LSU wins sixth national title with 11-4 victory

Glenn Guilbeau

gguilbeau@jacksonville.com

OMAHA, Neb. — LSU’s gumbo of talent was just too hot, fast and peppery even for Texas.

The Tigers won the national championship of college baseball going away 1990s style — Wednesday night with a satisfying, 11-4, 12-hit victory over the best pitching staff in the nation in front of 19,980 at Rosenblatt Stadium.

LSU (56-17) won its sixth national championship in baseball and first under third-year coach Paul Mainieri. It was also the Tigers’ first in the new best-of-three series format. The Tigers, who won 7-6 Monday night before losing 5-1 Tuesday night to the Longhorns, won their first national title since 2000 to go with the four in the 1990s.

“LSU fans love their oysters and championships by the half dozen,” a sign over the LSU dugout said.

“I’m so filled with so many different emotions right now,” Mainieri said seconds after the dog pile at the pitcher’s mound. “I’m so proud to be the coach at LSU. All I could think about was those wonderful kids. I’m so happy for these kids. They just played great. It’s just been a coach’s dream.”

LSU, which watched Texas hit seven home runs, solo, or solo, home runs over the previous two nights, took a 3-0 lead in the top of the first inning on a two-out, three-run home run by New Iberia’s Jared Mitchell, who was named the CWS most valuable player.

Then LSU showed the Longhorns the essence of the big inning with five in the sixth for a 9-4 lead and coasted.

Mitchell will get the baseball ring to go with his national championship ring he helped win in football in 2007.

“There’s so many words that can describe it that I

See TIGERS on Page 4D

FIT TO BE TIED
LSU's six national titles in baseball ties the school with Texas for second-most national titles in NCAA.

RINGS ON BOTH HANDS
LSU pitcher Chad Jones and outfielder Jared Mitchell added baseball titles to go with their football title.

SIXTH LEADS TO SIXTH
LSU's sixth national title was made possible by a five-run outburst in the decisive sixth inning.

■ RANAUDO SURVIVES
LSU starter Anthony Ranaudo labored, but went six innings.

■ AGACIANA DUO
Mkie Mahtook and Jared Mitchell helped pave the way with big hits.

■ MAIN MAN MAINIERI
Paul Mainieri’s first national title comes in his third year as coach.

LSU starting pitcher Anthony Ranaudo delivers against Texas in the first inning of the deciding game of the NCAA CWS.
Tigers can't even process right now," Mitchell said. "Everybody just came together late in the year and had a sense of urgency.'

The five-run lead in the sixth provided a sigh of relief for laboring LSU starting pitcher Anthony Ranaudo (12-3), who got the win with 5.1 innings of eight-hit, four-run pitching. He threw 43 pitches and walked four in the third inning as Texas got within 4-2 but left the bases loaded. Then he gave up a two-run home run to Kevin Keyes in the fifth that tied the game 4-4.

Texas middle reliever Brandon Workman shut LSU down in the fifth, and things looked dicey as the Tigers middle pitching has not been their strength. But LSU sent 10 to the plate in the sixth inning against two pitchers to put the game away. After Workman hit Mitchell and wild pitched him to second, Mikie Mahtook exited him with an RBI single for a 5-4 lead. On came reliever Austin D chilly, who gave up a sacrifice fly to left to Derek Helenihi for a 6-4 LSU lead. D chilly later walked DJ Lemahieu with two outs to load the bases and left the game.

Fearled left-handed closer Austin Wood was anything but that. He promptly hit Ryan Schimpf to load the bases, and then hit Blake Dean, pushing the Tigers ahead 7-4.

Sean Ochinko, batting fourth in an adjusted batting order, then stroked a two-run single for the 9-4 bulge, and the celebration started.

"We had two outs, but the wheels just kind of fell off the car," said Texas coach Augie Garrido, who has won five national champions and remained tied with former LSU coach Skip Bertman in that category. "And then they added to it."

The Tigers also embelished.

Chad Jones, the free safety turned lefty reliever, replaced Ranaudo with one out and nobody on in the sixth after 115 pitches, and put on a show. He struck out left-handed third and fourth hitters Brandon Belt and Russell Moldenhauer both looking on wicked curve balls. Moldenhauer had hit three homers against LSU.

Jones retired the side without incident again in the seventh before giving way to Louis Coleman, who finished the eighth and ninth with allowing only one hit.

LSU made it 10-4 in the eighth on a double by Austin Nola, single by DJ Lemahieu and a sacrifice fly by Schimpf. Sean Ochinko added a solo home run in the ninth for the final.

"Once they smelled blood in the water, they did what they should do—put us away," Garrido said. "They are the best team we've played by far."

Mahtook was in tears.

"This was a dream come true," he said. "I dreamed about this many times, and now I'm part of the tradition."