

Soccer defeats Little Rock in final regular season match

Red Wolves earn third place finish in the SBC

KRISHNAN COLLINS
SPORTS EDITOR

The Arkansas State soccer team defeated in-state foe Little Rock 1-0 on Tuesday afternoon to close out the Red Wolves' regular season.

With the win, the Red Wolves improved to 5-2-3 in the Sun Belt Conference which earned them a third place finish in the league. A-State finished the regular season with a 9-5-3 overall record.

The Red Wolves scored in the 58th minute when Sarah Sodoma was slipped past the Little Rock backline by Sophia Restrepo. Sodoma took her time and then slotted the ball past Julia Curatolo in the Trojan's goal. Restrepo played the role of midfield maestro this season for the Red Wolves and came up with a masterful touch to play Sodoma through. After missing her freshman year with a devastating injury, this game-winning assist meant a lot.

"That means so much to me," Restrepo said. "I can't even explain the feeling of being able to comeback and contribute in such a way that we can stay in third place. It's a really good feeling."

1-0 to A-State was a typical scoreline earlier in the season when the Red Wolves shut down Louisiana and Texas State at the A-State Soccer park. A-State won behind that scoreline once again and the Red Wolves' defense played a major role in the victory. Sophomore Haley Husted dominated at the right back position.

"We have some mad chemistry to be honest," Husted said about the backline. "We just kind of all click. We know what we want to do and we know what to do. It just happens. We mesh so well together. This season we've definitely grown way, way more than last season as a defense."

With the third place finish in the SBC, the Red Wolves will take on the sixth seeded Texas State Bobcats in the league tournament. A shutout win at home against a rival is a great way to head into postseason play.

"We're coming in so excited," Restrepo said, "because we got a win in our last game on our home field."

The Red Wolves went through a period this year of consecutive overtime games consisting of multiple draws. Husted knows just what a shutout win in the last game



Photo by: Krishnan Collins | Sports Editor
Sophia Restrepo and Haley Husted dominated the pitch in the Red Wolves' 1-0 win over Little Rock on Tuesday.

of the season could do for A-State soccer.

"It feels amazing, especially after coming off a long tying road," Husted said. "It feels real great. I think we've put ourselves in a really good spot. Third place is the best we've ever done in Arkansas State soccer. So I think going into the tournament with a shutout, I think that's going to be a real game changer."

For a full first and second half recap of A-State's win over Little Rock, head to The Herald's website.

Looking ahead, after earning the No. 3 seed in the SBC tournament, the Red Wolves take on a Texas State team that A-State beat at home earlier in the season. A-State took down the Bobcats 1-0 by the way of a Dana O'Boye penalty in the 28th minute.

Texas State finished the regular season with a 5-4-1 record in the SBC and an 8-8-2 overall record.

The Bobcats were actually

predicted to finish first in the league this year, but Texas State did not live up to the expectations.

The Bobcats' senior striker Kaylee Davis did not quite find the same goal scoring form this season that she found last year.

The Allen, Texas native registered eight goals on the season compared to 18 during the 2018 season. When she came to A-State she struggled against the Red Wolves' center back pairing of Julianna Coates and O'Boye.

The winner of A-State's match against Texas State will take on the winner of the Troy versus Louisiana match. A-State beat Louisiana earlier in the season and tied Troy.

The SBC tournament promises to be a good one. The Red Wolves play the first match in the tournament hosted in Foley, Alabama. Kick off is set for Nov. 6 at 10 a.m.

Volleyball returns home for important SBC action

BRAD BREWER
SPORTS WRITER

After splitting the weekend with a thrilling five-set victory over ULM and getting swept in a loss to Louisiana, the Arkansas State volleyball team returns to the First National Bank Arena this weekend to host Georgia State and Georgia Southern in their campaign to secure a spot in the Sun Belt conference tournament.

The Red Wolves currently sit at 4-5 in conference play heading into the weekend, and have a very good opportunity to snatch their first winning conference record of the season against the struggling Georgian teams.

Play starts Friday night against the Eagles from Georgia Southern who have had a tumultuous year thus far, only picking up one conference win over Troy at home compared to nine other losses.

The Eagles are riding low on a seven-game losing streak, and they have to rely on some gimmicky play like

having their sophomore setter Madison Brown go for surprise kills of her own after notching two on three attempts last weekend against Troy.

Thankfully for the Red Wolves, A-State's junior outside hitter Madison Brown started hitting more and more as she led scoring with 16 kills against ULM last weekend.

It doesn't help that the Eagles' primary outside and right side hitter Maddie Bryant has been off recently, as she hit negatively at .133 below zero against the Trojans after suffering 12 errors compared to her eight kills.

Even after a blistering loss against the Ragin' Cajuns, the Red Wolves should be able to easily handle Georgia Southern to reach .500 on the conference season. First service is set for 6:30 p.m.

Georgia State rolls into town Saturday night, and though they are doing slightly better than their neighbors, it is not by much.

The Panthers are 3-7 in conference play this season



Photo by: Krishnan Collins | Sports Editor
Malgorzata Andersohn and Kendahl Davenport are part of a strong volleyball squad returning home for SBC play.

with wins over South Alabama, UT-Arlington and ULM which are teams that have not impressed this year either.

It also does not help the squad from Atlanta that they are coming into this weekend off of three straight sweeps. They were on the wrong side

of each.

However their personnel is not awful, as junior outside hitter Leah Wilcox has overcome her short height to deliver decent performances against talented opposition like Louisiana, where she put off 11 kills. Junior Meisheia Griffin is pretty solid as well,

hitting .333 against a Troy defense that held Arkansas State's Macey Putt to a .057 percentage earlier in the season.

Overall, Georgia State travels into this weekend as definite underdogs with less firepower than the Red Wolves, but with an

inconsistent A-State defense and the way the Sun Belt is going this year, anybody can beat anybody, so the Red Wolves will need to be laser focused if they want to leave this weekend with a winning conference record. First service is set for 6:30 p.m.