BROADCAST HIGHLIGHTS

MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL

2 p.m.	St. Joseph's vs. South Florida	CBSSN
4:30 p.m.	Penn at Navy	CBSSN
6 p.m.	Marquette at Michigan	FS1
6 p.m.	Colgate at St. John's	NBCSN
8 p.m.	Lindenwood at Nebraska	FS1
8 p.m.	Ark.- Pine Bluff at UCLA	NBCSN
10 p.m.	Southern Cal at California	ESPN2

WOMEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL

6 p.m.	S. Dakota St. at Texas	SECN

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

6:30 p.m.	UMass at Toledo	CBSSN
6:30 p.m.	Buffalo at Ball St.	ESPN2
6:30 p.m.	Sacramento St. at Cent. Mich.	ESPNU

WOMEN'S COLLEGE VOLLEYBALL

6 p.m.	Notre Dame at Pittsburgh	ACCN
8 p.m.	Auburn at Alabama	SECN

GOLF

1 a.m. (Th.)	DP World Tour Champ.	Golf

WOMEN'S IIHF HOCKEY

8 a.m.	Canada vs. Finland	NHLN
Noon	U.S. vs. Czech Republic	NHLN

MLB

6 p.m.	BBWAA Cy Young Award	MLBN
8 p.m.	All-MLB Team	MLBN

NBA

6:10 p.m.	Cleveland at New York	ESPN
7 p.m.	Brooklyn at New Orleans	GCSEN
8:35 p.m.	Golden State at Houston	ESPN

NHL

6 p.m.	Tampa Bay at Buffalo	TNT
8:30 p.m.	Utah at Vegas	TNT

TENNIS

11 a.m.	Stockholm-ATP; Early Rounds	Tennis
2 p.m.	WTA Finals: Indian Wells	Tennis

LSU getting points off pressure

Tigers converting steals into easy buckets

BY TOYLOY BROWN III
Staff writer

Louisiana Tech forward Braylon Wenger learned Monday night that turning his back on an LSU defender wasn't a winning maneuver.

When he started to back down the slimmer Abdi Bashir near the free-throw line, LSU backup guard Divine Ugochukwu swooped in from behind for a steal that to his two-handed dunk.

That was one of 16 steals that led to an influx of fastbreak scoring during LSU's 90-50 win over Louisiana Tech (2-1) at the Pete Maravich Assembly Center.

➤ LSU vs. Gonzaga.
2:30 P.M.
SATURDAY, USA

Before the season, coach Will Wade emphasized that he wants his team to be the aggressor and for its physical and mental dominance to "pop through the TV" and in person.

For the third straight game against an overmatched opponent, that's exactly what happened. For the first time in program history, LSU (3-0) has won three straight games by 40 or more points.

Monday's wire-to-wire rout was fueled by elite turnover generation. The Tigers forced 23 turnovers, which hasn't happened since Nov. 17, 2022, when they accomplished it in a 91-62 win over LSU New Orleans. In the first two games, LSU averaged 15 forced turnovers.

The starting backcourt of Skyy Clark and Donovan Dent had five steals apiece Monday, stripping ballhandlers clean after full-court pressure and jumping passing lanes that Louisiana Tech believed were clear for deliveries.

"I thought Donnie and Skyy did a great job pestering those guards," Wade said. "So, you know, that's a big part of what we do."

Bashir, who had 16 points, said the press defense has been practiced since the team's first practice as a group on Sept. 2.

"We've been practicing that since we all have been together," he said. "It's just something we've been grinding every day."



STAFF PHOTOS BY MICHAEL JOHNSON

ABOVE: Louisiana Tech forward Ethan Blackmon, second from right, tries to move to the hoop as LSU guard Donovan Dent, second from left, forward Mo Dioubate, left, and center Brice Dessert defend in the second half on Monday at the Pete Maravich Assembly Center. **BELOW:** Dent, left, swipes at the ball against Louisiana Tech forward Braylon Wenger.



The goal of the full-court pressure is not only to waste valuable seconds for the opposing team's offense but also to take the ball and score quickly on the other end.

"Points off turnovers is a huge stat when you're as aggressive as we are on defense," Wade said. "You're trying to do what we're trying to do on defense. You get to turn those into steals. And our guys were really active tonight. You know, (Saliou Niang) and Mo. I thought Mo (Dioubate) was way more active at the front of the press tonight, which was huge. You know, we got to just keep coming at you with our activity on the front of that press."

LSU finished with 38 points off of turnovers. It also outscored Louisiana Tech 21-2 in fastbreak points.

The ability to get "free" points by making opponents uncomfortable will be a critical piece of the team's winning formula, especially when it sees its first challenging opponent in No. 14 Gonzaga at 2:30 p.m. Saturday at Numerica Veterans Arena in Spokane, Washington.

"Yeah, that's a big part of our game," Bashir said of scoring off of turnovers. "Skyy's a great defender, (Niang's) a great defender in our press. It causes so many turnovers or opportunities for points, and yeah, those points you can steal away from teams quick. We have more possessions because we're getting the ball more from turnovers and converting them into points. So that's important."

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Westminster enters playoffs with momentum

Crusaders overcome early-season slump

BY MIKE COPPAGE
Contributing writer

Westminster Christian football coach Byron Porter assembled a rugged nondistrict schedule that has paid off with the playoffs set to begin this week.

Although the Crusaders returned several talented veteran players from last year's 12-1 Division IV select semifinal team, the program was also breaking in a number of new starters, and Porter knew traveling to Kentwood and Class 5A Live Oak and hosting Lafayette Christian would get his team seasoned quickly.

"With the young group of kids that we have, playing the likes of those schools would answer a lot of questions, and we'd be able to compete in the district," he said.

