

RED WOLVES ARE GOING DANCING!



PHOTO COURTESY OF NORTHEAST ARKANSAS SPORTS

Guard Crislyn Rose celebrates in the final seconds of the Sun Belt Conference Championship victory.



PHOTO COURTESY OF PENSACOLA NEWS JOURNAL

JMU forward Ashanti Barnes is swarmed by a pack of Red Wolves defenders.

ALLIE CARSON

STAFF WRITER

For the first time in program history, the Arkansas State Red Wolves women's basketball team qualified for the NCAA Women's Basketball Tournament after defeating the James Madison Dukes 86-79 in an overtime thriller.

Redshirt junior guard Wynter Rogers put the Red Wolves on the board first after winning jump ball but the Dukes soon responded with a three. The rest of the first quarter was neck and neck with Arkansas State and James Madison going into the second quarter tied 23-23.

The Red Wolves were soon dominated during the second quarter as the Dukes scored 17 unanswered points before the Red Wolves could finally score with three minutes remaining in the second quarter. A-State scored nine points within the final minutes of the second quarter, including a last-second three from forward Anna Griffin heading into halftime with JMU leading 32-40.

It was a relatively slow quarter for the Dukes, with JMU only leading 47-44 against the Red Wolves halfway through the quarter and their primary source of points being free throws or layups while A-State only scored threes.

However, the quarter ended 57-51 with JMU keeping their lead.

After missing plenty of threes in the second quarter, the Red Wolves entered the third with a three-pointer by Griffin and then one more from point guard Crislyn Rose. Over the fourth quarter, the Red Wolves slowly but surely chipped away at the Dukes' lead.

In the fourth quarter, the Red Wolves scored first, cutting the point deficit to four before they traded field goals with the Dukes for a while. However, with 6:19 to go in the fourth, the Red Wolves scored back-to-back-to-back threes from guard Mimi McCollister and Crislyn Rose. This gave

A-State the lead at 66-63.

Just like the first quarter though, JMU tied it up and points were traded back and forth before the clock hit zero at 70-70, sending the championship game into overtime.

The Red Wolves won the jump ball to start the five minutes of overtime but neither team scored until Wynter Rogers made a layup with 3:49 to go. JMU scored a single free throw point then Crislyn Rose scored a layup then a three with three minutes to go.

Free throws and field goals were exchanged by both teams, JMU scored a jumper with a second to go, but the Red Wolves were far enough

ahead that it didn't matter.

The confetti rained down at the buzzer as the Arkansas State Red Wolves won 86-79.

Fouls were the Red Wolves' enemy throughout the entire game, racking up 16 personal fouls which gave the Dukes 13 of their points.

As a team, the Red Wolves were 45.3% on their field goals, 35.3% on their threes and 76.2% on their free throws.

Rose led the Red Wolves in points, scoring 23 in total. She was 10-16 for field goals and 3-6 in threes. Junior guard Zyion Shannon recorded the most assists with four. Griffin scored the most threes for the team, draining four of her

eight while Mimi McCollister made the most free throws, scoring six of her eight tries.

Forward Nissa Sam-Grant led in rebounds with eight total, four offensive and four defensive. She also led the team in blocks with a total of three. Guard Kennedie Montue recorded three steals.

With their win over JMU, Arkansas State moves on to play in the NCAA tournament for the first time in program history. The brackets for the tournament will be released at 7 p.m. on Sunday, March 16. Currently, the Red Wolves are projected as a 14-seed.

Red Wolves continue win streak with victory over Memphis

WILL LIVINGSTON

SPORTS EDITOR

Arkansas State baseball won a close game against the Memphis Tigers on Tuesday thanks to strong pitching and some late-game clutch.

Starting pitcher Jelle van der Lelie took the mound for the Red Wolves, and threw two perfect innings. In the bottom of the second inning, center fielder Ashton Quiller took the ball deep for an RBI triple, bringing second baseman Raul Torres across the plate and breaking the scoreless tie.

Memphis soon responded. At the top of the third inning, Tigers first baseman Shane Cox hit a fly ball to center field, but this was enough to bring across Memphis right fielder Seth Cox (no relation). Van der Lelie managed to get out of the inning by striking out the next batter swinging and getting the flyout. He was replaced by pitcher Kole Turner. The Red Wolves scored their

second run when Memphis third baseman Cy Turner committed a throwing error, allowing A-State shortstop Patrick Engskov to score an unearned run. This regained a lead for the Red Wolves.

The score remained the same for the next four innings, with both A-State and Memphis trading hits but never getting a man across. This changed in the top of the eighth. Engskov committed a fielding error, allowing Tigers centerfielder James Smith IV to score an unearned run and tie the game.

