

It's Official: He's Mike VI

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Mike VI, he is.

The tiger donated to LSU in August by an Indiana rescue facility and nicknamed "Roscoe" was designated as Mike VI on Saturday, the LSU athletics department announced in a news release on its Web site.

A formal ceremony is still being planned by students and LSU officials but, just in case they weren't already, it's safe for fans to call him Mike.

"He's Mike VI," said Herb Vincent, LSU's senior associate athletics director, on Saturday. "We're not going to send him back."

LSU's tiger mascot arrived in Baton Rouge on Aug. 25 after being donated by Great Cats of Indiana in Idaville, Ind. He was donated to succeed Mike V, who died in May of renal failure.

The tiger, a Bengal-Siberian mix, was expected to be placed in quarantine in his night habitat for two weeks to adjust to his new home.

But he adjusted more rapidly than LSU officials expected and was released into the outside portion of his habitat seven days later before a crowd of cheering onlookers.

The latest development in the tiger's saga was his official naming as Mike VI, and it appears LSU sports officials did that with Saturday's announcement.

A formal announcement and welcome for Mike VI is being planned for the near future by the chancellor's office and students, Vincent said.

The tiger still isn't expected to make his first appearance in Tiger Stadium for a football game until — at the earliest — the Sept. 22 game against South Carolina, Vincent said. Mike VI's veterinarian, David Baker, will make the decision on when the tiger can appear before 92,000 fans in Tiger Stadium.

Vincent said the 2-year-old tiger has reacted well to everything in the past two weeks.

LSU officials started playing music outside his habitat this week to get him adjusted to the noise coming from Tiger Stadium, Vincent said. He said the tiger has also had no problems with the fans who watch him from outside the habitat.

"He's a character," Vincent said. "He likes to show off."

And, starting Saturday, the tiger has a new name.