

Men's basketball opens season with squad depth Red Wolves set to take on Arkansas-Monticello

KRISHNAN COLLINS

SPORTS EDITOR

The Arkansas State men's basketball team takes on Arkansas-Monticello tonight in the Red Wolves' season opener.

The Red Wolves took on Harding University in an exhibition on Oct. 30 as A-State took down the Bisons 80-54 to warm up for the regular season.

Canberk Kus led the Red Wolves against Harding with 20 points while freshman Caleb Fields showed he could be a danger man this season chipping in with 13 points. Malik Brevard and Antwon Jackson also scored in double figures for the Red Wolves registering 13 points and 11 points respectively.

"I think we have great chemistry already," Kus said. "We're a defense first team this year. Last year we were an offensive team. You can bring defense every night and offense is going to follow it."

Last year, Kus suffered an injury and struggled to get back to full form during the season. This year could be different for the senior guard from Turkey.

"I feel good about this season," Kus said. "Not only personally but as a team. My teammates have given me a lot of confidence. They let me do what I'm best at. They always support me. I'm supporting them as well. I think my teammates are really helping me."

A-State head coach Mike Balado talked about the depth of the Red Wolves after the win over Harding.

"It's been very, very easy this year to discuss what our emphasis is in this program," Balado said. "This team is bought in from top to bottom. There is no weak links. Their mindset is on the right page. I tell the point guards you guys call plays. You guys know our package, you guys call if you see something or I'll call something."

Looking ahead to tonight,

The Red Wolves take on a UAM team that is yet to play a game this season. Last season the Boll Weevils boasted a 16-13 overall record and went 12-11 in the Great American Conference. The Boll Weevils were predicted to finish seventh this year in the GAC preseason coaches' poll.

Tip off from the First National Bank Arena is set for 7:30 p.m.

Last season, A-State finished ninth in the Sun Belt Conference behind a 7-11 league record. The Red Wolves were predicted to finish 10th in the SBC this season as South Alabama was picked as the conference favorites.

A-State also travels to Southeastern Conference opponent Ole Miss on Friday. Last season Ole Miss went 20-13 overall and finished with a conference record of 10-8. This earned Ole Miss a ticket to the NCAA tournament where they fell to Oklahoma 95-72. Tip off from Oxford is set for 6 p.m.



Photo by: Krishnan Collins | Sports Editor

Freshman Caleb Fields passes in the Red Wolves' 80-54 win over Harding on Oct. 30.

Matt Daniel's team set to take the court for the first time

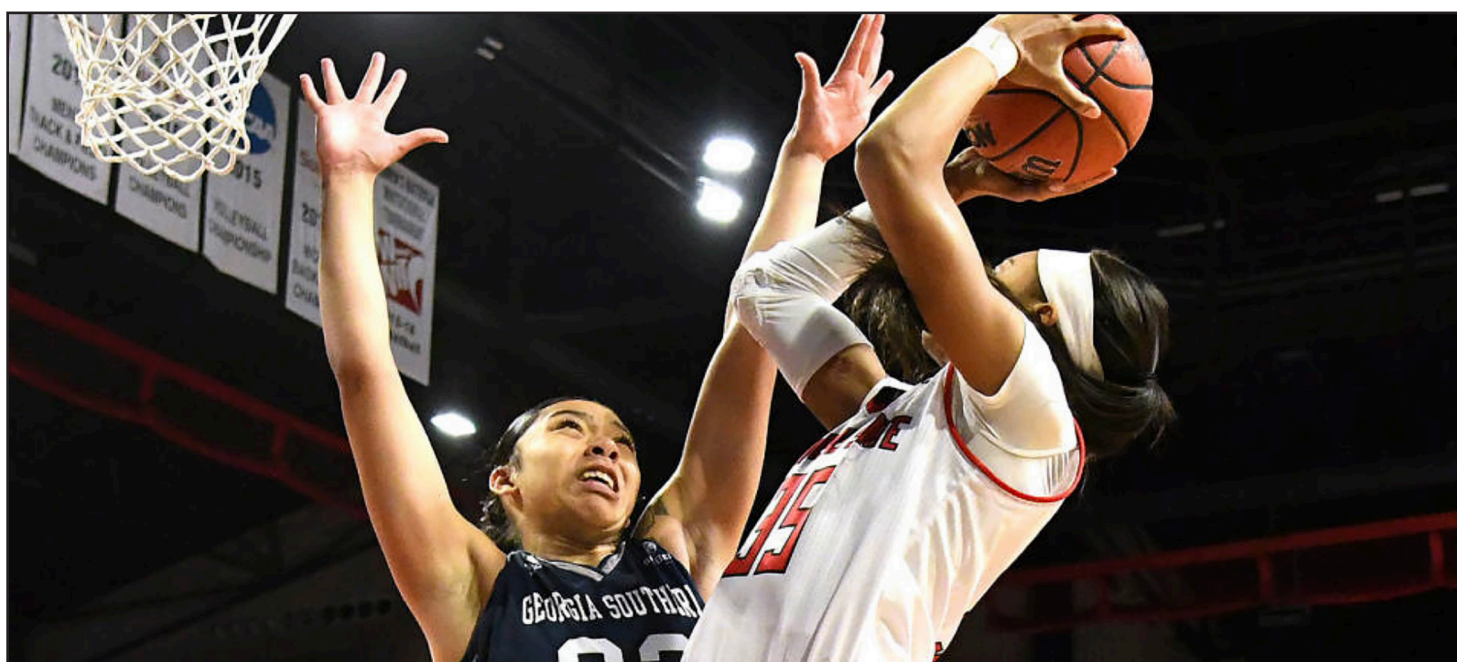
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SPORTS EDITOR

