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Baseball

Sports

Valincius brothers share Dudy Noble Field for one season together

Abby Miller, Sports Editor

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The Valincius brothers spent most of their baseball careers on separate fields. This season at Mississippi State University, they are finally sharing one.

Lithuanian brothers Tomas and Vytas Valincius grew up in Illinois and went to a private high school, Baylor School, in Tennessee. The brothers both went their separate ways to play college baseball, but that all changed this year when they made their way to Starkville.

Tomas and Vytas are both new faces in Starkville, as they transferred to Mississippi State in 2026 for the current season. This season will be Vytas' last eligible season, while Tomas is just getting started.

Growing up, the brothers played football and baseball with their neighbors, often leading to competition and occasional fights

"It always resulted in some type of fight," Tomas said while Vytas chuckled and agreed. "There's a lot of fun, but there would be fights between all of us." That brotherly competition did not go away once they grew up.

Baylor School head baseball coach Greg Elie coached both brothers and still serves as the team's head coach.

"They're just competitors," Elie said. "They do not like to lose at anything."

Elie said that the brothers are "fun as heck" to watch as their former coach.

Despite their shared competitiveness, the brothers discovered an unexpected difference this season at Mississippi State University: they pronounce their last name differently.

"I didn't know there was any other way to say it," Tomas said. "I just found out this year."

Tomas pronounces Valincius as Vuh-LINK-cus, while Vytas says Vuh-lin-SEE-us.

Before playing for the Bulldogs, left-handed sophomore pitcher Tomas played for head baseball coach Brian O'Connor at the University of Virginia. Vytas, a graduate student outfielder, started his freshman year at the University of South Carolina, his sophomore season at John A. Logan Community College and his junior and senior seasons at the University of Illinois.

Once Vytas found out that he had one more year of eligibility left, he knew he wanted to make the brothers' dreams come true and play together on a team again. With all roads aligning, the brothers each earned the opportunity to play together at Mississippi State.

"For me, I know that if I strike out or I do good, I always have someone that has my back and loves me for who I am," Vytas said with a smile. "When two brothers play together, it's just like the competitiveness is more because you don't want to lose together."

Even when they did not share the field, the brothers have always been each other's number one supporter.

"They support each other big time," Elie said. "I can remember multiple times when Tomas was at school sending Vytas a message of what he was doing, so they've always been super supportive of each other."

Because they play different positions, Tomas and Vytas are rarely compared on the field.

"No, we don't really get compared," Vytas said. "He's a pitcher, if I were a pitcher, though, it'd be a different story."

The two shared a brief pause before breaking into laughter.

"They're a mess," Elie said. "They're great, great kids. Just competitors and just fun, but they could not be so similar, yet so different."

On the field, Tomas and Vytas assist their team in drastically different ways. Tomas is MSU's ace pitcher and has the recognition to back it up. He was named 2026 D1 Baseball Top 50 Transfer Pitchers, 2026 Perfect Game Top 100 Sophomores and 2026 D1 Baseball Top 200 Starting Pitchers. He was also selected as a semifinalist for the National Pitcher of the Year Award by the College Baseball Foundation and the College Baseball Hall of Fame. So far at Mississippi State, he has pitched 63.1 innings with 87 strikeouts. "Oh, he's going to be a draftee in the first round," Elie said regarding the MLB Draft. "You watch what he's doing on the mound this year in the hardest division in college baseball, and he's just dominating."

On the other hand, Vytas assists the Bulldogs with his at-bats and fielding. Vytas has recorded 14 RBI's through his 22 hits this season. He has also scored 14 runs in his games played. Defensively, Vytas has been consistent. He has a 1.000 fielding percentage and has yet to commit an error at Mississippi State. "And Vytas will have a shot to play pro ball, too," Elie said. The Valincius brothers have contributed both performance and energy to the team, and the Bulldog fans are eager to watch them play the remainder of this season. "He's the best brother," Vytas said, grinning ear to ear.

