee & Joe Jamail Texas Swim Center)
10:00 AM CT
10 a.m. CT (prelims); 6 p.m. CT (finals)

Sat, Mar 20
at NCAA Women's Championships (Day 4)
Austin, Texas (Lee & Joe Jamail Texas Swim Center)
10:00 AM CT
10 a.m. CT (prelims); 6 p.m. CT (finals)

Wed, Mar 24
at NCAA Men's Championships (Day 1)
Austin, Texas (Lee & Joe Jamail Texas Swim Center)
10:00 AM CT
10 a.m. CT (prelims); 6 p.m. CT (finals)

Thu, Mar 25
at NCAA Men's Championships (Day 2)
Austin, Texas (Lee & Joe Jamail Texas Swim Center)
10:00 AM CT
10 a.m. CT (prelims); 6 p.m. CT (finals)

Fri, Mar 26
at NCAA Men's Championships (Day 3)
Austin, Texas (Lee & Joe Jamail Texas Swim Center)
10:00 AM CT
10 a.m. CT (prelims); 6 p.m. CT (finals)

Sat, Mar 27
at NCAA Men's Championships (Day 4)
Austin, Texas (Lee & Joe Jamail Texas Swim Center)
10:00 AM CT
10 a.m. CT (prelims); 6 p.m. CT (finals)



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LSU MEN'S SWIMMING & DIVING 2026 ROSTER

NAME	CLASS	HGT	POS	HOMETOWN	HIGH SCHOOL	PREVIOUS SCHOOL
Jack Cameron	FRESHMAN	5-10	Freestyle/Breaststroke	Newton, Mass.	Valley Christian HS	
Guilherme Camossato	SENIOR	6-4	Breaststroke	Sao Paulo, Brazil	Colégio Amorim Tatuape	TCU
Jackson Congdon	FRESHMAN	5-6	Diving	Victoria, Canada	Claremont HS	
Andreas Da Silva	FRESHMAN	6-3	Freestyle/Backstroke	Wellington, Fla.	Wellington HS	
Zach Dale	FRESHMAN	6-8	Freestyle/Backstroke	Stoke-on-Trent, England	Repton School	
Diggory Dillingham	JUNIOR	6-1	Freestyle/Butterfly	Bend, Ore.	Mountain View Senior HS	USC
Caleb Ellis	5TH-YEAR SENIOR	6-1	Butterfly	Lee's Summit, Mo.	Lee's Summit West HS	Ohio State
Jere Hribar	SENIOR	6-8	Freestyle	Split, Croatia	School of Design, Graphics, and Sustainable Construction	
Travis Keith	JUNIOR	6-1	Diving	Fairfax, Va.	Colgan HS	Auburn
Jovan Lekic	SENIOR	5-11	Freestyle/Individual Medley	Banja Luka, Bosnia	Gaudeamus HS Center	
Volodymyr Lisovets	JUNIOR	6-7	Breaststroke	Zhytomyr, Ukraine	Humanitarian Gymnasium No. 23	
Tyson Marrs	FRESHMAN	6-0	Diving	Houston, Texas	Memorial HS	
Simon Meubry	SOPHOMORE	6-4	Freestyle	Lannion, France	Lycee Lesven	
Elias Noe	SENIOR	6-0	Freestyle/Butterfly	Holbaek, Denmark	Stenhus Gymnasium	Indianapolis
Karlo Percinic	SENIOR	6-2	Freestyle	Zagreb, Croatia	The Eleventh Gymnasium	
Collin Quickstad	JUNIOR	6-0	Individual Medley/Butterfly	Keller, Texas	Keller HS	
Matias Santiso	SENIOR	6-2	Freestyle	Liniers, Argentina	Velez Sarsfield	Louisville
Nikola Simic	JUNIOR	6-0	Freestyle	Belgrade, Serbia	Ivanka Gajic Educational Center	
Luke Stibrich	REDSHIRT SOPHOMORE	6-2	Individual Medley/Butterfly	Humble, Texas	Summer Creek HS	Texas
Levi Thome	SENIOR	5-1	Breaststroke/Individual Medley	Cypress, Texas	Bridgeland HS	

