

Date: June 20, 2005
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Gum Named New Mulerider Baseball Coach

Magnolia, Ark. - Allen Gum, assistant baseball coach at Southern Arkansas University the past two years, has been named the new head coach of the Muleriders, according to athletics director Jay Adcox. Gum, who played at Southern Arkansas in 1990 and 1991, succeeds Mike Godfrey, who resigned as head coach at SAU after two years to spend more time with his family.

A native of Bentonville, Gum led the Muleriders in hitting as a junior outfielder with a .338 batting average, and fielded .975 as Southern Arkansas won the now defunct Arkansas Intercollegiate Conference (AIC) championship with a 20-4 record and posted a 27-23 overall record.

As a senior, Gum hit .328 and fielded .961 to help lead Southern Arkansas to their sixth consecutive AIC championship with a 20-4 record, and overall record of 44-15-1. The 1991 Muleriders won the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) Area 5 tournament by defeating the nation's number-one ranked team, the University of North Florida, in the championship game to advance to the NAIA College World Series in Lewiston, Idaho.

While playing for SAU his senior season, Gum was honored with the Charlie Berry Hustle Award. SAU now honors a Mulerider player each season with the Allen Gum Hustle Award. Before returning to Southern Arkansas, Gum served as assistant baseball coach at Sheridan High School for six years before moving to Batesville as the head baseball coach in 2000. Batesville had a 75-25 record in his three years with the Pioneers, and was the Class AAAA runner-up in 2002 and 2003.

Before transferring to Southern Arkansas, Gum played two years at Crowder (Junior) College in Neosho, Mo. He is a member of the Crowder College Baseball Hall of Fame. He is married to the former Shenna Calloway of Strong. The Gum's have a six-year old son, Tyler.

Godfrey was an assistant to the legendary Steve Goodheart, who guided the Southern Arkansas program for 23 years, from 1990 through 1992, as pitching coach. He was on the staff that guided SAU to the NAIA College World Series in 1991. In his two seasons as head coach, SAU had a 79-40 won-loss record. His 2004 team posted a 45-15 record, played in the Gulf South Conference Tournament championship game, placing runner-up to NCAA Division II national champion Delta State University, and competed for the first time in the NCAA South Central Region Tournament, again the runner-up to Delta State. His 2005 team posted a 34-25 record in spite of a series of injuries and academic casualties.

Godfrey, who has three young daughters, plans to return to high school coaching where he will have more time to spend with his family. He is married to the former Sandi Mudford of Fouke.

Steve Browning, a six-year member of the SAU baseball staff, has been promoted to full-time assistant to Gum. A two-year starter for the Muleriders in 1999-2000, he was co-captain of the 2000 team. Last season, Browning primarily worked with infielders, and was recruiting coordinator. In his tenure on the staff as a student assistant and graduate assistant, Southern Arkansas has ranked in the Top 20 in the nation in NCAA Division II baseball.

A native of Hensley, Browning is a graduate of Sheridan High School. He played two years at Crowder (Junior) College in Missouri before transferring to SAU. He is married to the former Brandy Nicholson of Strong.