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ASU Golf Team Wins Red Wolves Intercollegiate Tournament

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Submitted by
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Jonesboro, Arkansas - The Arkansas State men's golf team collected its sixth all-time Red Wolves Intercollegiate title on Tuesday, recording a final-round 282 at the RidgePointe Country Club to finish with a season-best 862 total that placed them atop the 21-team field.

A-State won its 18th annual home event for the first time since 2002 and claimed its first championship at any tournament since winning the First Tee/UALR Collegiate Classic during the 2004-05 season. The Red Wolves entered today's final round just two strokes ahead of runner-up Belmont, but separated themselves by posting their best single-round score since their first tournament of the 2010-11 campaign.

A-State began play by shooting a 285 that gave it an 11-stroke lead over Belmont, but the Bruins closed the gap by recording a 286 to the Red Wolves' 295 in the second round. However, A-State's strong final round propelled the team to its best three-round score since the 2010-11 season and give it a 12-stroke margin of victory over the Bruins.

"This was an outstanding team performance, and I couldn't be happier for our guys," said A-State head coach Steve Johnson. "They've been working extremely hard for a long time and have been continuing to improve, so this is something that has been coming. They didn't get ahead of themselves, which is something that has been holding us back this year. The focus has been on getting them to trust themselves, and they did that today."

The Red Wolves were led by four players finishing among the top-15 individuals, including Easton Key, **Chance Holden**, Sean Brock and Matthew Loiacano. Key and Holden both placed a team-best tied for third place, while Brock and Loiacano ended the tournament tied for ninth and 13th, respectively.

Key picked up his best finish of the year and was among the top-10 performers for the fourth time this season after posting a combined 215 (70-71-74). Holden recorded a 72-74-69 to also claim his best finish this season, which was his third top-10 performance as well.

Like Key and **Holden**, Brock had his best finish this year. He shot a 219 (72-73-74) for his best three-round score this season. His score included a first-round 72 that was his best total for a single round.

Loiacano led A-State on the final day, carding a 65 that was the lowest single-round score by an A-State player this season and moved him up 41 spots in the standings. He was among the four A-State players to collect a season-best finish, and his total 220 (78-77-65) tied his lowest three-round score of the year.

"This was a total team effort, but Matthew really came through for us this afternoon with a tremendous golf score," said Johnson.

Also competing for the Red Wolves, Seth Garner finished tied for 51st place with a 230 (71-78-81). A-State had an additional five players competing in the tournament as well to make up a second squad for the Red Wolves. The team of Alex Hewitt, Christian Helmbold, Drake Merritt, Brayden Brown and Landon Hearnnes finished 18th place with a 926 team score (324-304-298).

A-State returns to action April 21-23 at the Sun Belt Conference Championships in Saucier, Miss.

ARKANSAS STATE RESULTS

PLACE, NAME (RD 1-RD 2--TOTAL)

1, Arkansas State (A) (285-295-282--862)

T3, Easton Key (70-71-74--215)

T3, Chance Holden (72-74-69--215)

T9, Sean Brock (72-73-74--219)

T13, Matthew Loiacano (78-77-65--220) - moved up from tied for 54th

T51, Seth Garner (71-78-81--230)

18, Arkansas State (B) (324-304-298--926)

T43, Alex Hewitt (81-72-76--229)

T56, Drake Merritt (81-77-73--231)

T71, Christian Helmbold (79-79-76--234)

T92, Landon Hearnnes (89-77-73--239)

T102, Brayden Brown (83-78-83--244)

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Below is a press release courtesy of the Arkansas State University about Chance Holden -

2012-2013: As a junior, Holden played in 32 rounds at 11 tournaments...Shot a low score of 70 at the Jackrabbit Invitational and placed a season high T11 at the Mobile Bay Intercollegiate...He had three other top 25 finishes, T14 at the ASU

Fall Beach Classic, T14 at the ASU Red Wolves Intercollegiate and T22 at the Sun Belt Conference Championship...Holden held an average score of 75.8.

2011 - 2012: Played in six rounds and attended two tournamens (Sam Hall Intercollegiate Tournament & Amelia National Intercollegiate Tournament). Finished with a season high 55th placement in the Ameilia National Intercollegiate.

2010 - 2011: Played in nineteen rounds during seven tournaments...During those tournaments, Holden shot a low score of 72 two times, and also placed a season high rank of T29th at the Sun Belt Conference Championships...He held a an average score of 78.

High School: Dexter, Mo. native . . . All-state and all-conference selection and the district medalist at Dexter High School in 2009 . . . All-conference selection in 2007 and 2008, as well as the district medalist in 2008 . . . Over the last four years, Holden posted the lowest high school score in a match 33 times and claimed six tournament titles . . . Averaged 74.9 strokes per round in tournament play and was his high school's team medalist from 2007-09 . . . During 2009, Holden posted six top-10 and nine top-25 finishes in 11 tournaments played . . . Also played basketball as a freshman . . . President of the Dexter High School Honor's Society, which he was a member of since 2008.

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Article and photo courtesy of Arkansas State University Athletic Department

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