GEORGIA STATE PANTHERS



OUTLOOK

### 2007-08 **ROSTER**



**JIHAD ALI** G • 6-4, 185 • Fr. Atlanta, Ga.



JUSTIN BILLINGSLEA F • 6-8, 235 • Sr. Litha Springs, Ga. **32** 



**RASHAD CHASE** F • 6-7, 235 • Jr. **15** Atlanta, Ga.



DEVEN DICKERSON
C • 6-9, 260 • Sr.
Richmond, Va.



JOE DUKES G • 6-1, 175 • Jr. Cuthbert, Ga.

2



14

TRAE GOLDSTON
G • 6-0, 175 • So.
Decatur, Ga.

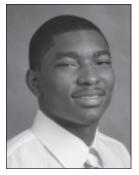
11



TREY HAMPTON F • 6-7, 225 • Jr. Hoover, Ala.



XAVIER HANSBRO F • 6-10, 230 • Jr. Trezevant, Tenn.



**D.J. JONES**G • 6-2, 180 • Fr. Hinesville, Ga.



OUSMAN KRUBALLY
F • 6-6, 195 • So. **24**Atlanta, Ga.



KEVIN LOTT
F • 6-7, 210 • So.
Peachtree City, Ga.



LEONARD MENDEZ G • 6-5, 180 • Jr. **2 1** Smyrna, Ga.



NORMAN MITCHELL G • 6-4, 180 • So. Midfield, Ala.



22

MICHAEL MOYNIHAN
G • 6-0, 170 • So.
Roswell, Ga.

12



**BERNARD RIMMER** F • 6-8, 200 • Jr. **33** Crenada, Miss.



ROD BARNES Head Coach



PAUL GRAHAM Assistant Coach



WILLIAM SMALL
Assistant Coach



SCEPTER BROWNLEE
Assistant Coach



JEFF CONARROE
Director of Operations

# CEPTERIVER PREPERSIONS

### 2007-08 **ROSTER**

### **ALPHABETICAL ROSTER**

No.	Name Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Hometown (High School/Previous School)		
14	Jihad AliG	6-4	185	Fr.	Atlanta, Ga. (M.L. King)		
32	Justin BillingsleaF	6-8	235	Sr.	Lithia Springs, Ga. (Lithia Springs)		
15	Rashad ChaseF	6-7	235	Jr.	Atlanta, Ga. (Mays)		
50	Deven DickersonC	6-9	260	Sr.	Richmond, Va. (Henrico)		
2	# Joe Dukes G	6-1	175	Jr.	Cuthbert, Ga. (Randolph-Clay/Wake Forest)		
11	Trae Goldston G	6-0	175	So.	Decatur, Ga. (IMG (Fla.) Academy)		
1	# Trey HamptonF	6-7	225	Jr.	Hoover, Ala. (Hoover/Mississippi)		
23	# Xavier Hansbro F	6-10	230	Jr.	Trezevant, Tenn. (West Carroll/Mississippi)		
22	D.J. Jones G	6-2	180	Fr.	Hinesville, Ga. (Wilkinson County)		
24	Ousman KruballyF	6-6	195	So.	Atlanta, Ga. (W.D. Mohammed)		
30	Kevin LottF	6-7	210	So.	Atlanta, Ga. (Sandy Creek)		
21	Leonard Mendez G	6-5	180	Jr.	Smyrna, Ga. (Campbell)		
4	Norman Mitchell G	6-4	180	So.	Midfield, Ala. (Midfield)		
12	Michael Moynihan G	6-0	170	So.	Roswell, Ga. (Centennial)		
33	# Bernard RimmerF	6-8	200	Jr.	Grenada, Miss. (Grenada/Mississippi State)		