LSU WOMEN'S SWIMMING & DIVING 2026 ROSTER

NAME	CLASS	HGT	POS	HOMETOWN	HIGH SCHOOL	PREVIOUS SCHOOL
Anastasia Bako	JUNIOR	5-8	Freestyle	Oradea, Romania	Emil Racovita National College	
Sophie Benn	FRESHMAN		Freestyle	Northwood, England	Mount Kelly HS	
Lauren Bernardo	JUNIOR	5-8	Backstroke/Individual Medley	Charlotte, N.C.	Charlotte Catholic HS	
Saskia Blasius	JUNIOR	5-7	Breaststroke/Individual Medley	Waiblingen, Germany	Wirtemberg-Gymnasium	
Martina Bukvic	SOPHOMORE	5-9	Breaststroke/Freestyle	Belgrade, Serbia	Srednja Skola Kosta Cukic	
Zoe Carlos-Broc	JUNIOR	5-7	Backstroke/Butterfly/Individual Medley	Paris, France	Emmanuel Mounier HS	
Michaela de Villiers	5TH-YEAR SENIOR	5-10	Freestyle/Backstroke	Capetown, South Africa	Herschel Girls School	
Parker Del Balso	SENIOR	5-10	Backstroke/Freestyle	Foster City, Calif.	San Mateo HS	Pittsburgh
Roselyne Depatie	FRESHMAN	5-5	Diving	Lavel, Quebec, Canada	Collège André-Grasset	
Malou Douillard	SOPHOMORE	5-6	Freestyle/Butterfly	Dumbea, New Caledonia	College d'Auteuil	
Dara Duffy	FRESHMAN	5-6	Freestyle	Virginia Beach, Va.	First Colonial HS	
Kara Jones	SOPHOMORE	6-1	Freestyle	Huntsville, Ala.	Grisson HS	
Morgan Lalonde	SOPHOMORE	5-7	Diving	Huntington Beach, Calif.	Mater Dei HS	
Jessie Liao	JUNIOR	5-9	Freestyle/Backstroke	Hsinchu, Taiwan	National Hsinchu Commercial Vocational HS	
Avery Littlefield	JUNIOR	5-6	Freestyle/Butterfly	Stillwater, Okla.	Stillwater HS	
Lucijana Lukšić	FRESHMAN	6-0	Freestyle/Backstroke	Split, Croatia	Wallner HS	
Sabrina Lyn	SENIOR	5-7	Butterfly/Freestyle	Kingston, Jamaica	The Bolles School	
Eve Nelson	SOPHOMORE	5-4	Diving	College Station, Texas	A&M Consolidated HS	
Grace Palmer	JUNIOR	5-7	Breaststroke/Freestyle	Liège, Belgium	College Sainte Veronique	
Giovana Reis	JUNIOR	5-7	Freestyle	Santos, Brazil	Escola Estadual Fernão Dias Paes	Georgia Tech
Nicole Santuliana	JUNIOR	5-5	Freestyle/Backstroke	Costabissara, Italy	Farina All-Inclusive Institute	
Helen Sava	REDSHIRT JUNIOR	5-6	Freestyle/Individual Medley	Toronto, Canada	The York School	
Zara Selimovic	FRESHMAN	5-6	Freestyle	Schwerte, Germany	Helmholtz-Gymnasium	
Ella Smoker	JUNIOR	5-10	Breaststroke	Cypress, Texas	Cy-Fair HS	Texas A&M
Nina Stanisavljević	JUNIOR	5-9	Freestyle/Backstroke	Leskovac, Serbia	Gimnazija Leskovac	Georgia Tech
Alexa Venglar	FRESHMAN	5-6	Diving	The Woodlands, Texas	Texas Connections Academy	
Ieva Visockaite	FRESHMAN	6-0	Freestyle	Kaunas, Lithuania	Kauno J. Jablonskio Gimnazija	
Ava Ward	FRESHMAN	5-6	Freestyle	Ridgefield, Conn.	Ridgefield HS	

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LSU VOLLEYBALL 2026 SCHEDULE

LSU Home Tournament

Fri, Aug 28
vs. Wake Forest
Baton Rouge, La.
Win 3-2

Sat, Aug 29
vs. Incarnate Word
Baton Rouge, La.
Win 3-1

SEC/Big 10 Challenge
Tue, Sep 1
vs. Michigan State
Ann Arbor, Mich.
Loss 0-3

Wed, Sep 2
at Michigan
Ann Arbor, Mich.
Loss 1-3

SEC/ACC Challenge
Tue, Sep 8
vs. NC State
Baton Rouge, La.
7:00 PM CT

Fri, Sep 11
vs. Charlotte
Baton Rouge, La.
11:00 AM CT

Sun, Sep 13
at Southeastern Louisiana
Hammond, La.
2:00 PM CT
Canes Classic

Thu, Sep 17
at Miami (Fla.)
Coral Gables, Fla.
5:30 PM CT

Fri, Sep 18
vs. Tulsa
Coral Gables, Fla.
3:00 PM CT

Wed, Sep 23
vs. Alabama
Baton Rouge, La.
7:00 PM CT

Sun, Sep 27
at Mississippi State
Starkville, Miss.
2:00 PM CT

Wed, Sep 30
vs. Vanderbilt
Baton Rouge, La.
6:00 PM CT

Sun, Oct 4
vs. Missouri
Baton Rouge, La.
12:00 PM CT

Fri, Oct 9
at Kentucky
Lexington, Ky.
6:00 PM CT

Sun, Oct 11
at Tennessee
Knoxville, Tenn.
1:00 PM CT

Fri, Oct 16
vs. South Carolina
Baton Rouge, La.
7:00 PM CT

Sun, Oct 18
vs. Georgia
Baton Rouge, La.
1:00 PM CT

Fri, Oct 23
at Florida
Gainesville, Fla.
6:00 PM CT

Sun, Oct 25
at Auburn
Auburn, Ala.
2:00 PM CT

Sun, Nov 1
at Ole Miss
Oxford, Miss.
2:00 PM CT

Wed, Nov 4
vs. Arkansas
Baton Rouge, La.
6:00 PM CT

Sun, Nov 8
vs. Oklahoma
Baton Rouge, La.
1:00 PM CT

Fri, Nov 13
at Texas A&M
College Station, Texas
7:00 PM CT

Sun, Nov 15
at Texas
Austin, Texas
2:00 PM CT

Fri, Nov 20 - Tue, Nov 24
SEC Tournament
Savannah, Ga.
TBA

Thu, Dec 3 - Sun, Dec 20
NCAA Tournament
Sites TBD
TBA

NCAA Selection Show: Sunday, Nov. 29

LSU VOLLEYBALL 2026 ROSTER

No.	Name	Class	Hgt	Pos.	Hometown	High School	Previous School
0	Laurel Cassidy	SOPHOMORE	5-9	Defensive Specialist / Libero	Baton Rouge, La.	Parkview Baptist HS	
1	Kiley Brooks	FRESHMAN	5-8	Defensive Specialist/Libero	Justin, Texas	Northwest HS	
2	Tireh Smith	5TH-YEAR SENIOR	6-3	Right Side	Charleston, S.C.	Stratford HS	South Carolina
3	Aly Kirkhoff	JUNIOR	5-6	Defensive Specialist / Libero	Indianapolis, Ind.	Roncalli HS	
4	Angelina Lee	SENIOR	6-2	Middle Blocker	Long Island, N.Y.	Farmersville HS	
5	Jurnee Robinson	SENIOR	6-1	Outside Hitter	Simpsonville, S.C.	Mauldin HS	
6	Hannah Lee	FRESHMAN	6-0	Middle Blocker / Pin Hitter	Frisco, Texas	Wakeland HS	
7	Jessica Jones	JUNIOR	6-2	Middle Blocker	Frisco, Texas	Wakeland HS	
8	Ella Hemmings	SENIOR	5-6	Defensive Specialist / Libero	Brownsburg, Ind.	Brownsburg HS	
9	Camryn Jeffery	SOPHOMORE	6-2	Opposite Hitter	Columbia, S.C.	Westwood HS	
10	Emilee Prochaska	JUNIOR	5-4	Defensive Specialist / Libero	Little Elm, Texas	Lone Star HS	Houston
11	Lainee Pyles	JUNIOR	6-2	Outside Hitter	Keller, Texas	Fossil Ridge HS	
12	Samara Coleman	SOPHOMORE	6-1	Outside Hitter	Spring, Texas	Grand Oaks HS	TCU
13	Martina Villani	SENIOR	6-2	Setter	Milan, Italy	Liceo Leonardo Da Vinci	Akron
14	Djay Seaward	FRESHMAN	6-0	Middle Blocker	Plano, Texas	Plano Senior HS	
15	Lauren Brooker	SENIOR	6-1	Setter	Calabasas, Calif.	Marymount HS	UC San Diego
18	Remi Nuss	JUNIOR	5-6	Defensive Specialist / Libero	Overland Park, Kan.	Blue Valley Northwest HS	
22	Katie Raymer	FRESHMAN	5-6	Defensive Specialist/Libero	Apex, N.C.	Apex HS	
23	Sanaa Donaie	SOPHOMORE	6-3	Middle Blocker	Baytown, Texas	Goose Creek Memorial HS	
25	Takyla Brown	SOPHOMORE	5-9	Setter	Pflugerville, Texas	Weiss HS	