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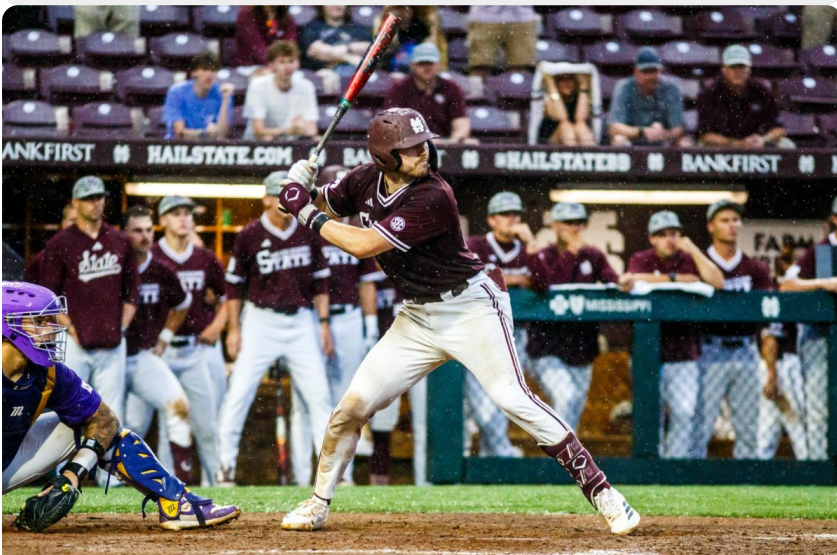
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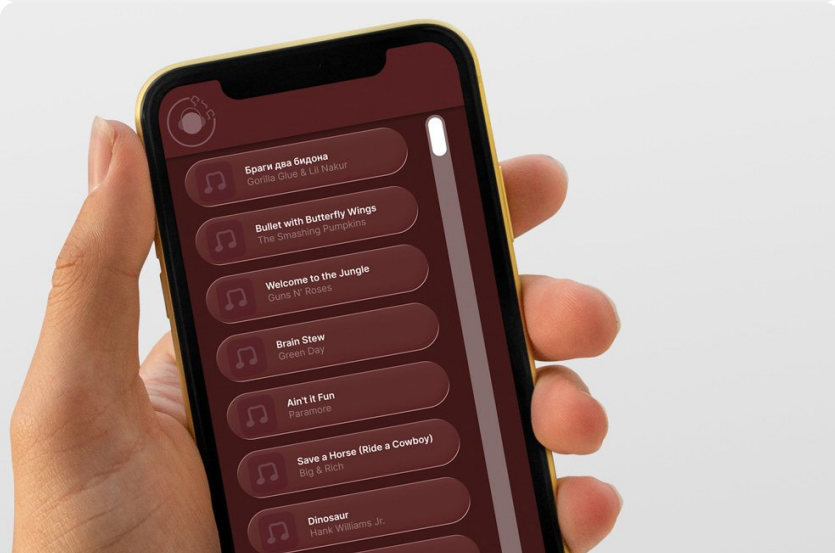
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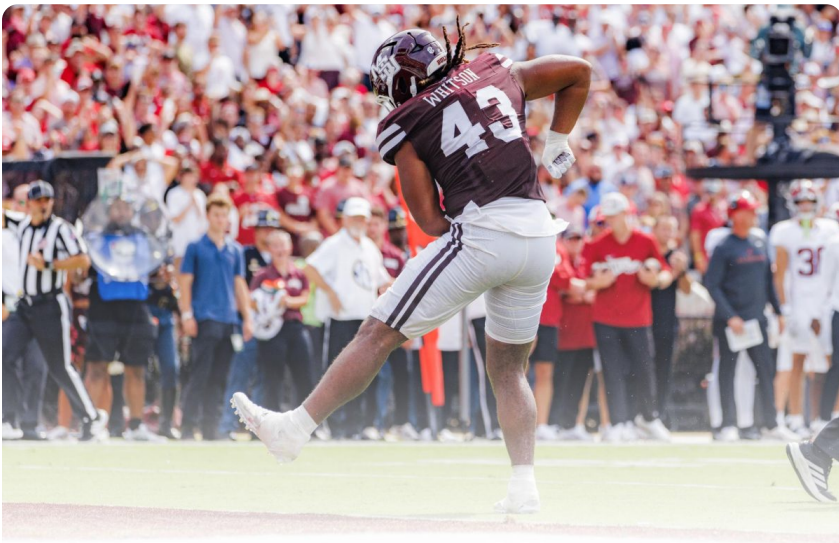


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