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# SPORTS

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TEXAS AT LSU · 6:30 P.M. SATURDAY · ABC

# STATUS REPORT



STAFF PHOTO BY MICHAEL JOHNSON

LSU coach Lane Kiffin tries to pump up the crowd up as the Alabama offense tries to convert a crucial third-down play in the third quarter on Saturday in Tiger Stadium.

## LSU's 6-3 start spurs questions about present, future under Kiffin



**Scott Rabalais**

It's been nearly one year since Lane Kiffin became the LSU football coach.

In some ways, it's gone by in a flash. Especially in the context of this Saturday's historical game against Texas being LSU's last home game this season.

In some ways, it's felt quite long. From the leaving Ole Miss saga to all of the legal hassles of trying to add Dae'Quan Wright and Zxavian Harris to the roster (remember them?).

I think back to that late November night last year when Kiffin arrived, flying from the middle fingers and insults in Oxford to an adoring throng of LSU fans pressing against the fence at Baton Rouge Metro Airport.

Specifically, I remember the young man who shouted out "We're never losing again!" as Kiffin's motorcade zoomed out of the gate.

That was fantasy. The reality is a long, difficult season in the Southeastern Conference, a season that finds LSU 6-3 overall and clinging to thinning hopes of reaching the College Football Playoff.

So many thoughts about where Kiffin and LSU are right now, I thought it best to break them down piece by piece:

**Is the Kiffin era already a failure?**

It is far, far too early to draw any conclusions, good or bad. You can have your opinions and I have mine, but LSU can still get in the CFP this season if it finishes 9-3. In fact, ESPN's playoff predictor says the Tigers have a 79% chance to make the playoff if they sweep Texas, Tennessee and Arkansas.

Can LSU close the season 3-0 is the real question. It's a season in which

➤ See **RABALAIS,** page **4C**

# Tyson's usage shows how Saints may try to utilize WR

**BY MATTHEW PARAS**
Staff writer

Coming off a hamstring injury, Jordyn Tyson had a strict snap count for his NFL debut. The New Orleans Saints rookie wide receiver didn't break it, either.

"No more than 30," Tyson said.

The 21-year-old played just 18 snaps in Sunday's 23-22 overtime win over the Cleveland Browns. Even with limited reps, Tyson's usage and effectiveness provided a glimpse at how the Saints plan to deploy the wide receiver as his workload likely increases.

**Analysis**

➤ **Panthers at Saints.**
NOON SUNDAY, FOX

Coach Kellen Moore used Tyson in ways that were reminiscent of his film at Arizona State. The Sun Devils saw Tyson as a versatile chess piece, and so do the Saints. Tyson had nine snaps apiece between inside and outside. Of the nine snaps outside, Tyson spent five on the left and four on the right.

New Orleans sent Tyson in motion on five of his 16 routes, good for the highest motion percentage of any Saints receiver on Sunday.

Tyson's four catches for 30 yards and a fumble may be considered underwhelming, but don't just look at the box score. A closer examination shows Tyson is just getting started.

"The volume is about what we expected," Moore said. "Again, he hasn't played a lot of football in a long time. So he's been itching to play a ton of football. We've got to build him up the right way. I thought he had a positive impact on the game over those snaps.

"Obviously, the big turnover was a really big

➤ See **TYSON,** page **4C**



STAFF PHOTO BY BRETT DUKE

Saints wide receiver Jordyn Tyson makes his first NFL reception before the ball is punched out by Cleveland Browns linebacker Carson Schwesinger and recovered by the Browns on Sunday afternoon at the Caesars Superdome.

# Hall, Tulane feel urgency after Tulsa debacle

**BY GUERRY SMITH**
Contributing writer

Tulane coach Will Hall said Tuesday he was told in advance that athletic director David Harris would issue a statement on Saturday night about the humiliating 60-10 loss to Tulsa earlier in the day.

He added he never read the 200-plus-word apology, where the terms "unacceptable" and "embarrassed" appeared prominently, but he understood the sentiment.

➤ **Tulane at Rice.**
1 P.M. SATURDAY, ESPN+

"Obviously everyone's upset," he said. "Nobody's more upset than me. I'm in charge of this. It's my responsibility. I accept that very urgently. We played very poorly, and ultimately that falls on me. We've got to fix it and we're going to."

The homecoming defeat, in which Tulane trailed 32-0 at halftime, was bad enough that Las Vegas oddsmakers installed Rice (1-8, 0-5 American Conference) as a 1½-point favorite for Saturday's home game against Tulane (4-5, 2-3) despite the Owls' eight-game losing streak. The line has gone up to 2.5 after early betting, an indication of the total lack of confidence in the Green Wave.

Hall talked about simplifying the plan on both sides of the ball to make sure the players were more comfortable, but fourth-year junior safety Jack Tchienchou offered a more elemental solution.



STAFF FILE PHOTO BY ENAN CHEDIAK

Tulane coach Will Hall, center, calls to his team from the sideline against South Alabama on Sept. 12 at Yulman Stadium.

"We have self-motivation within these walls that goes beyond what Vegas says," he said. "We've seen what we're capable of. We've flashed some signs of greatness on this defense. First and foremost it's executing your job, not making anything harder than it has to be and seeing what you need to see."

Tchienchou talked about how much the Wave's championship pedigree mattered at American Conference media days in July after four straight title-game appearances and two rings, including one last year. Those plans are gone four months later, but he insisted motivation came from inside.

"You can't perform based on outcomes," he said. "You have to be process-driven, so being able to go back on Monday and get to work, that's the most important thing. We're moving forward."

➤ See **TULANE,** page **4C**

# Pelicans lose their fight during knockout losses

## N.O.'s 51-point defeat to Warriors biggest margin in team history

➤ **Nets at Pelicans.**
7 P.M. WEDNESDAY, GCSEN

The 2025-26 NBA season had just ended 48 hours earlier.

Joe Dumars, the New Orleans Pelicans executive vice president of basketball operations, was giving his assessment of what his team needed to do better after a disappointing 26-win season. He didn't like what he had watched in his first season calling the shots for the Pelicans.



**Rod Walker**

"We have to be able to compete every night," Dumars said that day in April. "We cannot get banged around, pushed around. We have to be physical and compete every night. There were some nights we did it, but too many nights we didn't compete at a high enough level for me."

Jamahl Mosley, who Dumars hired a month later as the new Pelicans head coach, was supposed to stop those type of nights from happening. Fast forward seven months to Monday, and the Pelicans had another one of those nights where they got pushed around and didn't compete at a high level.

Truth be told, they didn't compete at any level at the Chase Center in San Francisco.

The end result was an embarrassing 138-87 loss to the Golden State Warriors, the most lopsided regular-season loss in franchise history. The 51-point beatdown broke the record set in April 2025 when the Pelicans were handed a 49-point shellacking (153-104) by the Miami Heat.

Since the West Coast game had a late tipoff time here in New Orleans, you may not have stayed up to watch all of it. Consider yourself lucky. This one was over by halftime when the Pelicans trailed 72-43.

➤ See **WALKER,** page **4C**