LSU CROSS COUNTRY 2026 SCHEDULE

Fri, Sep 4
Battle for New Orleans (W)
New Orleans, La. (Lake Oaks Park)
3rd (10) 78 pts.

Fri, Sep 4
at LSU New Orleans
Battle for New Orleans (M)
New Orleans, La. (Lake Oaks Park)

Fri, Sep 18
LSU Twilight Relay Invitational (M)
Baton Rouge, La. (UREC Field Complex)
7:15 PM CT

Fri, Sep 18
LSU Twilight Relay Invitational (W)
Baton Rouge, La. (UREC Field Complex)
8:00 PM CT

Fri, Oct 2
at Lehigh
Paul Short Run (M)
Bethlehem, Pa. (Goodman Campus XC Course)

Fri, Oct 2
at Lehigh
Paul Short Run (W)
Bethlehem, Pa. (Goodman Campus XC Course)

Fri, Oct 16
at Texas A&M
Arturo Barrios Invitational (M)
Bryan-College Station, Texas (Watts Cross Country Course)

Men's 8k
Fri, Oct 16
at Texas A&M
Arturo Barrios Invitational (W)
Bryan-College Station, Texas (Watts Cross Country Course)

SEC Championships
Fri, Oct 30
Columbia, Mo. (Gans Creek XC Course)
Fri, Oct 30
at SEC Championships (W)
Columbia, Mo. (Gans Creek XC Course)

Fri, Nov 13
at NCAA South Central Regional (W)
Bryan-College Station, Texas (Watts Cross Country Course)

Fri, Nov 13
at NCAA South Central Regional (M)
Bryan-College Station, Texas (Watts Cross Country Course)

Sat, Nov 21
at NCAA Championships (W)
Terre Haute, Ind. (LaVern Gibson Championship XC Course)

Sat, Nov 21
at NCAA Championships (M)
Terre Haute, Ind. (LaVern Gibson Championship XC Course)

LSU MEN'S CROSS COUNTRY 2026 ROSTER

NAME	CLASS	HGT	HOMETOWN	HIGH SCHOOL	PREVIOUS SCHOOL
Findlay Belk	FRESHMAN	5-11	Fort Worth, Texas	Arlington Heights HS	
Jackson Burney	SOPHOMORE	6-0	Shreveport, La.	Calvary Baptist Academy	
Hugh Carlson	SENIOR	5-10	Greensboro, N.C.	McCallie School	
Rhen Langley	SENIOR	6-1	Zachary, La.	Zachary HS	
Mats Swanson	5TH-YEAR SENIO	6-2	Leduc, Alberta, Canada	Leduc Composite HC	
Gabe Tubbs	JUNIOR	6-0	League City, Texas	Clear Springs HS	UTSA
Jayden Williams	FRESHMAN	6-0	Bossier City, La.	Airline HS	

LSU WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY 2026 ROSTER

NAME	CLASS	HGT	HOMETOWN	HIGH SCHOOL	PREVIOUS SCHOOL
Abigael Chemnagei	SOPHOMORE	4-10	Kapenguria, Kenya	A.I.C Biribiriet Secondary School	
Edna Chepkemai	SOPHOMORE	5-4	Nakuru, Kenya	Mogonga P.A.G. Secondary School	
Ahry Comer	JUNIOR	5-6	Golconda, Ill.	Pope County Community HS	
Sofia Francini	SOPHOMORE	5-8	Calabasas, Calif.	Calabasas HS	Colorado
Ava Gumb	JUNIOR	5-5	Staten Island, N.Y.	Saint Joseph Hill Academy	
Maddie Gump	JUNIOR	5-4	Morgantown, W.Va.	Morgantown HS	
Ka'Myia Haywood	SENIOR	---	Jacksonville, Fla.	Bishop Kenny HS	Tennessee
Stella Junius	FRESHMAN	5-5	New Orleans, La.	Mt. Carmel Academy	
Brynn Kelso	SENIOR	5-9	Houma, La.	Vandebilt Catholic HS	Southern Miss
Yuya Sawada	JUNIOR	5-5	Hamamatsu City, Japan	Hamamatsu Shiritsu HS	
Taylor Tarpley	JUNIOR	5-6	Peachtree City, Ga.	Whitewater HS	
Georgia Theriot	FRESHMAN	5-3	Baton Rouge, La.	Parkview Baptist HS	
Beth Trow	FRESHMAN	5-7	Shrewsbury, England	Thomas Telford School	
Natalie Venkataraman	JUNIOR	5-7	Baton Rouge, La.	Baton Rouge HS	
Micaela Villarreal	SOPHOMORE	5-8	San Antonio, Texas	Antonian College Preparatory HS	

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LSU MEN'S GOLF 2026 SCHEDULE

