

**THIS WEEK'S SCHEDULE**

**Friday February 17**

Prairie View A&M vs. Illinois Chicago  
New Orleans, La., 11 a.m. (DH)

Mississippi Valley State vs. North Dakota State  
Itta Bena, Miss., 1 p.m.

Alabama State vs. #8 Louisville  
Clearwater, Fla., 2 p.m.

Alabama A&M vs. Indiana Purdue-Fort Wayne  
Huntsville, Ala., 2 p.m.

Alcorn State vs. Grambling State  
New Orleans, La., 5 p.m.

Arkansas Pine Bluff vs. La Tech  
Ruston, La., 6 p.m.

Southern vs. New Orleans  
New Orleans, La., 6:00 p.m.

Texas Southern vs. Texas Rio Grand Valley  
Edinburgh, Texas, 7 p.m.

**Saturday February 18**

Mississippi Valley State vs. North Dakota State  
Itta Bena, Miss. 11 a.m. (DH)

Alabama A&M vs. Indiana Purdue-Fort Wayne  
Huntsville, Ala., 11 a.m. (DH)

Jackson State vs. Morehead State  
Jackson, Miss., 12 p.m. (DH)

Alabama State vs. Ball State  
Clearwater, Fla., 1 p.m.

Grambling State vs. Southern (\*)  
New Orleans, La., 6 p.m.

Alcorn State vs. Prairie View A&M (\*)  
New Orleans, La., 2 p.m.

Texas Southern vs. Texas Rio Grand Valley  
Edinburg, Texas, 12 p.m. (DH)

Arkansas Pine Bluff vs. La Tech  
Ruston, La., 2 p.m.

**Sunday February 19**

Alabama State vs. #25 Maryland  
Clearwater, Fla., 9 a.m.

Texas Southern vs/ Texas Rio Grand Valley  
Edinburg, Texas, 12 p.m.

Grambling State vs. Illinois-Chicago  
New Orleans, La. 12 p.m.

Southern vs. Alcorn State  
New Orleans, La., 3 p.m.

Mississippi Valley State vs North Dakota State  
Itta Bena, Miss. 1 p.m.

Prairie View A&M vs New Orleans  
New Orleans, La. 1 p.m.

Alabama A&M vs. Indiana Purdue-Fort Wayne  
Huntsville, Ala., 1 p.m.

Jackson State vs. Morehead State  
Jackson, Miss. 3 p.m.

Arkansas Pine Bluff vs. La Tech  
Ruston, La., 1 p.m.

**Monday February 20**

Alcorn State vs. Murray State  
Lorman, Miss. 12 p.m.

**Tuesday February 21**

Prairie View A&M vs. Incarnate Word  
Prairie View, Texas, 2 p.m.

Arkansas Pine Bluff vs. Central Arkansas  
Pine Bluff, Ark., 3 p.m.

Alabama A&M vs. South Alabama  
Mobile, Ala., 3 p.m.

Alabama State vs. UAB  
Birmingham, Ala., 4 p.m.

Grambling State vs. Oklahoma  
Norman, Okla., 6:30 p.m.

**Wednesday February 22**

Alabama A&M vs. South Alabama  
Mobile, Ala., 3 p.m.

Grambling State vs. Oklahoma  
Norman, Okla., 3:05 p.m.

Mississippi Valley State vs. Arkansas State  
State University, Ark., 4 p.m.

Jackson State vs. New Orleans  
New Orleans, La., 6 p.m.

Alabama State vs. UAB  
Montgomery, Ala., 6 p.m.

(\*)= Games to be aired on MLB Network

**2016 CONFERENCE & OVERALL STANDINGS**

EASTERN TEAM	SWAC			OVERALL			L10
	W	L	PCT	W	L	PCT	
Alabama State	24	0	1.000	38	17	.691	9-1
Jackson State	14	10	.583	34	26	.567	8-2
Alcorn State	10	14	.417	16	36	.308	1-9
Alabama A&M	8	16	.333	13	44	.228	1-9
Mississippi Valley	4	20	.167	6	36	.143	0-10

  

WESTERN TEAM	SWAC			OVERALL			L10
	W	L	PCT	W	L	PCT	
Arkansas-Pine Bluff	16	5	.762	22	25	.468	6-4
Grambling State	15	8	.652	22	27	.449	3-7
Texas Southern	13	10	.565	23	27	.460	5-5
Southern	6	14	.300	15	31	.326	1-9
Prairie View A&M	5	18	.217	10	32	.238	1-9

