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Photo Gallery: Who Dat Nation

By IT Blog on February 9, 2010 3:25 PM | [Comments \(1\)](#)

Former Traveler intern J.T. Blatty shares some scenes from New Orleans in the midst of football euphoria.



4 . . 3 . . 2 . . 1 . . 0: Mouths hang open and a look of shock plagues their faces. The Saints fans in New Orleans watch the final moments of the game in disbelief, and for ten seconds following the moment of victory, not a word is spoken. They're still trying to internalize what has just happened. For the first time in history, not only did the Saints make it to the Super Bowl—they won the Super Bowl. Tears begin to well up and roll down the cheeks of full-grown men.

People from around the world joined the "Who Dat" nation on Super Bowl Sunday, stomping their feet and singing the team's anthem to celebrate this monumental moment in New Orleans history. But it's not just about football: It's about a city that much of the world has grown to love, and one that has chosen to rise up and overcome the trying years following Hurricane Katrina.

On Tuesday, February 9th, the city will celebrate with their returning heroes. What was originally titled as the "win or lose" parade is proudly called the "Victory Parade" now. Nine floats selected from various Mardi Gras Krewes will launch from the Superdome at 5:00 p.m. and travel through the central business district on a 3.7-mile route to Mardi Gras World. This may be the last official celebration for the Saints, but a non-official celebration will remain in New Orleans for years to

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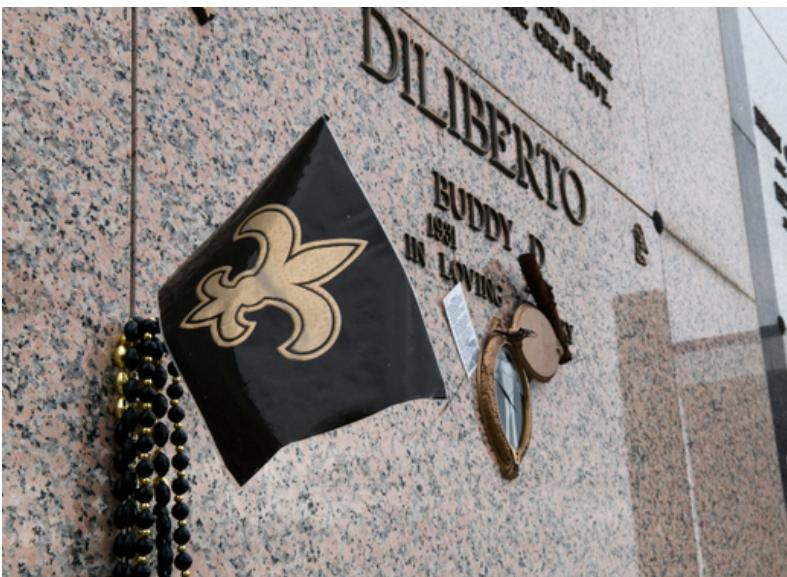
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come.

[Click through for more scenes from New Orleans.](#)



There are no fans like the Saints fans, even during their era as the "Aint's." In the suburbs of New Orleans, there are no boundaries when it comes to supporting their boys.



Locals pay their respects to Buddy Diliberto, or "Buddy D," a 50-year New Orleans sports commentator who passed away in 2005. During the days leading up to the game, locals convened at his grave in the [Old Metairie Cemetery](#) to share the celebration of a day he never lived to see. Buddy once made a vow that if the Saints should ever make it to the Super Bowl, he would wear a dress for the day. He didn't live to fulfill his vow, but the city fulfilled it for him on January 31st, when men, outfitted in dresses, paraded through the city.



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Wait . . . Mardi Gras started? Friday marked the opening day of the New Orleans celebration, and this year, black, gold and "Who Dat!" paraphernalia has been integrated into the traditional purple, green, and gold decor. Outside of the downtown area, Saints specialty stores such as the [Black & Gold Sports](#) shop experienced lines for the first time. Police Officers patrolled the store area to assist with traffic and any potential thrown downs for the last size medium T-shirt.



On game day, a "Who Dat" nation formed on Bourbon Street for their own pep rally prior to kickoff. Locals, tourists, lifetime fans and bandwagon fans chanted through the streets while boasting their best black and gold spirit, even if it included decking out their dogs.



Less than fifteen minutes following the victory, the "Who Dat" nation trickles back into the streets and beelines to the French Quarter. Less than an hour later, the back-to-back, push and shove traffic normally pandemic to Bourbon Street stretches throughout the entire Quarter. High-fives slap between complete strangers, bandwagon fans embrace the "Who Dat" cheer, and the locals naturally gravitate towards each other by the tears in their eyes.

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