

Second half kills Red Wolves, losing five straight

BRAYDEN MORSE
SPORTS EDITOR

The Arkansas State Red Wolves men's basketball team's second half struggles resulted in a 74-57 loss to the Southern Miss Golden Eagles, while being tied 33-33 at halftime.

The first half for A-State was going according to plan. Being aggressive on offense and defense, while being able to attack the rim and create plays for shots outside the arc. It was a back and forth game, as it was looking promising for this basketball team.

Sophomore guard #2 Avery Felts led the team with nine points in the first half. Senior forward #22 Omar El-Sheikh had seven points while leading the team with six rebounds in the first half.

This team was clicking on both sides of the ball, then all of a sudden they fell off in the second half.

"The second half was a blur. I will need to go back on film and see what exactly we did wrong. Usually I know what we did wrong right after the game, but this time it is different," Head Coach Mike Balado said.

Shooting was not a strong suit for the Red Wolves throughout the game, as they finished 17-49 (34.7%) from field-goal range and 6-15 (40.0%) from three-point range. Southern Miss outrebounded A-State 40-28. The Golden Eagles also had a better field-goal percentage,



Sophomore guard #2 Avery Felts dribbling down the court.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ARKANSAS STATE ATHLETICS

finishing 25-57 (47.4%). It is hard to win basketball games when getting outrebounded and outshot against.

"We matched the physicality of their team in the first half, but we just could not make shots. We also could not get to the foul line even though both sides were playing aggressively," El-Sheikh said.

Having the mindset of wanting to win and being present mentally and physically is the winning formula in any sport. Although, it is easier

said than done. Setting a team apart from other teams with not only the talent, but the mental side as well. A-State needs to find a way back to their winning ways that they had earlier in the season.

Through their first 14 games of the season, the Red Wolves had nine wins (.623 winning percentage).

"It is all about the mindset. You have to buy-in every single day. That is basically it. You have to have the mindset that you are going to be better than

them," Felts said.

Another key factor is the amount of minutes that this team has been having to give to their starters. The Red Wolves had four of their starters go over 30 minutes. That amount of time puts wear and tear on the body. Only three players came off the bench for Arkansas State. The more players coming off the bench, the better. Doing so puts fresh legs and new energy on the court.

Southern Miss did well

with rotating players as they had six guys come off their bench with a combined 10 rebounds. The Golden Eagles only had two players go over 30 minutes, which helped other players get rest and time to recuperate.

"It is frustrating as a coach when I have my players who practice all week and then tell me they are hurt and can not play in the next game. We do not have enough guys coming off the bench. I have noticed a lot of these good teams around

the league have a couple of their starters with a lot of minutes and then a lot of guys coming off their bench. Our first-year guard #11 Terrance Ford Jr. had the most minutes on the team with 36. He is not ready for that at age 19. He will be next year and as he gets older, but right now he is doing the best he can," Balado said.

Although the Red Wolves are going through a rough patch, anything can happen between now and the end of the season. A-State will look to keep their head on a swivel and stay focused on the future, rather than the past. They have 12 games left in the season and all of them are conference games.

"Anything can happen in these next couple of weeks. There was a team who was an eight seed in the tournament and made it all the way to the SBC Championship last year. I am not saying we do not need to worry about the present, because we certainly need to fix things, but we have things to look forward to," Felts said.

To add on a positive note, El-Sheikh and Ford Jr. both finished with nine points, while El-Sheikh led the team with 11 rebounds. Felts led the team with 15 points.

A-State is now below .500 with a 9-10 record. They control their own destiny and will look to even their record back to .500 tomorrow against Louisiana Lafayette at 7 p.m. on ESPN+.

Baseball schedule is released

FEBRUARY		APRIL	
17	ARKANSAS-PINE BLUFF	1	AT TEXAS STATE*
18	ARKANSAS-PINE BLUFF	2	AT TEXAS STATE*
19	ARKANSAS-PINE BLUFF	4	AT ARKANSAS
21	AT OLE MISS	6	TROY*
24	ILLINOIS STATE	7	TROY*
25	ILLINOIS STATE	8	TROY*
26	ILLINOIS STATE	11	MURRAY STATE
28	MISS. VALLEY STATE	14	AT GEORGIA STATE*
		15	AT GEORGIA STATE*
		16	AT GEORGIA STATE*
		18	OLE MISS
		21	ULM*
		22	ULM*
		23	ULM*
		25	HENDERSON STATE
		26	AT LITTLE ROCK
		28	AT SOUTHERN MISS*
		29	AT SOUTHERN MISS*
		30	AT SOUTHERN MISS*

MARCH		MAY	
1	MISS. VALLEY STATE	2	MEMPHIS
3	MISSOURI STATE	5	OLD DOMINION*
4	MISSOURI STATE	6	OLD DOMINION*
5	MISSOURI STATE	7	OLD DOMINION*
10	EASTERN ILLINOIS	9	LITTLE ROCK
11	EASTERN ILLINOIS	12	AT APP STATE*
12	EASTERN ILLINOIS	13	AT APP STATE*
14	CENTRAL ARKANSAS	14	AT APP STATE*
17	AT LOUISIANA*	18	SOUTH ALABAMA*
18	AT LOUISIANA*	19	SOUTH ALABAMA*
19	AT LOUISIANA*	20	SOUTH ALABAMA*
21	AT MISSISSIPPI STATE		
22	AT MEMPHIS		
24	JAMES MADISON*		
25	JAMES MADISON*		
26	JAMES MADISON*		
28	AT CENTRAL ARKANSAS		
31	AT TEXAS STATE*		

PHOTO COURTESY OF @ASTATEBASEBALL TWITTER

A-State's tough season continues with loss to Texas State



PHOTO COURTESY OF ARKANSAS STATE ATHLETICS

Sophomore guard/forward #15 Anna Griffin with a jump shot against Southern Miss. The Arkansas State women's basketball team dropped their seventh game in a row, as they lost 89-55 to Texas State.

The Red Wolves were only 23.3% from field-goal range and 21.1% from three-point range. Arkansas State's only statistic that was better than Texas State was the nine steals they had compared to Texas State's seven. They have now had back-to-back games with over 20 turnovers.

On the bright side, A-State had three players score in double-digits. Senior guard #10 Keya Patton and Anna Griffin each had 13 points, while sophomore guard #0 Jade Upshaw had 11 points.

The Red Wolves are now 5-12 and 0-6 in Sun Belt Conference play. They will travel to play South Alabama tomorrow at 7 p.m.

Sandlot's 'Ham' excited for the Annual Grand Slam Banquet



PHOTO COURTESY OF POSTERAZZI

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Patrick Renna played Ham Porter, a main character in the 1993 film "The Sandlot".

"The Sandlot" is considered one of the greatest baseball movies ever made. It has inspired kids around the world to play America's Pastime.

He began his acting career at a young age and has appeared in a variety of television shows and films. Other than "The Sandlot", he

has been in movies like "Son in Law" and "The Big Green" and TV shows like "Step by Step".

Renna continues to act and has worked as a voice actor and producer.

Renna will be heading to Jonesboro on Feb. 13 as a guest speaker at the Annual Grand Slam Banquet. Doors will open at 5 p.m.

"I am very excited to get to Jonesboro in February to speak at the 2023 Grand Slam Banquet," Renna said.