

[Tanner Lee is ready to make history](#)

September 03, 2014 8:45 AM Johanna Gretschel
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Tanner Lee rests on the sidelines during the Green Wave's opening road game at Tulsa. He made an impressive debut at quarterback, passing for 262 yards and three touchdowns in a narrow Tulane loss. (Photo by Parker Waters)

The [Green Wave](#) has been practicing in Yulman Stadium for a week now, but quarterback Tanner Lee is already familiar with the brand-new turf.

The redshirt freshman, along with a few lucky teammates, got a sneak peek at the facility two weeks ago to test the stadium lights.

"I didn't want to leave," Lee said. "We just felt like little kids playing on the playground; it was amazing."

[Lee](#) will star in the stadium unveiling this Saturday (Sept. 6) for the Green Wave home opener against the Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets. He is the first Tulane freshman to start at quarterback since Tommy Hightower in 1976.

After a long year of watching from the sidelines, Lee made his college debut last week in a tough road contest against [Tulsa](#), a fellow holdover from Conference USA to the new American Athletic Conference. The game was a four hour and six minute, double overtime marathon and a heartbreaking Tulane loss, 38-31.

Lee finished with 22-of-44 passing for 262 yards and three touchdowns.

The New Orleans native and business major last threw the football for Jesuit High School. He did not start for the Blue Jays until his senior year, when he completed 118 of 218 passes for 2,364 yards, 25 touchdowns and just two interceptions.

"When I was going through my redshirt year here, it was a lot similar to when I didn't play at Jesuit [right away]," said Lee, now 6-foot-4 and 220 pounds. "I was learning from older guys, so I was a little bit prepared for that. Redshirting is frustrating for anybody because I missed playing. [But] it definitely benefited myself and my game."

"I think Tanner is going to be a fine quarterback for us, and I just want him to run the offense properly," Tulane head coach Curtis "C.J." Johnson said. "I want him to achieve his personal goals and our team goals, and that will translate into wins."

Johanna Gretschel holds bachelor's and master's degrees from Tulane University. She is a freelance writer living in New Orleans.

“Tanner's got a strong arm, command of our offense, great leadership skills and doesn't make many mistakes.” -- Curtis Johnson, head football coach