**NEWS & NOTES**

- Alabama State looks to capture its second consecutive conference title in 2017, after going a perfect 24-0 in conference play leading to the first SWAC Baseball Tournament title in program history last season in 2016.
- Four SWAC teams will be in taking part in the MLB Urban Youth Invitational on opening weekend. Alcorn State, Grambling State, Prairie View A&M and Southern all will be making the trip to New Orleans, La. to participate
- Mississippi Valley State will begin its 2017 campaign with a three game slate against North Dakota State
- Alabama State (Eastern) and Arkansas Pine Bluff (Western) have been pegged as the preseason favorites to win their respective divisions. Each won its division a season ago.
- Jackson State will begin its 2017 campaign against Morehead State. The two programs did not square off in 2016.
- Two opening weekend games featuring SWAC schools will be aired live on the MLB Network on Saturday Feb 18. Alcorn State vs. Prairie View A&M at 2 p.m., and Grambling State vs. Southern at 6 p.m.
- For the fourth year, the 2017 Southwestern Athletic Conference baseball tournament will take place May 17-21 in New Orleans, La., at the MLB Urban Youth Academy's Wesley Barrow Stadium

**Follow the SWAC**



**2017 PRESEASON ALL-CONFERENCE AWARDS AND TEAMS**

**Player of the Year**

Dondrayas Harris, Outfielder, Southern

**Pitcher of the Year**

Issac O’Bear, Pitcher, Grambling State

**Defensive Player of the Year**

Wesley Drain, Infielder, Grambling State

**First Team**

1B Chris Biocic (Alabama State)  
 2B Eriq White (Alabama State)  
 3B Ray Hernandez (Alabama State)  
 SS Cornelius Copeland (Jackson State)  
 OF Carlos Ocasio (Alabama State)  
 OF Dondrayas Harris (Southern)  
 OF Yamil Pagan (Alabama State)  
 OF CJ Newsome (Jackson State)  
 C Hunter Allen (Alabama State)  
 DH Diandre Amion (Alabama State)  
 SP Tyler Howe (Alabama State)  
 SP Issac O’Bear (Grambling State)  
 SP Miguel Yrigoyen (Jackson State)  
 RP Brandon Marsonnek (Alabama A&M)

**Second Team**

1B Jesus Santana (Jackson State)  
 2B Wallace Rios (Alcorn State)  
 2B Richard Alamo (Texas Southern)  
 3B Daniel Barnett (Grambling State)  
 SS Wesley Drain (Grambling State)  
 OF Kamren Dukes (Texas Southern)  
 OF Jaqueese Moore (Arkansas Pine Bluff)  
 OF Bryce Brown (Jackson State)  
 OF Cody Den Beste (Prairie View A&M)  
 C Johan Majica (Grambling State)  
 DH Julian Jones (Arkansas Pine Bluff)  
 DH Sam Campbell (Jackson State)  
 SP Seth Oliver (Texas Southern)  
 SP Brandon Caples (Alabama State)  
 RP Austin Bizzle (Alabama State)

**2016 ALL SWAC POSTSEASON BASEBALL TEAMS**

**Player of the Year**

Carlos Ocasio, Alabama State

**Pitcher of the Year**

Joseph Camacho, Alabama State

**First Team**

C – Hunter Allen, Alabama State  
 1B –Chris Biocic, Alabama State  
 2B - Eriq White, Alabama State  
 3B – Ray Hernandez, Alabama State  
 SS–Cornelius Copeland, Jackson State  
 OF – Carlos Ocasio, Alabama State  
 OF – Yamil Pagan, Alabama State  
 OF – CJ Newsome, Jackson State  
 DH – Diandre Amion, Alabama State  
 SP – Joseph Camacho, Alabama State  
 SP – Tyler Howe, Alabama State  
 RP – Robert Pearson, Texas Southern  
 RP – Skyler Henson, Ark.-Pine Bluff

