

# Basketball reaches Sweet 16, falls to champions

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The Texas Wesleyan men's basketball team advanced to the Sweet 16 of the NAIA National tournament and fell to Oklahoma Baptist University on March 19. Senior guard Jamel White led the Rams with 40 points in the 85-75 overtime loss.

"We competed at the highest level we played at all season and on the biggest stage," said Head Coach Terry Waldrop. "Playing Central Methodist University was a virtual home game in front of 8,000 people, which made it a tough environment, but our guys rose to the challenge and knocked off the Heart of America league champion."

The Rams eliminated Central Methodist 74-73 in the first round.

"Our team performed well in the tournament," White said. "The most a coach can ask for is that a team leaves everything on the court, and we did that for the most part. Some people thought we didn't have a chance, but we came together at the right time."

OBU was the third seed in the tournament with a 29-3 record. The Rams came out strong and led the Bison 20-5. The Rams continued to lead 61-58 with less than six minutes, but Bison A.J. Hawkins scored with 39 seconds left to play to tie the game at 67 and head into overtime.

The match was the 12th

overall between the Rams and Bison and the second in the NAIA national tournament.

"Every year is a different set of obstacles," Waldrop said. "We led the No. 1 team in the country for virtually the entire game and lost in overtime. There were so many little things that could have gone either way and changed the course of the game. It's the nature of college basketball, and that's what makes it so widely followed."

The 2010 NAIA National Championship title went to OBU after they defeated Azusa Pacific, 84-83.

According to Waldrop, he told the guys before the game that whoever won the Wesleyan vs. OBU game would play

for the national title.

"OBU is an all-around team who has a lot of pieces that fit together in the tournament," White said. "We didn't just lose to anyone, but the best team in the country."

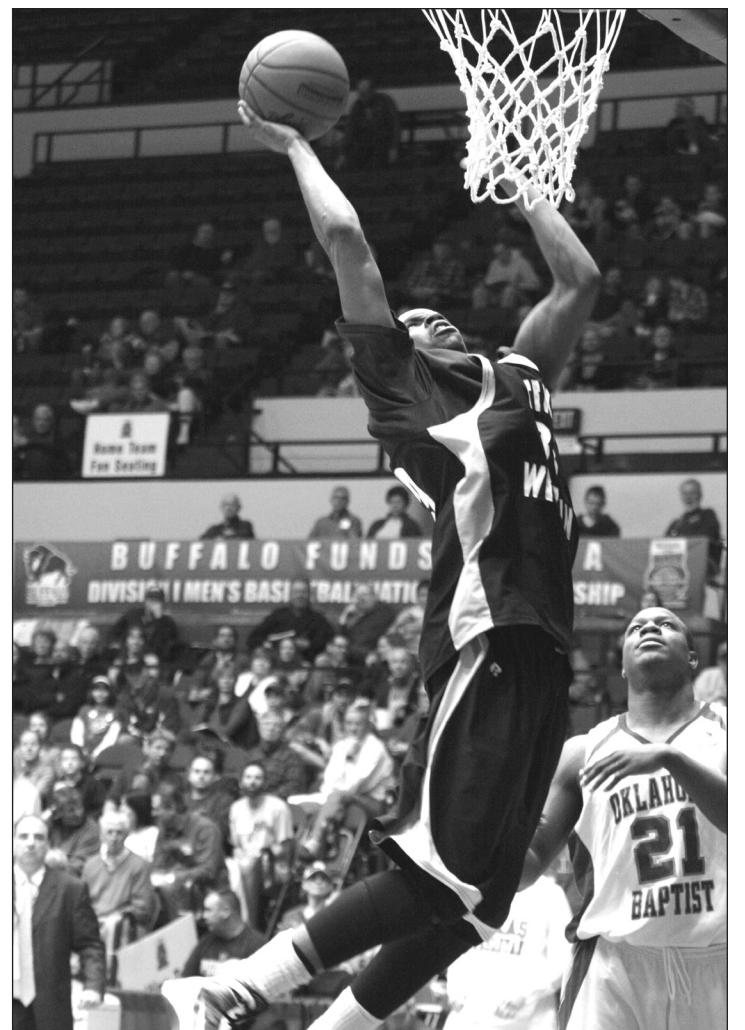
White was named NAIA Division I Men's Basketball Honorable Mention All-American and the 2010 Buffalo Funds-NAIA Division I Men's Basketball All-Tournament Team. Throughout the season White averaged 22.4 points per game and now holds the fourth highest scoring average in the 73 years of Wesleyan basketball.

"I owe it to my teammates because they helped me out a lot," White said. "They found me when I had open shots and made it possible for me to be open."

In the Sweet 16, White's tournament high of 40 points was just five points away from Wesleyan's single game scoring record set in 1965 by Irvin Rue.

"White gave one of the premiere performances I have ever seen in 24 years in both games, including 40 points against OBU," Waldrop said. "Hector Mukweyi turned in stellar performances in both games, especially against OBU in shutting down their 6-foot-9 Wake Forrest transfer Kevin Swinton."

