

## **Brees Leads Saints Players to Campus Workouts**

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Laughing, smiling and joking with each other, about 40 members of the New Orleans Saints turned out at Tulane's Westfeldt practice facility on Tuesday (May 3) for a second day of light workouts. It's part of a plan the players have put into place to practice and train while the NFL lockout continues.



New Orleans Saints quarterback Drew Brees, center, greets Saints players on the practice field at Tulane for a workout. (Photos by Sally Asher)

"We all wanted a place to work out, and we all wanted to be together," said quarterback Drew Brees. "We know there is a lot of uncertainty, but we are all about the things we can control."

Brees was joined by other veteran team leaders, including Jonathan Vilma, Darren Sharper, Jon Stinchcomb and Heath Evans.

"This has been good for our team because it has empowered our guys to step up in the leadership positions and know if they don't do it, it doesn't get done," Brees told the group of reporters who were allowed access during the first hour of practice. Practices are closed to the public.

Tulane athletics director Rick Dickson said Brees approached him in March inquiring about whether Tulane's facilities could be made available to Saints' players in the event of a lockout.



Brees draws attention from a crowd of news media at Tulane. The NFL lockout due to a labor dispute led some team members to practice on the uptown campus.

“We laid out the parameters and how we would go about it once we knew what their needs were and our ability to accommodate them,” said Dickson. “We do a measure of this when we provide practice facilities for bowl teams that come to New Orleans as well as Super Bowl participants. So we have a kind of template in place.”

Depending on how the dispute works out in court, the Saints players could be using the Tulane facilities for a few days or for several months, said Dickson.

Brees said he hopes the lockout ends as soon as possible, but indicated he was happy with the present accommodations. “If you want to be at a facility that you know can cater to everything you need and what you are used to, there are very few facilities like that, Tulane being the best in the area.”