Sun, Sep 13 at University of Toledo Inverness Intercollegiate (Day 1) Toledo, Ohio (Inverness GC)	Fri, Feb 5 at University of Hawaii Amer Ari Invitational (Day 2) Waimea, Hawai'i (Mauna Lani GC - North Course)	Mon, Apr 12 at Georgia Southern University The Ford Collegiate (Day 1) Richmond Hill, Ga. (The Ford Field & River GC)
Mon, Sep 14 at University of Toledo Inverness Intercollegiate (Day 2) Toledo, Ohio (Inverness GC) 7:30 AM CT	Sat, Feb 6 at University of Hawaii Amer Ari Invitational (Day 3) Waimea, Hawai'i (Mauna Lani GC - North Course)	Tue, Apr 13 at Georgia Southern University The Ford Collegiate (Day 2) Richmond Hill, Ga. (The Ford Field & River GC)
Tue, Sep 15 at University of Toledo Inverness Intercollegiate (Day 3) Toledo, Ohio (Inverness GC) 7:30 AM CT	Sun, Feb 28 at University of Arkansas Cabo Collegiate (Day 1) Cabo San Lucas, Mexico (Twin Dolphin Club)	Wed, Apr 21 at SEC Championships (Stroke Play, Day 1) St. Simon's Island, Ga. (Sea Island GC, Seaside Course)
Fri, Sep 18 at University of Illinois Olympia Fields/Fighting Illini Invitational (Day 1) Olympia Fields, Ill. (Olympia Fields CC)	Mon, Mar 1 at University of Arkansas Cabo Collegiate (Day 2) Cabo San Lucas, Mexico (Twin Dolphin Club)	Thu, Apr 22 at SEC Championships (Stroke Play, Day 2) St. Simon's Island, Ga. (Sea Island GC, Seaside Course)
Sat, Sep 19 at University of Illinois Olympia Fields/Fighting Illini Invitational (Day 2) Olympia Fields, Ill. (Olympia Fields CC)	Tue, Mar 2 at University of Arkansas Cabo Collegiate (Day 3) Cabo San Lucas, Mexico (Twin Dolphin Club)	Fri, Apr 23 at SEC Championships (Stroke Play, Day 3) St. Simon's Island, Ga. (Sea Island GC, Seaside Course) Top 8 Advance to Match Play
Sun, Sep 20 at University of Illinois Olympia Fields/Fighting Illini Invitational (Day 3) Olympia Fields, Ill. (Olympia Fields CC)	Mon, Mar 8 at UL-Lafayette Louisiana Classics (Day 1) Lafayette, La. (Oakbourne CC)	Sat, Apr 24 - Sun, Apr 25 at SEC Championships (Match Play, if nec.) St. Simon's Island, Ga. (Sea Island GC, Seaside Course)
Mon, Sep 28 at University of South Carolina Bryan Bros Collegiate (Day 1) West Columbia, S.C. (Solina GC)	Tue, Mar 9 at UL-Lafayette Louisiana Classics (Day 2) Lafayette, La. (Oakbourne CC)	Mon, May 17 at NCAA Regional (Day 1) Host Site TBD
Tue, Sep 29 at University of South Carolina Bryan Bros Collegiate (Day 2) West Columbia, S.C. (Solina GC)	Mon, Mar 15 at Loyola Marymount University Pauma Valley Invitational (Day 1) Pauma Valley, Calif. (Pauma Valley CC)	Tue, May 18 at NCAA Regional (Day 2) Host Site TBD
Sat, Oct 17 at University of Southern Mississippi Fallen Oak Collegiate Invitational (Day 1) Saucier, Miss. (Fallen Oak GC)	Tue, Mar 16 at Loyola Marymount University Pauma Valley Invitational (Day 2) Pauma Valley, Calif. (Pauma Valley CC)	Wed, May 19 at NCAA Regional (Day 3) Host Site TBD Top 5 Teams Advance to NCAA Championships
Sun, Oct 18 at University of Southern Mississippi Fallen Oak Collegiate Invitational (Day 2) Saucier, Miss. (Fallen Oak GC)	Wed, Mar 17 at Loyola Marymount University Pauma Valley Invitational (Day 3) Pauma Valley, Calif. (Pauma Valley CC)	Fri, May 28 at NCAA Championships (Stroke Play, Day 1) Carlsbad, Calif. (Omni La Costa Resort & Spa, Champions Course)
Mon, Oct 19 at University of Southern Mississippi Fallen Oak Collegiate Invitational (Day 3) Saucier, Miss. (Fallen Oak GC)	Sat, Apr 3 at Augusta Augusta Haskins Award Invitational (Day 1) Augusta, Ga. (Forest Hills GC)	Sat, May 29 at NCAA Championships (Stroke Play, Day 2) Carlsbad, Calif. (Omni La Costa Resort & Spa, Champions Course)
Thu, Feb 4 at University of Hawaii Amer Ari Invitational (Day 1) Waimea, Hawai'i (Mauna Lani GC - North Course)	Sun, Apr 4 at Augusta Augusta Haskins Award Invitational (Day 2) Augusta, Ga. (Forest Hills GC)	Sun, May 30 at NCAA Championships (Stroke Play, Day 3) Carlsbad, Calif. (Omni La Costa Resort & Spa, Champions Course) Top 15 Teams Advance to Round 4
		Mon, May 31 at NCAA Championships (Stroke Play, Day 4, if nec.) Carlsbad, Calif. (Omni La Costa Resort & Spa, Champions Course) Top 8 Advance to Match Play
		Tue, Jun 1 - Wed, Jun 2 at NCAA Championships (Match Play, if nec.) Carlsbad, Calif. (Omni La Costa Resort & Spa, Champions Course)

