

## Red Wolves Volleyball cruises through early tournaments to start the season

WILL LIVINGSTON

STAFF WRITER

The Arkansas State volleyball team entered conference play after finishing non-conference games with a record of 10-2.

Head coach Brian Gerwig and the Red Wolves ended no-conference competition feeling not only improved, but capable of making some waves in the Sun Belt this year.

"The team has been working hard with communication and training, just the technique to get better and more consistent is what we've been focusing on a lot," Gerwig stated in an interview with the Herald. "We have the skill, we have a lot of size and some different areas, and our kids are getting better. But we're pretty young. So improving the consistency is what our main focus is."

Gerwig also praised his players' aggressiveness on the court. "This team is really aggressive, and because

they're young they don't know what the pressure feels like. Sometimes you get young teams that back away from that situation. That's not us."

The team's aggressiveness has paid off so far, too. The Red Wolves powered through their early season tournaments, sweeping most contests. The only two losses in non-conference were to Houston Christian and Eastern Illinois.

The players have shown off this season as well. After a strong performance in the Bear Invitational at Missouri State, freshman setter Erin Madigan won Sun Belt Setter of the Week, and leads all setters in the nation in assists.

Like Gerwig, Madigan attributed the early success to the team's aggressive play. "I think it's important to kind of put yourself out there in a way, like try to be the most aggressive or loudest on the court to really stand out. And that will translate into games and make

it more comfortable for you.

Freshman outside Kaitlin Whitlock has excelled this season as well, leading the Red Wolves in kills with 125 and is second in total team points. At the Bear Invitational, Whitlock scored 17 kills and 13 digs, earning tournament MVP. Whitlock credits her team with her success on the court.

"I think it really helps having our teammates, it allows me to have confidence in them and trust they're going to get that ball," Whitlock said.

Senior libero Sarah Martinez recorded 27 digs and seven assists at the Bear invitational and is second in team assists total.

"I think our communication is super fierce in a way, like we're all about the hype," Martinez said. And we like to hype each other up when someone does something good. And then whenever stuff is going wrong, we have each other's back."



PHOTO COURTESY OF ASTATE ATHLETICS

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## A-State bowling prepares for season



PHOTO COURTESY OF ASTATE ATHLETICS

The A-State bowling team in a huddle. The season will kick off Oct. 13-15 at their first match.

CAROLINE AVERITT

LIFE EDITOR

The Arkansas State University women's bowling team finished runner-up last year in the National Collegiate Bowling Championship. Now, the team is working to have an even better season this year.

Justin Kostick, the head coach, said he feels good about this year's team.

"The teams brought everybody back that was on TV for the National Championship, the five people that placed, we got all of them back. (We) got some good transfers, got some good incoming freshman kids," Kostick said.

He said he has been working with the team as a whole, as well as working with individual players.

"We've just been really working on a lot of spare shooting stuff right now and obviously physical game work as well, trying to get people— especially all the

newcomers— to make some small tweaks and any other physical game that I feel like can help them," Kostick said.

Faith Welch, a fifth-year student working in the occupational therapy doctoral program from Savannah, Tennessee, said she feels confident about the upcoming season.

She said the team has been working with Kostick, as well as Taylor Bailey, the assistant coach, on mindset.

"Both coaches really just get us in the mental aspect as well, because that's really important for our sport since it's really about controlling our side of it and we can't control the other teams. So, they just kind of prepare us for that," Welch said.

The season will start at the MOTIV Penguin Classic in Stuthers, Ohio, Oct. 13-15.

"I think that the team is pushing each other and I think we can do something special here," Kostick said.

## "Fore" the love of the game



Photo by Shailey Wooldrige | Staff Writer

Thomas Schmidt earned his first collegiate win, scored the second lowest 54 hole total in program history and was named Sun Belt Conference golfer of the week, this month.

SHAILEY WOOLDRIGE

STAFF WRITER

The first time Thomas Schmidt got a golf club into his hand was on his seventh birthday.

"It was a present from my mom to take me on the golf course and push her trolley. Just walking around with her," Schmidt said. "Afterwards, I wanted to experience it myself and try it out."

Schmidt and his sister started playing golf at the same time. They played once a week at a youth practice and two years later they joined a youth club and started playing in small tournaments.

Schmidt said he became serious about golf and began dreaming of becoming a professional at 9-years-old.

Schmidt, a sophomore sports administration major from Gelsenkirchen, Germany, plays on the A-State men's golf team.

Sept. 12, Schmidt earned his first collegiate win and scored the second lowest 54 hole total in program history at the Golfweek fall challenge. Sept. 14, Schmidt was named Sunbelt's golfer of the week.

"It feels like a reward to me," Schmidt said. "It's like an accomplishment, just somebody saying 'you've been the best golfer this week.'"

Mike Hagen, the A-State men's golf coach, said Schmidt's dedication to golf is above and beyond.

"He strives for perfection. He always keeps me on my toes," said Hagen. "He's a lot of fun to coach because he wants to keep getting better. He wants to be the best. I think a lot of people can say that with whatever they do in life, but not everybody actually does what it takes to achieve what they want"

Schmidt said he comes from an immediate family

of golfers who are very supportive of his golf career.

"They did everything that could have been done to support me in my dream of becoming a golf professional," said Schmidt. "They are still supporting me, they're following all the tournaments that I'm playing. They send me daily updates and feedback on how I did and they say how happy they are for me."

Schmidt has traveled a lot for golf and said he documents in his notes app all the places he has been, including airports and golf courses he's played at. The list ranges from Cincinnati, Ohio to Dubai. Schmidt said it's like a little collection by now.

Schmidt said it's important to have a good playlist when traveling. He said he listens to club dance music that he got into as a teenager in Germany going to clubs with his friends.

"It just calms me down when I'm riding the car or just going

somewhere and on long trips. I've been on the road a long time in Germany. With the car I drive into different countries it usually takes like 8 to 14 hours of the drive," Schmidt said.

Schmidt said most of his time is consumed by golf and schoolwork. In his spare time, he said he enjoys hanging out with his teammates.

He said he's also a Netflix fan. In the evenings he enjoys searching for old movies. His favorite is the 1990 thriller film "The Hunt for Red October".

Schmidt said he describes himself as driven but isn't taking himself too seriously and enjoys what he's doing.

"I want to accomplish my goal of becoming a golf professional, earning my living with it and doing some part of history as well. It's way too early to talk about that but that's what I want to accomplish in my life," Schmidt