After losing all three nondistrict games, WCA hasn't tasted defeat again. The No. 13-seeded Crusaders (7-3) swept through District 6-1A to repeat as league champions, downing unbeaten No. 6 Sacred Heart 49-28 last week.

"Kyle Horde showed up in big fashion against Sacred Heart," Porter said of the 6-foot-3, 230-pound three-star linebacker and Texas State commitment, who had been dealing with an ankle injury.



STAFF FILE PHOTO BY BRAD BOWIE

Westminster Christian coach Byron Porter has his Crusaders on a seven-game winning streak to close out the regular season.

"Even when he was out, Kyle was a steady presence there in the locker room."

WCA, which will host No. 20 Covenant Christian (4-6) in the bi-district round at 7 p.m. Friday, was lights out on defense in Weeks 5-9, allowing a total of 26 points in five wins with three shutouts.

With the Crusaders battling injuries throughout the season, they got a welcome boost from freshman receiver/defensive back Mason Alexander, who caught four passes for 53 yards and a touchdown and returned a punt 40 yards for a score against Sacred Heart.

"Sacred Heart wanted to win, but so did our kids," Porter said. "We went into a hostile environment and played really well. They have a really good team."

Sophomore quarterback Garrett Noel has improved throughout the season after taking over for four-year starter Stephen George, who is making headlines as a freshman at Centenary College.

"Noel has progressed pretty well," Porter said of the young QB, who started his first varsity game in one of the state's most notorious venues at Kentwood.

All-state end Matthew Lalonde had excellent games against Sacred Heart and St. Edmund, said Porter, who has been slowly working star sophomore defensive back Cayden Brown back into the mix after an injury suffered in the Live Oak game.

While WCA is Class 1A, Covenant Christian competes in a Class 2A district headlined by undefeated Newman, which is in the Division III playoffs.

"The next game is the biggest game," said Porter, whose team would face sister school WCA-Lafayette (9-1) in the second round. "We have to win Friday before I think about that."

Last year, WCA and Westminster-Lafayette met for the first time with the Crusaders claiming a 49-7 win.

Covenant Christian earned a bye in the past two playoff brackets as a No. 8 and No. 3 seed. The Lions defeated WCA's district rival, Opelousas Catholic, 21-12 earlier this season.

Westminster, the top seed in the 2025 playoffs, beat Opelousas Catholic 7-0 in Week 5.

IN BRIEF

FROM STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

Murphy, Venable named MLB managers of year

Pat Murphy from first-time World Series champion Milwaukee is the NL Manager of the Year, making him the first skipper from either league to win the award three years in a row.

Milwaukee has won the NL Central in all three seasons under Murphy after he spent eight seasons on Craig Counsell's staff.

Murphy, 67, was in a hospital bed recovering from hip replacement surgery when he did interviews on MLB Network.

Will Venable is the American League Manager of the Year after the Chicago White Sox became the first team in MLB history to reach the playoffs after consecutive 100-loss seasons.

Balloting by the Baseball Writers' Association of America was conducted before the postseason and announced Tuesday night.

Florida cancels two-game contract with Notre Dame

Florida has canceled a home-and-home series with Notre Dame scheduled for the 2031-32 seasons.

The Gators used a clause in the contract to get out without financial penalties. The decision led to the Fighting Irish announcing Tuesday a home-and-home series with Washington to be played in 2031 and 2034.

Florida signed the deal with Notre Dame in 2021 while the Southeastern Conference was playing eight league games.

But with the SEC moving to nine-game conference slates beginning this season, Florida had a difficult time justifying playing nine league games, a rivalry game against Florida State and a perennial powerhouse like Notre Dame. The contract included a clause that allowed the Gators to get out if the SEC expanded to nine games.

Cardinals put QB Minshew on IR; rookie Beck to start

The Arizona Cardinals placed quarterback Gardner Minshew on injured reserve Tuesday because of an elbow injury, opening the door for rookie Carson Beck to move into a starting role.

The Cardinals (3-6) also placed receiver Michael Wilson (neck) on injured reserve. Minshew and Wilson were both hurt during the Cardinals' 17-3 loss to the Seattle Seahawks on Sunday.

Minshew completed 21 of 30 passes for 166 yards on Sunday, one week after taking over for the ineffective Jacoby Brissett and leading the Cardinals to a 14-point comeback win over the Dallas Cowboys.

The 24-year-old Beck was a third-round pick out of Miami, where he led the Hurricanes to the title game in his senior season before losing to Indiana.

Groin injury to sideline Dolphins QB Willis

The Miami Dolphins placed Malik Willis on injured reserve on Tuesday, sidelining the quarterback for at least four games.

Willis has been dealing with a nagging groin injury that appeared to significantly limit his mobility in last weekend's 19-9 loss to the Detroit Lions. He said after the game his groin "felt a little tight," and coach Jeff Hafley echoed those words.

Willis has completed 121 of 208 passes with six touchdowns and six interceptions this season for the 1-7 Dolphins.

Backup Kyle McCord, whom the Dolphins acquired in August from Green Bay, will be in line to start this week at Indianapolis.

Sinner: I'm returning to tennis in December

Jannik Sinner plans to return from an injury at an exhibition event in December to prepare for the Australian Open.

Sinner has not played since July when he beat Alexander Zverev in the Wimbledon final. He withdrew from the U.S. Open because of a right knee injury. Ongoing problems with the knee delayed the 25-year-old's return.

Last week, Zverev took over the No. 1 rank Sinner held for 95 weeks.

"The aim is to go to Australia, the aim is also maybe to do a couple of tournaments first," Sinner said Tuesday. "But I have to respect the protocols at the moment because if we rush things we could have more serious problems."