LSU MEN'S GOLF 2026 ROSTER

NAME	HGT	CLASS	HOMETOWN	HIGH SCHOOL
John Doyle	Freshman	6-0	Mitchelstown, Ireland	Christian Brothers' HS
Dan Hayes	Sophomore	5-11	Manchester, England	Cheadle Hulme School
Dylan Kayne	Redshirt Sophomore	6-2	Paarl, South Africa	Paarl Boys' HS
Hudson Lawson	Sophomore	5-9	Haleyville, Ala.	Haleyville HS
Noah McWilliams	Senior	6-0	Benton, La.	Benton HS
Jay Mendell	Senior	5-7	Lafayette, La.	Ascension Episcopal School
Austin Randall	Freshman	5-10	Prosper, Texas	Walnut Grove HS
Árni Sveinsson	Junior	6-0	Garðabær, Iceland	Fjölbrotaskólinn í Garðabæ

LSU WOMEN'S GOLF 2026 SCHEDULE

Mon, Sep 7
at Cougar Classic (Day 1)
Charleston, S.C. (Yeamans Hall Club GC)
7:50 AM CT

Tue, Sep 8
at Cougar Classic (Day 2)
Charleston, S.C. (Yeamans Hall Club GC)
7:45 AM CT

Tue, Sep 8
at Tulane Classic (Day 1)
Avondale, La. (TPC Louisiana)
8:00 AM CT

Wed, Sep 9
at Tulane Classic (Day 2)
Avondale, La. (TPC Louisiana)
8:00 AM CT

Mon, Sep 21
at Red Sky Classic (Day 1)
Wolcott, Colo. (Red Sky Golf Club - Fazio Course)

Tue, Sep 22
at Red Sky Classic (Day 2)
Wolcott, Colo. (Red Sky Golf Club - Fazio Course)

Wed, Sep 23
at Red Sky Classic (Day 3)
Wolcott, Colo. (Red Sky Golf Club - Fazio Course)

Mon, Oct 12
at Haskins Women's Intercollegiate (Day 1)
Columbus, Ga. (CC of Columbus)

Tue, Oct 13
at Haskins Women's Intercollegiate (Day 2)
Columbus, Ga. (CC of Columbus)

Mon, Oct 19
at The Fin (Day 1)
Fairfield, Texas (Freestone GC)

Tue, Oct 20
at The Fin (Day 2)
Fairfield, Texas (Freestone GC)

Wed, Oct 21
at The Fin (Day 3)
Fairfield, Texas (Freestone GC)

Sun, Jan 31
at Dominican Republic Classic (Day 1)
Punta Canta, DR (Cocotal CC)

Mon, Feb 1
at Dominican Republic Classic (Day 2)
Punta Canta, DR (Cocotal CC)

Tue, Feb 2
at Dominican Republic Classic (Day 3)
Punta Canta, DR (Cocotal CC)

Sun, Feb 14
at Moon Golf Invitational (Day 1)
Melbourne, Fla. (Suntree CC)

Mon, Feb 15
at Moon Golf Invitational (Day 2)
Melbourne, Fla. (Suntree CC)

Tue, Feb 16
at Moon Golf Invitational (Day 3)
Melbourne, Fla. (Suntree CC)

Mon, Mar 1
at Darius Rucker Intercollegiate (Day 1)
Hilton Head, S.C. (Long Cove Club)

Tue, Mar 2
at Darius Rucker Intercollegiate (Day 2)
Hilton Head, S.C. (Long Cove Club)

Wed, Mar 3
at Darius Rucker Intercollegiate (Day 3)
Hilton Head, S.C. (Long Cove Club)

Mon, Mar 15
at Valspar Augusta Invitational (Day 1)
Augusta, Ga. (Forest Hills GC)

Mon, Mar 15
at Magnolia Collegiate (Day 1)
Mobile, Ala. (Magnolia Grove, Falls Course)

Tue, Mar 16
at Valspar Augusta Invitational (Day 2)
Augusta, Ga. (Forest Hills GC)

Tue, Mar 16
at Magnolia Collegiate (Day 2)
Mobile, Ala. (Magnolia Grove, Falls Course)

Sun, Mar 21
at Clemson Invitational (Day 1)
Sunset, S.C. (The Reserve at Lake Keowee)

Mon, Mar 22
at Clemson Invitational (Day 2)
Sunset, S.C. (The Reserve at Lake Keowee)

Tue, Mar 23
at Clemson Invitational (Day 3)
Sunset, S.C. (The Reserve at Lake Keowee)

Fri, Apr 16
at SEC Championships (Stroke Play, Day 1)
Belleair, Fla. (Pelican GC)

Sat, Apr 17
at SEC Championships (Stroke Play, Day 2)
Belleair, Fla. (Pelican GC)

Sun, Apr 18
at SEC Championships (Stroke Play, Day 3)
Belleair, Fla. (Pelican GC)

Mon, Apr 19 - Tue, Apr 20
at SEC Championships (Match Play, if nec.)
Belleair, Fla. (Pelican GC)

Mon, May 10
at NCAA Regional (Day 1)
Campus Sites TBD

Tue, May 11
at NCAA Regional (Day 2)
Campus Sites TBD

Wed, May 12
at NCAA Regional (Day 3)
Campus Sites TBD
Top 5 Teams Advance to NCAA Championships

Fri, May 21
at NCAA Championships (Stroke Play, Day 1)
Carlsbad, Calif. (Omni La Costa Resort & Spa, Champions Course)

Sat, May 22
at NCAA Championships (Stroke Play, Day 2)
Carlsbad, Calif. (Omni La Costa Resort & Spa, Champions Course)

Sun, May 23
at NCAA Championships (Stroke Play, Day 3)
Carlsbad, Calif. (Omni La Costa Resort & Spa, Champions Course)
Top 15 Teams Advance to Round 4

Mon, May 24
at NCAA Championships (Stroke Play, Day 4, if nec.)
Carlsbad, Calif. (Omni La Costa Resort & Spa, Champions Course)
Top 8 Teams Advance to Match Play Bracket

Tue, May 25 - Wed, May 26
at NCAA Championships (Match Play, if nec.)
Carlsbad, Calif. (Omni La Costa Resort & Spa, Champions Course)

LSU WOMEN'S GOLF 2026 ROSTER

NAME	CLASS	HGT.	HOMETOWN	HIGH SCHOOL	PREVIOUS SCHOOL
Raegan Denton	FR	5-10	Adelaide, Australia	Henley HS	
Francesca Fiorellini	JR.	5-6	Rome, Italy	Serpahicum Scholastic Complex	UCLA
Lucia Iraola	SO	5-4	Hondarribia, Spain	Colegio Leones Jesus Maestro	
Ryleigh Knaub	SO	5-1	Debar, Fla.	Lake Mary HS	
Victoria Kristensen	FR	5-8	Thisted, Denmark	Sportstar College Ikast-Brande Handelsgymnasie	
Rocio Tejedo	JR.	5-5	Castellon de Plana, Spain	Ortega y Gasset	
Josefin Widal	JR.	5-4	Halmstad, Sweden	Aspero Idrotts gymnasium	



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Todd Horne
Vice President / Executive Editor

College football has payrolls now. It simply lacks payroll records the public can inspect.