**Second Team**

C – Carlos Diaz, Jackson State  
 1B – Jesus Santana, Jackson State  
 2B – Larry Barraza, Grambling State  
 3B – Daniel Barnett, Grambling State  
 SS- Wesley Drain, Grambling State  
 OF – Dondrayas Harris, Southern  
 OF – Angel Peguero, Grambling State  
 OF – Bryce Brown, Jackson State  
 DH – Cedric Bell, Alcorn State  
 DH – Ty Russell, Alabama A&M  
 SP – Josh Burchell, Alabama A&M  
 SP – Miguel Yrigoyen, Jackson State  
 SP – Issac O’Bear, Grambling State  
 RP – Creighton Hoover, Grambling St.  
 RP – Brandon Marsonnek, Alabama A&M

**SWAC BASEBALL HEAD COACHING RECORDS**

**Alabama A&M**

Mitch Hill - Record at AAMU 60-107 (2 seasons) / Overall 60-107 (2 seasons)

**Alabama State**

Jose’ Vazquez Record at ALST 0-0 (1st season) / Overall 0-0 (1st season)

**Alcorn State**

Bretton Richardson - Record at ALCN 17-38 (1st season) / Overall 17-38 (1st season)

**Grambling State**

James Cooper - Record at GRAM 135-212 (6 seasons) / Overall 135-212 (6 seasons)

**Jackson State**

Omar Johnson - Record at JKST 334-224 (9 seasons) / Overall 334-224 (9 seasons)

**Mississippi Valley State**

Aaron Stevens - Record at MVSU 13-72-1 (1 season) / Overall 13-72-1 (1 season)

**Prairie View A&M**

Auntwan Riggs - Record at PVAM 10-32 (first season) / Overall 10-32 (first season)

**Southern**

Roger Cadore - Record at SUBR 892-567-1 (31 seasons) / 892-567-1 (31 seasons)

**Texas Southern**

Michael Robertson - Record at TXSO 198-211 (7 season) / 364-382 (13 seasons)

**Arkansas-Pine Bluff**

Carlos James - Record at UAPB 108-172-1 (5 seasons) / Overall 135-246-2 (8 seasons)

**SWAC BASEBALL HOME STADIUMS**

<b>Team</b>	<b>Stadium/Field</b>
Alabama A&M.....	Bulldog Field
Alabama State.....	Wheeler-Watkins Baseball Complex
Alcorn State.....	Foster Field at McGowan Stadium
Grambling State.....	Wilbert Ellis Field
Jackson State.....	Robert “Bob” Braddy Field
Mississippi Valley State.....	Magnolia Field
Prairie View A&M.....	Prairie View A&M Baseball Stadium
Southern.....	Lee-Hines Field
Texas Southern.....	MacGregor Park
Arkansas-Pine Bluff.....	Torri Hunter Baseball Complex

**2017 PREDICTED ORDER OF FINISH**

<b>East Division</b>	<b>Points (1st)</b>
Alabama State	74 (14)
Jackson State	58 (1)
Alcorn State	41
Alabama A&M	35
Mississippi Valley	17
<b>West Division</b>	<b>Points (1st)</b>
Arkansas Pine Bluff	58 (7)
Grambling State	53 (3)
Texas Southern	53 (3)
Southern	37 (1)
Prairie View A&M	24

**PLAYERS OF THE WEEK**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Player</b>	<b>Honor</b>
1	TBA TBA	TBA TBA
2	TBA TBA	TBA TBA
3	TBA TBA	TBA TBA
4	TBA TBA	TBA TBA
5	TBA TBA	TBA TBA
6	TBA TBA	TBA TBA
7	TBA TBA	TBA TBA
8	TBA TBA	TBA TBA
9	TBA TBA	TBA TBA
10	TBA TBA	TBA TBA
11	TBA TBA	TBA TBA
12	TBA TBA	TBA TBA

**2017 SWAC BASEBALL TOURNAMENT**

The 2017 Southwestern Athletic Conference baseball tournament takes place May 17-21 in New Orleans, La. at the MLB Urban Youth Academy's Wesley Barrow Stadium. This is the fourth year the tournament is being held at the Urban Youth Academy.

The top four finishers from the Eastern and Western Divisions qualify for the SWAC baseball tournament. The team with the highest winning percentage during conference play is the regular season divisional champion and receives the number one seed.

Last year, Alabama State faced Texas Southern in the championship game. The Hornets edged the Tigers 7-5 to capture the first baseball championship in program history. The 2017 baseball championship game will be broadcast live on ESPNU.

