

# ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY

***ATHLETICS***

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## **ARKANSAS TECH MEN'S BASKETBALL EARNS NO. 4 SEED IN NCAA DIVISION II SOUTH REGION; FACES BENEDICT IN SATURDAY'S FIRST ROUND**

**RUSSELLVILLE, Arkansas** – Thanks to its 79-66 win in Sunday's Gulf South Conference Tournament Championship Game, the Arkansas Tech Men's Basketball team earned a No. 4 seed in next week's NCAA Division II South Regional Tournament. The berth in the NCAA Tournament is Tech's first at the Division II level.

Tech will open the NCAA South Regional Tournament against fifth-seeded Benedict in Saturday's first round at the Jenkins Fieldhouse in Lakeland, Fla. The tournament will be hosted by Florida Southern, as the Moccasins earned the No. 1 seed in the South Region after picking up a 77-76 overtime win in the championship game of the Sunshine State Conference on Sunday afternoon. It is the second consecutive year that Florida Southern is hosting the Men's South Regional Tournament.

"We excited to get the chance to play in the NCAA Tournament," Wonder Boys Head Coach **Mark Downey** said. "It is like a dream come true. I couldn't be more proud for a group of young men, our institution and our administration."

The tournament will begin with four quarterfinals games on Saturday, March 14, with the regional semifinals scheduled for Sunday, March 15 and the championship game slated for Tuesday, March 17. The winner of the South Region advances to the Elite Eight on March 25-28 at the MassMutual Center in Springfield, Mass. As of late Sunday night, game times for Saturday's first round games hadn't been determined.

Joining Tech, Benedict and Florida Southern in the eight-team South Region field are No. 2 seeded Christian Brothers (22-6), No. 3 seeded Claflin (24-3), No. 6 seeded Valdosta State (24-6), No. 7 seeded Delta State (21-8) and No. 8 seeded LeMoyne-Owen (17-13).

Benedict, Tech's first round opponent, enters the NCAA South Regional sporting a 24-5 overall record and a No. 14 ranking in the latest NABC/NCAA D-II Coaches' Top 25 Poll. Benedict finished second in the regular season SIAC standings and was upset in the semifinals of the SIAC Tournament by Lane College, 64-63. Last season, Benedict lost 97-75 in the South Region championship game to North Alabama and is making its fifth consecutive appearance in the NCAA D-II Tournament.

Meanwhile, Tech is making its first-ever appearance in the NCAA Tournament. The Wonder Boys are 2-3 against teams in this year's South Regional and is 3-3 against teams that qualified for this year's NCAA D-II Tournament.

**-- Tech Athletics --**