Players are compensated through two principal channels. The first is direct revenue sharing from the school under the House settlement. The second is third-party name, image and likeness compensation. That NIL money may be supplied by boosters, organized through collectives or associated entities, or paid through legitimate commercial agreements with businesses, sponsors and multimedia-rights partners.

Those are funding routes, not separate categories of talent. A player's package can combine a direct payment from the athletic department with NIL compensation arranged outside it. The public seldom knows the precise composition, and schools are not required to publish a player-by-player ledger.

That is how college football can possess \$50 million rosters without producing a document that proves exactly who received what.

The Athletic attempted to penetrate that secrecy by interviewing more than 70 people throughout the sport. Its figures estimate the total resources programs had available to acquire and retain their 2026 players. They do not include coaching salaries, facilities or the ordinary cost of operating a football program.

LSU's estimated roster budget was between \$47 million and \$50 million. Texas A&M operated within a range of \$45 million to \$50 million. Ole Miss was placed between \$39 million and \$45 million.

At the midpoint, LSU assembled a \$48.5

The Price Of A Roster Is Not Its Value

million roster. Texas A&M assembled a \$47.5 million roster. Ole Miss assembled a \$42 million roster.

Those estimates answer one question: What did the programs commit?

The Athletic's Austin Mock then constructed a model to answer another: What should the players be worth?

Mock assigned values by position, performance, recruiting pedigree, transfer-market standing and the projected contribution of younger players. He added the individual values to produce a price for each roster. The model does not claim to know what every athlete is actually being paid. It estimates what the collection of talent should command in an open market.

Its answer was uncomfortable.

Ole Miss' roster was valued at \$37.3 million. LSU's was valued at \$36.8 million. Texas A&M's was valued at \$31.8 million.

College Front Office uses a different methodology and produces higher totals: LSU at \$42.8 million, Texas A&M at \$38.9 million and Ole Miss at \$35.2 million. The figures change with the model. The broader conclusion survives them.

LSU and Texas A&M spent more. Neither bought more.

That does not make LSU's roster deficient. Lane Kiffin inherited a transition and added 59 players, combining transfers, freshmen and returning Tigers inside offensive and defensive systems. A program can purchase ability much faster than it can create trust, communication and cohesion.

But price establishes expectation. LSU cannot present its financial commitment as proof of championship ambition and then declare the cost irrelevant when the team performs beneath that investment.

The 32-24 loss at Ole Miss offered an early picture of the difference between collecting players and constructing a team. LSU trailed 24-7 at halftime because Ole Miss was more settled, more precise and better prepared. The Tigers' second-half response demonstrated toughness. It also proved that necessary answers were available after LSU had surrendered control of the game.

Ole Miss survived Kiffin's departure, promoted Pete Golding and fought to retain the players LSU wanted to bring to Baton Rouge. Its boosters reportedly raised another \$20 million to protect the roster. The Rebels identified the players they could not afford to lose and kept them.

This column is being written before LSU plays Texas A&M. By the time this magazine reaches you, the result will be known and the judgments will have begun.

The result will not answer whether either program spent wisely. One game cannot establish the value of a roster. It can reveal whether expensive talent has become a functional team.

That evidence will be found in protection, containment, communication and composure—not in the dollar total attached to either sideline.

LSU and Texas A&M committed almost \$100 million between them. The investment bought access to talent, accelerated rebuilding and reduced the acceptable timetable for results.

It could not buy a finished team.

Whatever happened in Tiger Stadium, construction remains the measure.

Todd Horne is the vice president and executive editor of Tiger Rag and started covering LSU sports in 1986. He is a graduate of the LSU Manship School of Journalism. Reach Todd at todd@tigerrag.com



Dale Brown (with Todd Horne)
Tiger Rag Featured Columnist

People sometimes ask where motivation comes from, as though it were a mysterious gift bestowed upon a fortunate few. I have never believed that. Motivation is built from experience, discipline, disappointment, faith and the people wise enough to challenge us before we are wise enough to challenge ourselves.

I have been blessed to meet extraordinary people throughout my life. I traveled to 90 countries, coached basketball for decades and spoke to audiences across America from 1982 through 2022. Wherever I went, I remained a student. Three men in particular helped shape the principles I tried to pass along: Norman Vincent Peale, John Wooden and Bob Richards.

Dr. Peale became known as “The Father of Positive Thinking.” He taught millions that our thoughts are not idle things. What we repeatedly tell ourselves influences what we attempt, what we endure and what we become. Positive thinking does not mean pretending difficulty does not exist. It means refusing to permit difficulty to make your decisions.

Coach Wooden showed me that achievement without character is an empty prize. He won 10 national championships at UCLA, but his greatest lessons were never confined to a scoreboard. He understood that success is preparing yourself thoroughly, living your values consistently and giving your best completely.

Bob Richards, the two-time Olympic pole-vaulting champion known as “the pole-vaulting pastor,” demonstrated the power of faith joined with action. A pole vaulter races toward an obstacle that

What My Mentors Taught Me About Winning at Life

appears impossible, plants the pole and trusts that disciplined preparation will carry him over it. That is a good picture of life. Faith is not standing still and hoping. Faith moves.

These men were my mentors, but mentorship is not imitation. A mentor should not make you a copy. A mentor should help you recognize the best within you, then demand that you put it to work.