**SWAC CHAMPIONSHIP HISTORY**

**Number of Championships**

- Southern** - 26 (2009, 2005, 2001-03, 1996-99, 1991-93, 1987-88, 1981, 1979, 1974-76, 1972, 1970, 1969, 1965-66, 1959-60)
- Jackson State** - 16 (2013-14, 2000, 1993-95, 1989-90, 1986, 1982, 1980, 1977-78, 1973, 1971, 1968)
- Grambling State** - 9 (2010, 1983-85, 1967, 1961-64)
- Texas Southern** - 3 (2015, 2008, 2004)
- Prairie View A&M** - 3 (2012, 2006-07)
- Alabama State** - 1 (2016)
- Alcorn State** - 1 (2011)

**Longest Championship Streaks**

- 4** - Southern (1996-99), Grambling State (1961-64)
- 3** - Southern (2001-03), Jackson State (1993-95), Southern (1991-93), Grambling State (1983-85), Southern (1974-76)

**Championships by Decade**

- 2010's** - 2 - Jackson State; 1 - Texas Southern, Prairie View A&M, Alcorn State, Grambling State, Alabama State
- 2000's** - 5 - Southern; 2 - Texas Southern, Prairie View A&M; 1 - Jackson State
- 1990's** - 7 - Southern; 4 - Jackson State
- 1980's** - 4 - Jackson State; 3 - Grambling State, Southern
- 1970's** - 6 - Southern; 4 - Jackson State
- 1960's** - 5 - Grambling State; 4 - Southern; 1 - Jackson State
- 1950's** - 1 - Southern

**SWAC Tournament History**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Champion</b>
2016	Alabama State
2015	Texas Southern
2014	Jackson State
2013	Jackson State
2012	Prairie View A&M
2011	Alcorn State
2010	Grambling State
2009	Southern
2008	Texas Southern
2007	Prairie View A&M
2006	Prairie View A&M
2005	Southern
2004	Texas Southern
2003	Southern
2002	Southern
2001	Southern
2000	Jackson State
1999	Southern
1998	Southern
1997	Southern
1996	Southern
1995	Jackson State
1994	Jackson State
1993	Jackson State/
1992	Southern
1991	Southern
1990	Jackson State
1989	Jackson State
1988	Southern
1987	Southern
1986	Jackson State
1985	Grambling State
1984	Grambling State
1983	Grambling State
1982	Jackson State
1981	Southern
1980	Jackson State
1979	Southern
1978	Jackson State
1977	Jackson State
1976	Southern
1975	Southern
1974	Southern
1973	Jackson State
1972	Southern
1971	Jackson State
1970	Southern
1969	Southern
1968	Jackson State
1967	Grambling State
1966	Southern
1965	Southern
1964	Grambling State
1963	Grambling State
1962	Grambling State
1961	Grambling State
1960	Southern
1959	Southern

**MEDIA CONTACTS**

**Southwestern Athletic Conference (SWAC)**  
 Nate Stevens  
 Email: n.stevens@swac.org  
 Office: 205-205-6383  
 Cell: 205-568-6383

**WEST DIVISION**

**Grambling State (GRAM)**  
 J.C. Gafford  
 Email: gaffordj@gram.edu  
 Phone: 318-274-6562  
 Website: gsutigers.com

**Prairie View A&M (PVAM)**  
 Duane Lewis  
 Email: dclewis@pvam.edu  
 Phone: 936-261-9106  
 Website: pvpanthers.com

**Southern (SUBR)**  
 Christopher Jones  
 Email: jones\_chrisk@yahoo.com  
 Phone: 225-771-3791  
 Website: gojagsports.com

**Texas Southern (TXSO)**  
 Alan Wiederhold  
 Email: wawiederhold@pvamu.edu  
 Phone: 713-313-6829  
 Website: tsuball.com

**Arkansas Pine-Bluff (UAPB)**  
 Ronnie Johnson  
 Email: ronnie.johnson74@yahoo.com  
 Phone: 870-284-7754  
 Website: uapblionsroar.com

**EAST DIVISION**

**Alabama A&M (AAMU)**  
 Bud McLaughlin  
 Email: aamusportsinfo@yahoo.com  
 Phone: 256-372-4005  
 Website: aamusports.com

