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



STAFF PHOTO BY MICHAEL JOHNSON

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.

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."

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."

Email Toyloy Brown III at toyloy.brown@theadvocate.com

In 24-team bracket, SEC would have had big showing

League would have occupied a quarter of CFP spots since 2021

BY ERIC OLSON
Associated Press

If the past five editions of the College Football Playoff had included 24 teams, as they will starting in 2027, the Southeastern Conference would have made up a quarter of the field, five schools would have been in every bracket and no fewer than five of the 16 campus-site games would have been played in cold-weather locations.

Analysis

College Football Playoff administrators and ESPN announced the expansion from 12 to 24 teams on Monday.

The Power Four conference champions and highest-ranked team from the Group of Six will receive automatic bids, and the other 19 spots will be decided by the selection committee. About 30% of college football's 68 power-conference schools will have a chance to play for the title under the format.

Had the 24-team format been in place from 2021-25, 60 schools would have appeared in at least one playoff. Under the four-team format from 2021-23 and 12-team format from 2024-25, 28 schools made the playoff at least once.

Alabama, Georgia, Notre Dame, Ohio State and Oregon would have made the field each year.

Under the conference alignments that applied each of the past five years, the SEC would have had 14 schools combine for 31 appearances, accounting for 25.8% of the 120 slots.

The Big Ten would have had nine schools in total 22 appearances (18.3%), the Big 12 would have had 14 schools and 18 appearances (15%) and the Atlantic Coast Conference 11 teams and 18 appearances (15%). The Group of Six would have had 12 schools make 13 appearances (10.8%), with Tulane getting in twice. The old Pac-12 would have accounted for the rest of the spots.

The SEC would have led all conferences with seven teams making the playoff in 2024 and '25. Last year, the Big Ten would have had six teams in the field and the Big 12 would have had five. The ACC would have maxed out at four teams. The Group of Six would have had four entries in 2021 with Cincinnati, Houston, UL and San Diego State.

There will be a total of 16 campus-site games in the first and second rounds starting next year. Had the format been in place the past five years, cold-weather teams would have hosted seven games in 2021 and five each from 2022-25, and that doesn't include hosts in places such as Kentucky, Oklahoma and Tennessee that can get chilly and snowy in December. Ohio State would have hosted games each of the five years.

A look back at what a 24-team bracket would have looked like (top eight seeds get first-round byes and home field for second round):

2021

First- and second-round matchups

■ No. 17 Wake Forest at No. 16 Oklahoma. Winner at No. 1 Alabama.

■ No. 18 North Carolina State at No. 15 Iowa. Winner at No. 2 Michigan.

■ No. 19 Clemson at No. 14 Oregon. Winner at No. 3 Georgia.

No. 20 Houston at No. 13 BYU. Winner at No. 4 Cincinnati.

■ No. 21 Arkansas at No. 12 Pittsburgh. Winner at No. 5 Notre Dame.

■ No. 22 Kentucky at No. 11 Utah. Winner at No. 6 Ohio State.

■ No. 23 UL at No. 10 Michigan State. Winner at No. 7 Baylor.

■ No. 24 San Diego State at No. 9 Oklahoma State. Winner at No. 8 Ole Miss.

Quarterfinals and semifinals played at the Cotton, Fiesta, Orange, Peach, Rose and Sugar bowls

■ No. 8 Ole Miss pod vs. No. 1 Alabama pod.

■ No. 7 Baylor pod vs. No. 2 Michigan pod.

■ No. 6 Ohio State pod vs. No. 3 Georgia pod.

■ No. 5 Notre Dame pod vs. No. 4 Cincinnati pod.

2022

First- and second-round matchups

■ No. 17 LSU at No. 16 Tulane. Winner at No. 1 Georgia.

■ No. 18 UCLA at No. 15 Oregon. Winner at No. 2 Michigan.

■ No. 19 South Carolina at No. 14 Oregon State. Winner at No. 3 TCU.

■ No. 20 Texas at No. 13 Florida State. Winner at No. 4 Ohio State.

■ No. 21 Notre Dame at No. 12 Washington. Winner at No. 5 Alabama.

■ No. 22 Mississippi State at No. 11 Penn State. Winner at No. 6 Tennessee.