The game looked doomed to travel to extra innings, but the Red Wolves clutched up. Tigers pitcher Michael Dallas came in at the bottom of the eighth to relieve pitcher Will Howell. Dallas gave up a hit to designated hitter Drake Anderson, who had come in to pinch hit for designated hitter Jeremiah Cabuyaban. Dallas struck out Quiller swinging, but then gave up a walk. The Red Wolves secured

victory on the next at-bat. With the bases loaded, right fielder Cross Jumper smacked the ball to left field. The ball got down, Anderson and pinch hitter Cason Campbell made it home, and the Red Wolves took a 4-2 lead. Closing pitcher Chase Richter led A-State out of the top of the ninth and the Red Wolves won.

Richter was credited with the win in his relief efforts, with 1.2 innings pitched, 2 strikeouts, and allowing 2 hits. Starting pitcher Jelle van der Lelie had a good outing, striking out 4 in 3 innings pitched, giving up no walks and allowing only 1 run. Tigers reliever Michael Dallas received the loss for allowing the game deciding hit from Jumper.

First baseman Wil French, Quiller, and Jumper all had games with multiple hits. Jumper was the hero of the game, ending the game 3 for 5 with 2 RBIs.

The Red Wolves will stay home the first Sun Belt Conference series with the Marshall Thundering Herd.

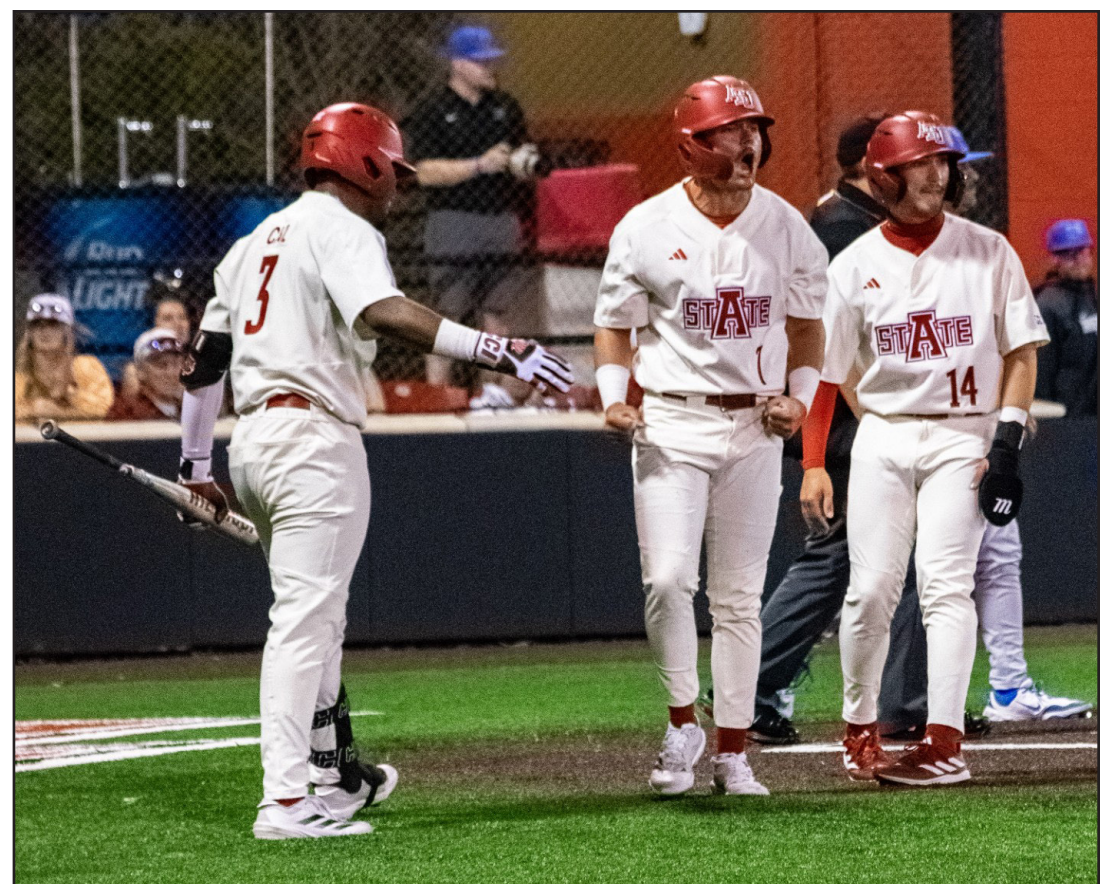


Photo by Abigail Leggett | Staff Photographer

Second baseman Cason Campbell and infielder Drake Anderson celebrate their game-deciding runs with third baseman Daedrick Cail.