**Alabama State (ALST)**  
 Brian Howard  
 Email: bjhoward@alasu.edu  
 Phone: 334-229-5217  
 Website: bamastatesports.com

**Alcorn State (ALCN)**  
 Robbie Kleinmuntz  
 Email: rkleinmuntz@alcorn.edu  
 Phone: 601-877-6501  
 Website: alcornsports.com

**Jackson State (JKST)**  
 Jenae Jones  
 Email: emily.j.jones@jsums.edu  
 Phone: 601-979-5859  
 Website: jsutigers.com

**Mississippi Valley (MVSU)**  
 LaMonica Scott  
 Email: lamonica.scott@mvsu.com  
 Phone: 662-254-8378  
 Website: mvsusports.com

## PRESEASON INDIVIDUAL AWARDS

**Player of the Year**

Dondrayas Harris  
(Southern)

The senior and Panama City, Fla. native hit .346 last season, while racking up 47 hits, and totaling 30 RBIs.

**Pitcher of the Year**

Issac O'Bear  
(Grambling State)

O'Bear, a senior, went 7-3 on the mound for the Tigers last season, while striking out 61 batters and totaling a 4.85 ERA in 2016.

**Defensive Player of the Year**

Wesley Drain  
(Grambling State)

The senior had a .263 batting average a season ago, while totaling 50 hits and 31 RBIs for the Tigers

## TEAM INDIVIDUAL RETURNING LEADERS (2016)

**Alabama A&M Bulldogs (13-44, 8-16 SWAC)**

BA: Eric Yarbrough  
.344 (11-for-32)  
RBI: JT O'Reel, 26  
HR: Cornelious Woods 5  
Wins: Brandon Marsonok 4

**Jackson State (34-26, 14-10 SWAC)**

BA: Cornelius Copeland  
.422 (79-for-187)  
RBI: Jesus Santana 67  
HR: Jesus Santana 17  
Wins: Miguel Yrigoyen 9

**Southern (14-32, 6-14 SWAC)**

BA: Dondrayas Harris  
.346 (47-for-136)  
RBI: Dondrayas Harris 30  
HR: Troy Lewis 4  
Wins: J'Marcus George  
Daniel Franklin 4

**Alabama State Hornets (38-17, 24-0 SWAC)**

BA: Eriq White  
.346 (66-for-191)  
RBI: Carlos Ocasio 60  
HR: Carlos Ocasio 13  
Wins: Tyler Howe 10

**Mississippi Valley State (6-36, 5-10 SWAC)**

BA: Arrington Smith  
.299 (44-for-147)  
RBI: Arrington Smith 19  
HR: Arrington Smith 3  
Wins: Arrington Smith 3

**Texas Southern (24-26, 13-10 SWAC)**

BA: Richard Alamo .346  
(37-for-107)  
RBI: Olajide Oloruntimiehin  
39  
HR: Olajide Oloruntimiehin  
7  
Wins: Ryan Rios 7

**Alcorn State Braves (16-36, 10-14 SWAC)**

BA: Cedric Bell  
340 (35-for-103)  
RBI: Cedric Bell 29  
  
HR: Three Players with 4  
Wins: Three Players with 3

**Prairie View A&M (10-32, 5-18 SWAC)**

BA: Darrien Williams  
.350 (28-for-80)  
RBI: Angel Avalos  
Shannon Washington  
30  
HR: Angel Avalos 6  
Wins: Three different players  
2

**Arkansas-Pine Bluff (22-25, 16-5 SWAC)**

BA: Aderly Perez  
.353 (48-for-140)  
RBI: Jaqueese Moore 30  
HR: Julian Jones 5  
Wins: CJ Lewington 2

**Grambling State (22-27, 15-8 SWAC)**

BA: Daniel Barnett  
.408 (75-for-148)  
RBI: Daniel Barnett 60  
HR: Daniel Barnett 9  
Wins: Issac O'Bear 7

## SEASON PREVIEWS



**2016 Record and Results:** (13-44, 6-16 SWAC) Fourth in East Division

**Key Returners:** Brandon Marsonек, JT O'Reel, Cornelius Woods

**Key Losses:** Josh Burchell, Nolan Ramsey

A lot of new faces will be in the Alabama A&M clubhouse this season, as head coach Mitch Hill welcomes 23 new names to the roster.