The Rams finished the season with an overall record of 24-10 and their second con-



Courtesy of athletic department

Hector Mukweyi and the Rams forced Oklahoma Baptist to overtime.

secutive appearance at the Sweet 16. The Rams also won their third RRAC championship and hold a 14-1 home record, which led to a 40-5 record in the Sid Richardson Center in the last three seasons.

"With the injuries and adversities we battled, we came

together as a team and played our best when it counted the most, and that is the way this team will be remembered," Waldrop said. "We have become one of the premiere programs in the country, and we want to build on this foundation, and I feel as though we will."

## Lady Rams softball takes on rivals, looking to be No. 1

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The Texas Wesleyan softball team is off to a strong start and working for more.

The Lady Rams are currently in second place in RRAC standings with a 6-2 record.

"Second place right now is great, but we are still fighting for first," Head Coach Shannon Gower said.

Junior short stop Lateah Lucero was named RRAC softball player of the week March 8 to 14 and freshman Deanna Freeman was named pitcher of the week.

"We have a lot of versatility and depth on this team, which has helped us to do well this season," Gower said. "Lucero and Freeman have done an amazing job along with their teammates."

Lucero has a .643 batting average, and Freeman went 1-1 with a 2.92 ERA for the week. Lucero had six hits and three RBIs, which helped Freeman lead the Lady Rams to victory against Huston-Tillotson University.

"Lucero is a great spark plug for us when she gets on base because she is either going to steal or score," Gower

said. "Her speed and her contribution as our lead-off hitter have helped us set the tone in many situations, and Freeman has definitely proven she can help us on the mound."

Our Lady of the Lake University is ranked No. 1 with a RRAC record of 12-2. The Lady Rams have not played as many games as OLLU, but Gower said it can all change very soon.

"I am very excited to play OLLU because the coach is a former player of mine," Gower said. "I know the girls are also ready, and my expectations are high as always. It will come down to who shows up to play that day and who is more ready mentally and physically."

While the Lady Rams will fight to be No.1, they also have Northwood University trailing close behind. The Lady Rams are tied with Northwood in RRAC standings with the same conference record of 6-2.

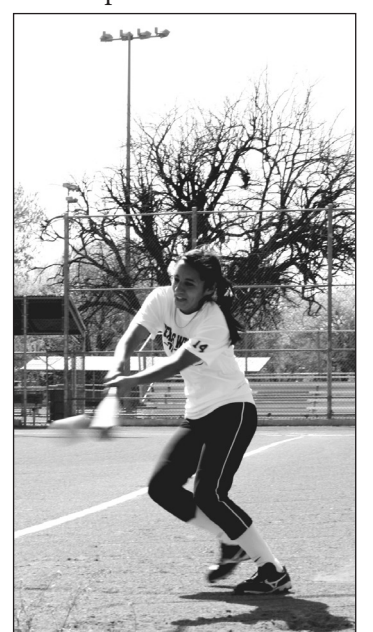
"Northwood has always been a rival for us, and, as a team, we know what they are capable of doing, but we also know what we are capable of doing," Gower said. "If we want to beat the strong teams,

then we have to play our game as a team. We will have to advance runners when needed and play strong defense as well as hit and pitch like we have been."

According to Lucero, the team is confident about defeating Northwood.

"If we play to our full potential and play like we all know we can, then we will beat them," she said.

The Lady Rams will face OLLU April 3 and Northwood April 6.



Rebecca Moore | Rambler Staff  
Lateah Lucero

### Upcoming Sports:

	Game	Time/Place
<b>Friday</b>	Baseball vs. Louisiana Tech University	6 p.m. Ruston, LA
<b>Saturday</b>	Softball vs. Our Lady of the Lake University	1 p.m. Sycamore Park
	Baseball vs. Louisiana Tech University	1 p.m. Ruston, LA
<b>Monday</b>	Golf at Diet Pepsi Shocker Classic	Wichita GC, Wichita, KS
<b>Tuesday</b>	Golf at Diet Pepsi Shocker Classic	Wichita GC, Wichita, KS
	Softball vs. Northwood Univ.	1 p.m. Sycamore Park
	Baseball vs. Abilene Christian University	3 p.m. LaGrave Field

### The Weekly Sports Quote

"...and Mark Blundell stops with his front wheels stationary."

Murray Walker  
sports announcer

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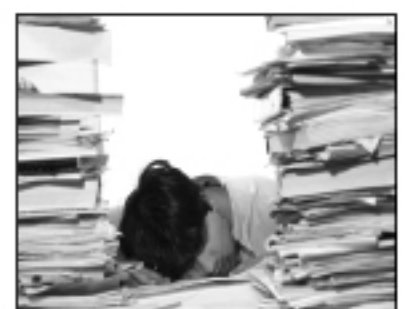
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