■ No. 23 North Carolina State at No. 10 Southern California. Winner at No. 7 Clemson.

■ No. 24 Troy at No. 9 Kansas State. Winner at No. 8 Utah.

Quarterfinals and semifinals played at the Cotton, Fiesta, Orange, Peach, Rose and Sugar bowls

No. 8 Utah pod vs. No. 1 Georgia pod

No. 7 Clemson pod vs. No. 2 Michigan pod

No. 6 Tennessee pod vs. No. 3 TCU pod

No. 5 Alabama pod vs. No. 4 Ohio State pod

2023

First- and second-round matchups

■ No. 17 Iowa at No. 16 Notre Dame. Winner at No. 1 Michigan

■ No. 18 North Carolina State at No. 15 Louisville. Winner at No. 2 Washington

■ No. 19 Oregon State at No. 14 Arizona. Winner at No. 3 Texas

■ No. 20 Oklahoma State at No. 13 LSU. Winner at No. 4 Alabama

■ No. 21 Tennessee at No. 12 Oklahoma. Winner at No. 5 Florida State

■ No. 22 Clemson at No. 11 Ole Miss. Winner at No. 6 Georgia

■ No. 23 Liberty at No. 10 Penn State. Winner at No. 7 Ohio State

■ No. 24 SMU at No. 9 Missouri. Winner at No. 8 Oregon

Quarterfinals and semifinals played at the Cotton, Fiesta, Orange, Peach, Rose and Sugar bowls

■ No. 8 Oregon pod vs. No. 1 Michigan pod

■ No. 7 Ohio State pod vs. No. 2 Washington pod

■ No. 6 Georgia pod vs. No. 3 Texas pod

■ No. 5 Florida State pod vs. No. 4 Alabama pod

2024

First- and second-round matchups

■ No. 17 BYU at No. 16 Clemson. Winner at No. 1 Oregon.

■ No. 18 Iowa State at No. 15 South Carolina. Winner at No. 2 Georgia.

■ No. 19 Missouri at No. 14 Ole Miss. Winner at No. 3 Texas.

■ No. 20 Illinois at No. 13 Miami. Winner at No. 4 Penn State

■ No. 21 Syracuse at No. 12 Arizona State. Winner at No. 5 Notre Dame.

■ No. 22 Army at No. 11 Alabama. Winner at No. 6 Ohio State.

■ No. 23 Colorado at No. 10 SMU. Winner at No. 7 Tennessee.

■ No. 24 UNLV at No. 9 Boise State. Winner at No. 8 Indiana.

Quarterfinals and semifinals played at the Cotton, Fiesta, Orange, Peach, Rose and Sugar bowls

No. 8 Indiana pod vs. No. 1 Oregon pod

No. 7 Tennessee pod vs. No. 2 Georgia pod

No. 6 Ohio State pod vs. No. 3 Texas pod

No. 5 Notre Dame pod vs. No. 4 Penn State pod

2025

First- and second-round matchups

■ No. 17 Arizona at No. 16 Southern California. Winner at No. 1 Indiana.

■ No. 18 Michigan at No. 15 Utah. Winner at No. 2 Ohio State.

No. 19 Virginia at No. 14 Vanderbilt. Winner at No. 3 Georgia.

■ No. 20 Tulane at No. 13 Texas. Winner at No. 4 Texas Tech.

■ No. 21 Houston at No. 12 BYU. Winner at No. 5 Oregon.

■ No. 22 Georgia Tech at No. 11 Notre Dame. Winner at No. 6 Ole Miss.

■ No. 23 Iowa at No. 10 Miami. Winner at No. 7 Texas A&M.

■ No. 24 James Madison at No. 9 Alabama. Winner at No. 8 Oklahoma.

Quarterfinals and semifinals played at the Cotton, Fiesta, Orange, Peach, Rose and Sugar bowls

■ No. 8 Oklahoma pod at No. 1 Indiana pod

■ No. 7 Texas A&M pod at No. 2 Ohio State pod

■ No. 6 Ole Miss pod at No. 3 Georgia pod

■ No. 5 Oregon pod at No. 4 Texas Tech pod

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."