The Bulldogs will be looking to build off its 13-44 finish a season ago. Hill will need to find a way for the team to come together quickly with so many new faces in the lineup. The Bulldogs will be looking to their nine returning players from last season to provide leadership and comradery for the new group.

Alabama A&M will look to J.T. O'Reel to lead them in the batters box this season. O'Reel tallied 55 hits, and 25 RBIs, while compiling a .332 batting average a season ago.

On the mound, the Bulldogs will look to preseason All SWAC first team pitcher Brandon Marsonек to lead its pitching rotation this season. Last season, Marsonек was tied for first on the Bulldogs with four wins, while striking out 89 batters.

Hill will also need to look to his 23 newcomers to find some more consistent pitching behind Marsonек. If some of the newcomers can step up on the mound, it will help the Bulldogs improve on its 13-44 record a season ago.



**2016 Record and Result:** 38-17 (24-0 SWAC) Won SWAC Baseball Tournament

**Key Returners:** Carlos Ocasio, Eriq White, Yamil Pagan, Tyler Howe

**Key Losses:** Dylan Cooper, Joseph Camacho

The Alabama State Hornets look to continue to build off its historic success last season, going a perfect 24-0 in Southwestern Athletic Conference play leading to an Eastern Division and SWAC Baseball Tournament Titles.

The Hornets had one of the best seasons in SWAC baseball history a year ago. First year head coach Jose' Vazquez, who replaces Mervyl Melenez, welcomes back a host of players from last year's squad. Vazquez should have no problem leading the Hornets to contend for another SWAC title this season.

Leading the Hornets on the mound this season is Tyler Howe. Howe, a preseason first team All-SWAC selection at starting pitcher, was tied for first on the Hornets in wins with a 10-3 record and was second on the team with a 1.69 ERA last season.

2016 SWAC Player of the Year and Hitter of the Year Carlos Ocasio returns to lead the Hornets' offense in 2017. Ocasio racked up 69 hits, tallied 60 RBIs, and had a .330 batting average a last season. The Hornets return three of their top five bats from a year ago. Preseason first team All-SWAC selections Yamil Pagan (70hits, 48RBI, .333avg.) and Eriq White (66h, 41RBI, .346 avg.) also are returning for the Hornets for what should be one of the league's top offenses.

**2016 Record and Results:** 16-36 (10-14 SWAC) Third in East Division

**Key Returners:** Walter Vives, Wallace Rios Jimenez

**Key Losses:** Cedric Bell, Moses Charles, George Helbig

The Alcorn State Braves will look build off its 16-36 record from a year ago. The Braves will also look to improve off its third place eastern division finish in 2017.

Head coach Bretton Richardson, entering his second season at the helm of the Braves, will look to the replace the production of 2016 Second Team All SWAC DH Cedric Bell in the batter's box. Richardson will look to the leadership of his nine seniors to lead the Braves in 2017.

Leading the Braves in the batter's box this season will be Walter Vives and preseason All SWAC second team selection Wallace Rios Jimenez. Each hit over .300 last season, Vives hit .331 and Jimenez hit .307 in 2016. Vives also racked up 41 hits including 10 doubles and batten in 13 runs. Jimenez collected 63 hits with 81 RBIs.

On the mound, the Braves' pitching rotation will include junior Jahborus Smith and seniors Regynold Johnson and Austin-Willie Greene. Smith and Johnson recorded three wins apiece last year, while Willis-Greene is a transfer from St. Catharine College where he earned All-Conference accolades.



## SEASON PREVIEWS



JACKSON STATE

**2016 Record and Results:** 34-26 (14-10 SWAC) Second in East Division

**Key Returners:** Cornelius Copeland, Miguel Yrigoyen, CJ Newsome, Jesus Santana

**Key Losses:** Jevon Jacobs, Carlos Diaz

The Jackson State Tigers will look to once again contend for the SWAC regular season and conference titles in 2017. The Tigers return a host of players from last year's squad, making JSU a strong bet to be right in the mix for the SWAC Baseball Tournament title in 2017.

Head coach Omar Johnson enters his eleventh season at the helm of the JSU baseball team. Johnson will look to continue the success that the program had last season, finishing second in the eastern division behind Alabama State.