### **NUMERICAL ROSTER**

No.	Name Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Hometown (High School/Previous School)
1	# Trey HamptonF	6-7	225	Jr.	Hoover, Ala. (Hoover/Mississippi)
2	# Joe Dukes G	6-1	175	Jr.	Cuthbert, Ga. (Randolph-Clay/Wake Forest)
4	Norman Mitchell G	6-4	180	So.	Midfield, Ala. (Midfield)
11	Trae Goldston G	6-0	175	So.	Decatur, Ga. (IMG (Fla.) Academy)
12	Michael Moynihan G	6-0	170	So.	Roswell, Ga. (Centennial)
14	Jihad AliG	6-4	185	Fr.	Atlanta, Ga. (M.L. King)
15	Rashad ChaseF	6-7	235	Jr.	Atlanta, Ga. (Mays)
21	Leonard Mendez G	6-5	180	Jr.	Smyrna, Ga. (Campbell)
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32	Justin BillingsleaF	6-8	235	Sr.	Lithia Springs, Ga. (Lithia Springs)
33	# Bernard RimmerF	6-8	200	Jr.	Grenada, Miss. (Grenada/Mississippi State)
50	Deven DickersonC	6-9	260	Sr.	Richmond, Va. (Henrico)

<sup>#</sup>Transfer, eligible in 2008-09

### **COACHING STAFF**

Head Coach: Rod Barnes (Mississippi, 1988)

Record at GSU: First year

Career Record: 141-109 (9th year)

Assistant Coach: Paul Graham (North Texas State, 1974)
Assistant Coach: William Small (Belhaven College, 1993)
Assistant Coach: Scepter Brownlee (San Francisco, 2003)

Director of BB Operations: Jeff Conarroe (Colorado College, 1999) Asst. Dir. of BB Operations: Christopher Jordan (Georgia State, 2005)

Graduate Managers: Lee Miller, Jason Hall Athletic Trainer: Marvin Trinkaus

### **PRONUNCIATION GUIDE**

Jihad Ali	juh-HAAD ah-LEE
Trae Goldston	TRAY
Xavier Hansbro	x-AA-vee-er
Ousman Krubally	OOOSS-maan
	crew-BAH-lee
Michael Moynihan	MOY-nuh-han
Scepter Brownlee	SEP-ter
Jeff Conarroe	CON-uh-row

# BRING THE HEAT

The 2007-08 season marks the beginning of a new era in Georgia State basketball as former national coach of the year Rod Barnes takes over and seeks to put his stamp on the Panthers' program.

Barnes is a 17-year veteran of college coaching who enjoyed a very successful run as the head coach at Mississippi, guiding the Rebels to three NCAA Tournaments and four post-season berths while averaging nearly 18 wins a year in eight seasons in the rugged Southeastern Conference. The highlight of his tenure in Oxford was a record-setting 27-8 campaign in 2001, when he led Ole Miss to the NCAA Sweet 16 and was honored as Naismith National Coach of the Year as well as SEC Coach of the Year.

In Atlanta, he inherits a Georgia State squad that looks to improve upon last year's 11-20 season, which included a 5-13 mark in the Colonial Athletic Association, one of the nation's premier mid-major conferences.

Although the Panthers graduated last year's leading scorer, Lance Perique, four key veterans return, led by sharp-shooting guard Leonard Mendez.

A 6-4 junior from Smyrna, Ga., Mendez led the CAA in three-point shooting, connecting on a school-record 47.5 percent from long range. He is the Panthers' top returning scorer after averaging 13.8 points last winter.

Mendez started 29 games, and two other players who started at least 15 games also return in 6-9 senior post player Deven Dickerson and 6-7 junior forward Rashad Chase, while senior forward Justin Billingslea, 6-8, was a top reserve.

"Leonard is an exceptional shooter, but he's going to have to not only be a shooter for us, he's going to have to be a scorer," said Barnes. "So we've really been working on his midrange game as well as his ability to score off the dribble. We're also depending on him to be one of our team leaders."

Chase, a CAA All-Rookie selection in 2006, led the Panthers in rebounding last season at 5.9 per game while averaging 8.5 points.

The tallest Panther at 6-9, Dickerson averaged 4.9 points and 4.8 rebounds while ranking fifth in the CAA with 1.7

blocked shots per game, but he has been hampered by injuries. Having him healthy and available will be a key for the Panthers.

Billingslea, who averaged 2.3 points and 2.5 rebounds, developed into a contributor last season before he was sidelined in late February by a broken finger. He will be looked upon for leadership as well as rebounding and solid defense.

The Panthers also return a quintet of sophomores, led by 6-0 guard Trae Goldston, the leading contender to be Panthers' starting point guard after averaging 3.2 points as a reserve. The other candidates at the point are 6-0 sophomore Michael Moynihan and 6-2 freshman D.J. Jones.