That belief carried into every locker room, classroom and auditorium I entered. When I addressed the United States Naval Academy, I spoke about “The Four Hurdles of Life.” The entire student body attended. Retired Vice Admiral Michael Miller, then the academy’s superintendent, later wrote that the message resonated strongly with the midshipmen and was among the best-received speeches of his tenure. He said the young people responded to its emphasis on leadership, perseverance and integrity.

Those three words belong together. Leadership without perseverance disappears when conditions become difficult. Perseverance without integrity may keep moving but in the wrong direction. Integrity without leadership remains private virtue when the world needs public courage.

The deepest craving in human nature is not applause. It is to know that our lives matter. We want to be valued, trusted and loved. We want our work to serve a purpose larger than our comfort. That is why no trophy, title or bank account can provide a complete definition of success.

Success is using the abilities God gave you in a way that lifts other people. It is

becoming dependable. It is doing the right thing when doing the wrong thing would be easier and perhaps more profitable. It is teaching your children not only how to make a living, but how to live. It is understanding that teamwork requires humility, tolerance requires strength and family requires a firm ethical and moral foundation.

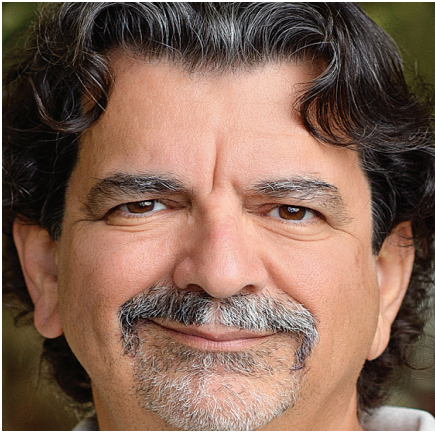
Fear will visit every life. It visited mine. The objective is not to wait until fear disappears. The objective is to refuse to give it command. Courage is movement in the presence of fear.

That may be the most important lesson my mentors gave me. They did not promise an easy road or a life free from failure. They taught me that we always retain the power to choose our response—to think constructively, prepare diligently, act faithfully and live honorably.

The world does not need more people searching for shortcuts. It needs people willing to clear the hurdles, lift their teammates and leave behind a path someone else can follow.

That is motivation. And that is a victory available to every one of us.

Editor’s note: Todd Horne wrote this column in Dale Brown’s voice, adapting material from The Little Book of Motivation: Advice from Coach Dale Brown “The Master Motivator,” written by Brown with Trent Angers and published by Acadian House Publishing. The material is used with permission.



Jim Kleinpeter
Tiger Rag Featured Columnist

My old friend, colleague and sometimes philosopher, Mike Strom, has a knack for pithy wisdom.

Some of his idioms aren't appropriate for this space but here's one that clears the bases: "There's nothing wrong with a little humble pie every now and then; just don't make a steady diet of it."

Would you like a scoop of ice cream with that, Lane Kiffin?

After 293 days – I wonder if he missed even one – of torturing his former employer, Ole Miss, Kiffin reached the end of his string of digs when the Rebels served him a 32-24 entrée of "shutup" to go with his pie.

Kiffin was moved somewhat to express humility afterward. He spoke of his "gratefulness" (also known as gratitude) for his six years in Oxford, and an emotional response as he bussed into the stadium.

He might have gotten to the end of his string but he's far from the end of his rope. He wasn't hired to badger or beat Ole Miss. His mission is to win a national title at LSU as soon as possible. That's still on the table for this season after his highly anticipated return but it's clear Ole Miss is the better team right now.

And above all, based on what I've seen and heard from Kiffin, that game isn't going to have nearly as big an effect on Kiffin as it did an Ole Miss fan base

Kiffin Takes A Bit Of His Own Medicine

thirsting for revenge. They're going to live off that all season and looked good enough to match last season's performance as well.

I expect, after an undetermined cooling off period, Kiffin will resume tweaking them, the SEC, Commissioner Greg Sankey and anyone else he crosses.

Just wait until Nov. 21 when the Tigers travel to Tennessee. It will be like Ole Miss lite and probably re-energize the Kiffin tweak reflex.

This is the point. No amount of discomfort in any situation prevents Kiffin from ramping said discomfort to another level. He proved that in the weeks leading up to the season opener when he brought the wrath of Sankey, the SEC and the nation by fiddling around with players who had signed NFL contracts.

As the parent of a child who, at an early age, had an innate understanding of pushing buttons and then basking in the aftermath rather than becoming contrite, I have to believe that whole show delighted Kiffin to no end. I think he has a deep-seated need to poke - sometimes torture - authority and opponents, especially when they don't understand the bigger the response is giving him more what he wants.

When was the last time any conference commissioner had that kind of direct and public confrontation with a football coach? Usually, they work through ADs and presidents. Pushing it to level of threatening to expel LSU was ludicrous but indicative of just how much Kiffin got under everyone's skin.

Kiffin probably broke a personal record for his biggest smirk afterward. I hope he took a selfie of it and drops it on us one day. It would look something like his face when he said "Imagine if we had pro players" at halftime of the Clemson wipeout victory, only much smirkier.

And then it got wiped clean off his face, at least for the time being.

That awesome quote bears some of the best irony in today's college football, too. Kiffin already does have pro players. A lot of college football is played by pro players and has been for decades. Money has always played a part but it's no longer a dirty little secret.

I'm not a complete college football anarchist here. There does need to be some separation from the NFL and college football. Perhaps it's time for the Power 4 football conference teams to break away, make their own rules and play only each other – or something. The NCAA needs to pull itself together and get better at making rules without so many loopholes.

Fighting antitrust laws was not a hill to die on. It's going to take better foresight to get college football to a better place.

All along the way it's going to be fun to watch Kiffin respond, react and tweak, and occasionally dine on a piece of humble pie.

Jim Kleinpeter is a graduate of the LSU Manship School of Journalism. He has been a sportswriter for 45 years, including 33 at the Times-Picayune. Reach him at jkleinpeter@gmail.com.