The Arkansas State women's basketball team opens its regular season tonight against the Central Baptist College Mustangs.

The matchup with the Mustangs marks the first game in charge for new A-State head coach Matt Daniel. Daniel was appointed in the spring after long-time Red Wolves' head coach Brian Boyer did not have his contract renewed at the end of last season.

A-State junior forward Peyton Martin was named to the Sun Belt Conference preseason third team. Martin had an outstanding sophomore year as the Pine Bluff native led the Red Wolves in scoring and averaged 13.7 points per game.



COURTESY OF ARKANSAS STATE ATHLETICS

Peyton Martin was named to the preseason Sun Belt Conference third team. Martin led A-State in scoring last year.

Martin also led the Red Wolves in rebounds per game last season averaging 6.3 per game.

Last season, the Red

Wolves finished ninth in the SBC and were predicted to finish 10th this year in a coaches' preseason poll. In-state foe Little Rock was

predicted to finish first in the coaches' preseason poll.

Looking ahead to tonight, CBC started their season with a whopping 107-44 win

over Ecclesia College. Last season the Mustangs boasted a 17-12 overall record with a 13-11 record in the American Midwest Conference. The

Mustangs entered this season coming off of their best year in program history.

CBC returned seven players from their team last season and all top-five of their leading scorers are still with the squad. This season, the Mustangs are projected to finish seventh in the AMC.

Tip off from the First National Bank Arena is set for 5 p.m.

A-State travels to Tulsa on Saturday in a rematch of a non-conference game that was played in Jonesboro last year.

Last season the Red Wolves took down Tulsa 73-60.

Martin led the Red Wolves with 14 points and 9 rebounds against the Golden Hurricanes.

Tip off from the Reynolds Center in Tulsa is set for 2 p.m.

Women's cross country captures Sun Belt Conference title for second time in history

STAFF REPORT

A-STATE ATHLETICS

Saturday at Nash Farm Battlefield Park on the outskirts of Atlanta, the Arkansas State cross country teams found their edge en route to a pair of historic finishes at the 2019 Sun Belt

Conference Championships.

A-State's women saw one of its best performances in program history.

A-State captured the women's crown for just the second time, while the men followed up with their highest Sun Belt finish ever, placing second overall.

Additionally, cross country

coach Jesse Duvall was voted as the conference's women's coach of the year at the conclusion of the event.

"I'm very proud of both the men and women," Duvall said. "They worked extremely hard this year and today's results showed that. Bennett and Pauline have done an amazing job leading

by example. We also had six lifetime bests across both teams. We are losing a few key seniors who made major contributions both on and off the course, but I am excited for the future of our distance program."

The historic day began with the Red Wolves taking the women's conference title

for just the second time in program history and the first since 2013.

A-State's finish came after being predicted to finish third in the preseason. Preseason favorite Texas State placed fourth as a team.

Individually, the Red Wolves' championship came on the legs of five top-20 runners, including

three All-Sun Belt Conference honorees.

As she has all season, Pauline Meyer paced the squad with a second-place finish in a personal-best 17:26.6.

This was the highest finish by a Red Wolf since Kristina Aubert won the individual title in 2013.