Southern Arkansas University
2005 Lady Mulerider Cross Country Outlook

Southern Arkansas University women’s cross-country team has shown remarkable improvement each season since beginning competition as a member of the Gulf South Conference in 1995. In their first conference championship meet, the Lady Muleriders finished last in 12th place. The next season, 1996, SAU improved to 11th out of 13 teams. SAU was 10th in 1997 in a field of 14 teams, and in 1998, jumped to eighth place. In 1999, the team surged all the way to third place, the most improved team in the GSC meet. It was a remarkable showing in only four years.

In 2000, the Lady Muleriders started off with a bang by winning three of their first four meets. However, two key runners were injured and did not recover in time for the GSC championship, and the team finished 5th out of 15 teams.

In 2004, SAU was shorthanded due to the red-shirting of injured All-GSC Gaby Mendoza, and freshman Kendall Mears. Both will be returning for the 2005 season. Lindsay Musielak ran number one for the 2004 team, and will help lead the team in 2005.

SAU Women’s 2005 cross-country team:

- **Gaby Mendoza**, team captain, is a junior transfer from Sam Houston State University. Her hometown is Royse City, Tex., and she graduated from Mesquite High School. During Mendoza’s first year at SAU, she achieved First Team All-GSC honors in cross-country. She was named to the NCAA Division II 2003 Cross Country Coaches Association All-Academic Team, and was on the GSC Honor Roll. Her best time in the 5,000 is a school record 18:23. She also holds school records in the 1,500, and 6,000. Mendoza is majoring in Spanish.

- **Lindsay Musielak** is a junior from McKinney, Tex. She is a graduate of McKinney High School where she was a member of the National Honor Society, and ran track and cross-country with a best time of 12:13 in the two mile run. Musielak missed All-GSC cross country honors last year by two spots. She was also named to the GSC Honor Roll in 2003 and 2004. She was selected to the NCAA Division II 2004 Cross Country Coaches Association All-Academic Team. Her best time in the 5,000 is 19:15.

- **Ashley Weeks** is a junior from Bells, Tex. She graduated from Bells High School where she was an All-American cheerleader, captain of the basketball team, regional qualifier for four years in cross-country, and three years in track and field. Weeks is a good all-around athlete competing in cross-country, and in the 800-meter run, long jump, triple jump, and pole vault in track and field. She ran number six for the 2004 team. In 2003, Weeks was named to the GSC Academic Honor Roll.

- **Sharon Bishop** is a junior from Cabot, Ark. She graduated from Cabot High School where she ran track and cross-country, and played softball. Bishop ran number seven on last year’s team, and Coach Dan Veach looks for her to move up this year. In 2003, Bishop was named to the GSC Academic Honor Roll.

- **Bridget Garza** is a sophomore from Amarillo, Tex. She graduated from Amarillo High School where she was a state qualifier in cross country, and a member of the National Honor Society. Garza’s best time in the two-mile run in high school was 11:43. She ran number two on SAU’s 2004 team.

- **Elvia Villa** is a sophomore from Forney, Tex. She graduated from Forney High School where she was a member of the National Honor Society, and cross country team, posting a best time of 12:24. Villa was injured most of her senior year in high school, and was not fully recovered during her freshman year at SAU. She still managed to run number three on the team at the conference meet.

- **Crystal Clifford** is a sophomore from Redwater, Tex. She graduated from Redwater High School, where she was a member of the National Honor Society, and ran track and cross country. Clifford ran number six for SAU in the GSC meet last year. Coach Dan Veach looks for Clifford to break into the 21’s this season.

- **Amanda Byers** is a sophomore from Lake Dallas, Tex. She graduated from Lake Dallas High School where she was a member of FCA, and was a regional qualifier in cross country, and track and field. Byers was injured most of her freshman year. If injury-free, Coach Dan Veach looks for her to help the 2005 cross country team.

- **Kendall Mears** is a freshman red-shirt from Sims, Tex. She graduated from Redwater High School where she ran track and cross-country. During her red-shirt year, Mears has proven she can run with her top teammates. Coach Dan Veach looks for her to make a difference on the 2005 team.

- **Marija Kolarevic** is a freshman red-shirt from Bacina, Serbia & Montenegro. She runs the 5,000 with a best high school time of 21:25.

- **Julie DeBoer** is a freshman red-shirt from Vicksburg, Miss. She graduated from Vicksburg High School, and ran distance events with a best 5K time of 20:35.