Norman Mitchell, a 6-4 sophomore wing, looks for an increased role and possibly a starting berth after averaging 2.2 points and 1.0 rebounds. Freshman Jihad Ali, a 6-4 guard, should also earn playing time.

Sophomore Kevin Lott is an athletic forward who stands 6-7 and can contribute. Sophomore Ousman Krubally, 6-6, is a hard-working player who adds depth in the frontcourt.

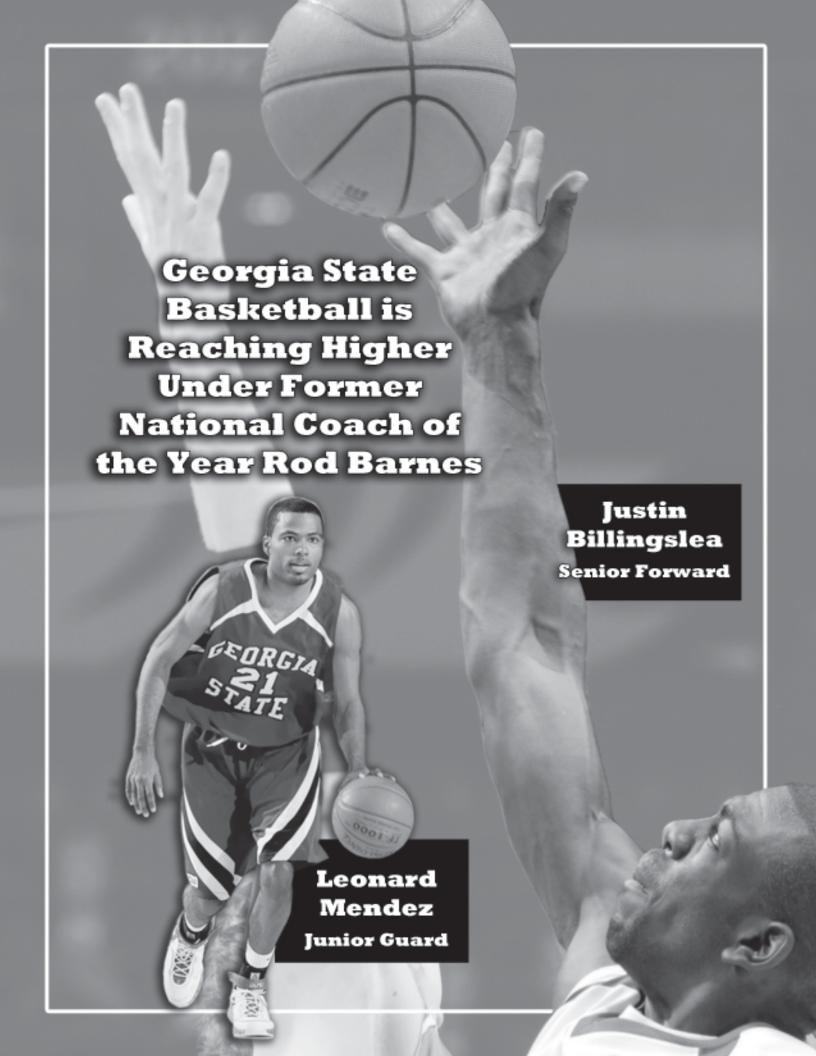
Those 11 players form the Panthers' active roster for this season, but Barnes also has four transfer student-athletes who will contribute next season after sitting out in 2007-08.

More than just X's and O's, Barnes is changing the culture of Georgia State basketball, raising expectations, both within the program and outside of it.

"The players are responding to what we're asking of them," said Barnes. "They seem excited about the possibilities, and they believe that we can build a great program here at Georgia State.

"We are demanding more from them but we are gaining their trust. They trust that we are doing the things to help them become winners.

"I truly believe we're going to win here, and win at a high level," continued Barnes. "We're not the team this year that we're going to be, but we're going to play hard and be disciplined and put a good product on the floor."