Jim Engster

President, Tiger Rag Magazine

Lane Kiffin reigns as the most polarizing college football wizard since Nick Saban called it a career after 17 glorious seasons at Tuscaloosa. Kiffin has a galaxy of miles to go before reaching Saban territory on the field, but he is a magnet for those who cherish a villainous target. A nation chats incessantly about the mercurial man, who is a native of Bloomington, Minnesota, but has never lived in one place long enough to call it home.

Eighteen years ago, Saban was burned in effigy in Baton Rouge at an off-campus apartment complex when he returned to LSU as the Alabama maestro. His No. 1 team survived to defeat the No. 15 Bengals 27-21 in overtime on Nov. 8, 2008. Saban was at the brink of his manifest destiny to be regarded as the best there ever was at winning college football contests.

Nick was also once regarded as a nomad who had deserted top posts at Toledo, Michigan State, LSU and the Miami Dolphins before spending his golden years between 55 and 73 years of age as the first worthy heir to the Bear in Alabama.

At 51, Kiffin is five years younger than was Saban when he arrived at the premier destination in the SEC. The popular pundit Paul Finebaum insists Kiffin desired to replace his former boss in the land of the Red Elephants, but Bama had trepidation about hiring a coach who is regarded as unpredictable as he is brilliant.

Controversy has frequently accompanied the Kiffin swagger.

He has been the recipient of an avalanche of attention since well-documented friction with Oakland Raiders owner Al Davis, the first boss to fire Lane. From his midnight run from Tennessee to USC where athletic director Pat Haden canned him on the airport tarmac to his move from sedate and proper Oxford to Babylon on the Bayou, Kiffin has been engulfed with catcalls from critics and amens from admirers.

Will Potential Produce Greatness for Kiffin at LSU?

Lane enticed a collection of keyboard cowards and armchair quarterbacks by departing Mississippi as the Rebels were prepping for a national championship run. The chase fell short by an eyelash under his successor Pete Golding. Trinidad Chambliss, the quarterback Kiffin molded and could not coax to LSU, has reached a new level of competence under his new coach.

The talented and charismatic passer and runner for Ole Miss gave Golding the first laugh in a newly fueled rivalry between two of the SEC's original members. There has not been as much excitement on a Saturday night telecast of LSU and Ole Miss since Dec. 5, 1970, the night when the Tigers pounded the Rebels 61-17 at Tiger Stadium in a bout between Bert Jones and Archie Manning.

LSU also savored a triumph in the initial Saban-Les Miles battle on Nov. 3, 2007 in a 41-34 slugfest at Tuscaloosa. By the time Les was fired in 2016, Saban enjoyed a 7-3 edge over Miles and had won six national titles to one for Miles.

A distinction between Saban at Alabama and Kiffin at LSU is that Nick had to rebuild without a transfer portal and NIL benefits and won it all in his third season at Alabama. In year one in Baton Rouge, Kiffin has assembled the most compensated roster and staff in the history of college sports. It is reasonable to expect LSU to compete at the highest levels under these circumstances.

At the start of the 2026 season, the only member of the SEC head football coaching fraternity to have won a conference championship is former LSU assistant and current Georgia coach Kirby Smart. The other 15 league coaches wallow in the shadow of Smart, who has four SEC crowns and two national titles in his eleven seasons at Athens.

Smart is nine months younger than Kiffin and served as defensive coordinator at Alabama in 2014 and 2015 with Kiffin as the Tide offensive coordinator. Those years produced a pari of SEC titles and a national championship for Bama.

It would be appropriate to term Smart a savant or genius, but it is too early to apply those descriptions to the LSU coach. Kiffin has shown great promise, but until he wins league honors, it would be wise to give assessments about his intellect a break.

A local sportscaster in Baton Rouge termed Lane the best coach in Ole Miss history. The

record shows Kiffin did not win the conference in six years at Oxford while Johnny Vaught won the SEC six times from 1947 to 1963. Some of Vaught's conference competitors included Bryant, Bobby Dodd of Georgia Tech, Shug Jordan of Auburn, Wally Butts of Georgia and Robert Neyland at Tennessee.

Here is the list of the SEC football coaches with the most league titles.

Coach/Championships/Years
Bear Bryant/14 (13 Alabama, 1 Kentucky)/33
Nick Saban/11 (9 Alabama, 2 LSU)/22
Johnny Vaught/6 at Ole Miss/25
Vince Dooley/6 at Georgia/25
Steve Spurrier/6 at Florida/23
Robert Neyland/5 at Tennessee/22

LSU is now touted as a Top 5 football power in the country even though LSU has no coaches with more than two SEC titles. Saban, Bernie Moore, Paul Dietzel and Les Miles won two SEC crowns to lead the pack in TigerTown. Charles McClendon, Bill Arnsparger, Mike Archer and Ed Orgeron each won a single conference title.

By comparison, Pat Dye was the SEC champ four times in 12 years at Auburn.

In conference competition, these SEC coaches have amassed more than 100 victories against league foes.

Bear Bryant/ 159-46-9/77.6 pct.
Nick Saban/148-30-0/83.1 pct.
Steve Spurrier/126-52-0/70.8 pct.
Vince Dooley/108-41-4/72.5 pct.
Johnny Vaught/107-42-10/67.3 pct.
Robert Neyland/103-17-10/85.8 pct.

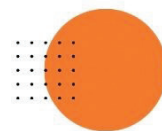
This is the LSU list of most prolific coaches in SEC play.

Charles McClendon/63-41-1/60.6 pct.
Les Miles/62-28-0/68.9 pct.
Bernie Moore/43-28-4/60.6 pct.
Ed Orgeron/31-17-0/64.6 pct.
Nick Saban/28-12-0/70.0 pct.
Paul Dietzel/26-16-2/61.9 pct.
Brian Kelly/19-10-0/65.5 pct.
Gerry DiNardo/18-20-1/47.4 pct.
Gaynell Tinsley/17-25-6/40.5 pct.
Mike Archer/15-12-0/55.6 pct.
Bill Arnsparger/13-3-2/81.3 pct.

Kiffin possesses potential to emerge as the most decorated coach in LSU history. He is a seasoned mentor primed to dominate headlines with success to offset his many controversies. But Lane is a work in progress until he reaches the SEC pinnacle.

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