Jackson State returns a number of its top players from a season ago. Among them is senior infielder, and preseason first team All SWAC selection at shortstop, Cornelius Copeland. Last season, Copeland led the Tigers and the SWAC in batting average (.422) and hits with 79. Copeland also drove in 36 runs, which ranked fourth on Jackson State last season.

Preseason All SWAC second team first baseman Jesus Santana also returns for JSU lineup this season. Santana led the conference with 17 long balls in 2016. Santana also tallied 67 RBIs for the Tigers. Preseason All SWAC first team outfielder, CJ Newsome will also look to help bolster the Tigers' offense this season. Last season, Newsome compiled 74 hits, including 14 doubles, and a .351 batting average which was fifth best on the Tigers.

On the mound, Johnson will look to ace and preseason All SWAC first team starting pitcher Miguel Yrigoyen to lead the pitching rotation for the Tigers. Yrigoyen led the Tigers with nine wins last season, while appearing in 16 games. The senior right hander also led JSU with 98 strikeouts and had a 4.61 ERA last season.

MISSISSIPPI  
VALLEY STATE

**2016 Record and Results:** 6-36 (4-20 SWAC) Fifth in East Division

**Key Returners:** Arrington Smith, Alex Bravo

**Key Losses:** Gabriel Waddell, Drew Wheeler

The Mississippi Valley State Delta Devils will look to improve on a season that did not go the way that it would like a year ago in 2017.

Head coach Aaron Stevens will welcome many new faces to the team this season. Stevens will need to need to replace the production of some key pieces from a season ago, as the Delta Devils are without four of its top five bats from 2016.

Among those returning is top hitter Arrington Smith. Last season, Smith had a team best .299 batting average, while having 44 hits, and 19 RBIs for the Delta Devils. Alex Bravo will also need to be productive in the lineup for the Delta Devils. Last season, Bravo recorded 27 hits including five doubles.

On the mound, Stevens will look to Smith, the club's most experienced arm to lead its pitching rotation. Smith made 12 starts for the Delta Devils last season, totaling 52 strikeouts.

Beyond Smith, Stevens will be looking for someone else to step up and serve as a compliment to Smith in the pitching rotation. Pitching was not MVSU's best asset last season, and another arm to compliment Smith will help the Delta Devils improve in 2017.

GRAMBLING  
STATE

**2016 Record and Results:** 22-27 (15-8 SWAC) Second in West Division

**Key Returners:** Daniel Barnett, Wesley Drain, Issac O'Bear

**Key Losses:** Larry Barraza, Angel Peguero

After finishing the 2016 season with the second best record in conference play at 15-8, the Grambling State Tigers will look to carry that momentum into 2017.

Tigers head coach James Cooper welcomes back a number of key pieces from last year's team. Cooper will look to improve on the Tigers' second place finish a year ago, and win the west division in 2017.

Top hitter and preseason second team All SWAC selection at third base, Daniel Barnett returns to lead the Tigers offense this season. Last season, Barnett led the Tigers and was third in the SWAC overall with a .408 batting average. Barnett also led the SWAC with a .647 slugging percentage and was second in the conference in on base percentage at .504.

Preseason SWAC defensive player of the year, Wesley Drain also looks to contribute to the Tigers' lineup this season. Drain had 50 hits, and 31 RBIs while having a batting average of .263 in 2016.

Preseason SWAC pitcher of the year, Issac O'Bear will lead the Tigers' rotation this season. O'Bear led the Tigers with a 7-3 record, while striking out 61 batters and having a 4.85 ERA last season.

## SEASON PREVIEWS



PRAIRIE VIEW A&amp;M

**2016 Record and Results:** 10-32 (5-18 SWAC) Fifth in West Division

**Key Returners:** Darrien Williams, Cody Den Beste, Charles Philpott

**Key Losses:** Shannon Washington, Angel Avalos

The Prairie View A&M Panthers will look to take a step forward this season, as the Panthers welcome back many players from last year's team.

Head coach Auntwan Riggins, who enters his second season with the Panthers, looks to continue to build continuity with the Prairie View baseball program, as he welcomes back a mix of veterans and new faces in 2017. PVAM seems poised to improve on last year's 10-32 mark this season.

Junior and preseason second team All-SWAC outfielder Cody Den Beste returns for the Panthers this season and will again look to contribute offensively. Den Beste, who hails from Wilmington, Calif., compiled a .287 batting average while racking up 35 hits and 21 RBIs in 2016. The Panthers will look to Den Beste to have similar production this season.

On the mound, Prairie View's pitching rotation will be led by Missouri City, Texas native Charles Philpott. Philpott is one of the most experienced pitchers on the roster for Riggins. The senior right hander made 11 starts for the Panthers a season ago, and they will look to get a similar workload from him this season.

Junior and Bryan, Texas native Darrien Williams, who matched Philpott with 11 starts on the mound, is slated to exclusively pitch this season and bring stability to the rotation.



SOUTHERN

**2016 Record and Results:** 14-32 (6-14 SWAC) Fourth in West Division

**Key returners:** Dondrayas Harris, Troy Lewis, Daniel Franklin

**Key Losses:** Jose DeLa Torres, Mateo Robinson

Southern returns arguably the most players of any team in the Southwestern Athletic Conference this season. The Jaguars have just six seniors on the roster in 2017.

Head coach Roger Cador will look to his young group to improve on its 14-32 record from a year ago. With so little seniors, Cador will look to a young nucleus of players to step up and lead the Jaguars in 2017.

Of those six seniors, preseason SWAC player of the year Dondrayas Harris is sure to be a key contributor for the Jaguars in 2017. Harris was Southern's top bat last season, totaling 47 hits, including 11 doubles and racking up 30 RBIs, all while having a .346 batting average. Fellow senior Troy Lewis will also be a key piece to the Jaguars' lineup. Lewis had a .330 batting average while totaling 53 hits, including 11 doubles and 78 RBIs for the Jaguars' offense a year ago.

On the mound, Cador will look to junior right hander Daniel Franklin to lead the Jaguars' pitching rotation. Franklin made 11 starts for the Jaguars a season ago, while throwing a team best 4.19 ERA with 49 strikeouts.

TEXAS  
SOUTHERN

**2016 Record and Results:** 24-26 (13-10 SWAC) SWAC Baseball Tournament Finalist

**Key Returners:** Richard Alamo, Gerrick Jimenez

**Key Losses:** Chris Scroggins, Larry Romero, Javier Valdez

Texas Southern will look to build off its runner up finish in the SWAC Baseball Tournament in 2017, with a number of key pieces returning.

Head coach Michael Robertson will look to lead TSU to its second conference title in three years, and third straight SWAC Baseball Tournament finals appearance.

Among those returning for Robertson is top bat Richard Alamo. The preseason second team All SWAC selection will look to once again lead the Tigers offense. Last season, Alamo totaled 37 hits, had 17 RBIs and led TSU with a .346 batting average in 2016. Gerrick Jimenez will also look to contribute to TSU's offense this season. Jimenez tallied 43 hits, 31 RBIs and had a .329 batting average for the Tigers last season.

Robertson will need to look to replace some key arms if the Tigers want to make another run in the SWAC Baseball Tournament. Notably, Larry Romero and Ryan Rios, who finished one and two on the team in wins last season. TSU will need a member form its pitching rotation to step up if it looks to replace the production of its top two arms from a season ago.

**2016 Record and Results:** 22-25 (16-5 SWAC) Won West Division

**Key Returners:** Aderly Perez, Julian Jones, Joshua Williams

**Key Losses:** Chris Phelps, Anthony Bowmaker

The Arkansas Pine Bluff Golden Lions will look for the same type of success that it saw a season ago. The Lions went 16-5 in SWAC play to win the West division in 2016.

Head coach Carlos James enters his seventh season at the helm of the Lions baseball program. James will look to his core of veteran leadership to help lead the Lions offense once again this season.

UAPB returns three of its top four bats from a season ago. Top hitter, senior Aderly Perez returns to lead the offensive attack for the Lions in 2017. Last season, Perez had 54 hits, 32 RBIs and a .353 batting average. Preseason second team All SWAC selection, sophomore Julian Jones also returns for UAPB this season. Last season, Jones totaled 30 hits while batting in 24 runs, while having a .340 batting average.

On the mound, James will need to replace his two most experienced arms from a season ago. Anthony Bowmaker, who led the team with a 6-2 record and Skyler Henson, who led the Lions with 23 appearances, have both moved on, and James will need to look to his returning arms to fill the void left by those two pitchers.

ARKANSAS PINE  
BLUFF