### **QUOTING HEAD COACH ROD BARNES**

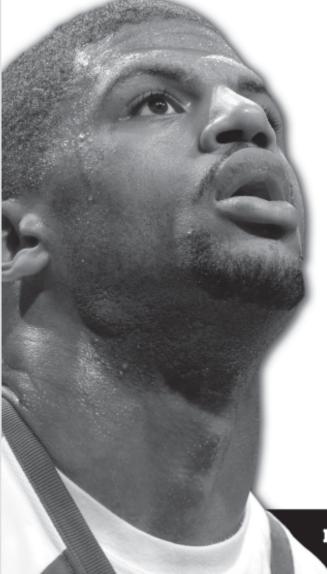
# How would you characterize your style of play and approach to the game of basketball?

"I expect my teams to bring a good work ethic every practice and every game. I want my teams to be disciplined in their approach and in the games. In the past, I have been known for my team defense, but that takes a while to develop and make it all happen.

"I'm a defensive-minded coach, and we're going to have a disciplined basketball team. The worst thing for fans is to invest their time and money to see a team that's not disciplined. We're going to be disciplined."

### Talk about your approach to defense.

"The mentality and mind-set I preach is "one and done." That obviously means play hard defense, don't allow open shots and then get the rebound. You seldom will find a team that makes many first shots, so the keys are limiting the easy baskets off your turnovers, making sure everyone is where they



ROSTER	ROSTER ANALYSIS					
BY CLASS:	BY STATE:					
Seniors2	Georgia 10					
Juniors 2(6*)	Alabama2					
Sophomores5	Mississippi1					
Freshmen2	Tennessee1					
* Includes four transfers eligible in 2008-09	Virginia1					

are supposed to be on defense to not allow an open shooter, and making sure everyone boxes out so the opponent can't follow its missed shot.

"Defense takes time, though, to have everything the way we want it. This season, because of our lack of depth, we will probably have to play more zone because we can't afford to get guys like Justin Billingslea in foul trouble. It is a process getting all the different defenses in place and it will take a while, but if all the guys work as hard as they can, it will happen."

## What was the first message that you communicated to this team?

"The first thing my staff and I are tried to do was instill the work ethic that it takes to be successful. We have got to be sure we are working as hard, if not harder, than anyone else. I've said before that basketball players are built in the off-season and teams are built in the fall. This has got to be a year round effort by the student-athletes as the rewards of that show up everywhere. It shows up in the classroom with the extra summer school. It shows up in the camaraderie of the team. It shows up in the strength and conditioning. It is a long process and it will take a full cycle to see the long-term results of this year-in, year-out work."

### What are realistic expectations for this team?

"Media people and others on the outside are not going to expect that much from us. My expectation is that we are going to play hard and compete and be disciplined, and we'll see where that can take us. We're going to play hard. We have some good basketball players who have experience and can still get better.

"We do have some veterans returning who have played in the CAA so we have a chance. I think we've got some pieces to work with. Whether we're good enough to win a lot of games, that's still to be determined, but I like their work ethic, I like their togetherness and closeness as a team. If we stay that way, we've got a chance to be okay, but we can't have any injuries because we don't have depth.

"We need everyone to continue to improve. But's it's a good, hardworking group, and I'm excited with where they are going into the season. We need some luck with our team health to keep all the guys ready."

RASHAD CHASE
Junior Forward

### With very little experience returning at the point, how will you handle that position?

"Trae Goldston is a lefthander who played some last year, and I think he should be poised for a more consistent, breakout-type season. He's going to be the first guy to get the opportunity to run our basketball team. Since I've been here, he's shown the type of characteristics that I would like in a point guard. He can push the ball up the floor, and he's a good shooter. He can help our team because he's a point guard who can stretch the defense."

### What other options do you have at point guard?

"First of all, we have Michael Moynihan. Of course, he's Lefty Driesell's grandson, so he's grown up around basketball, and you can see that he's very knowledgeable of the game. He's really picked up quickly what we're trying to do, both offensively and defensively. He played sparingly last year, but I think he's a guy who can help us, especially from a depth perspective. He's really improved offensively, and he needs to continue to work defensively.

"D.J. Jones is probably the most pure point quard of the group because he's a pass first, shoot second type of point guard. He's athletic and has good size for the position. He's the one who has had the most experience because he's been a point guard his whole life, and I think experience is going to be a big asset for him. He's the type of point guard we would like, and he's come in and tried to show that he can be a factor.

"Defensively, we're looking for our point guard to pressure the ball, and I think D.J. probably fits that the best. We'd like to play full-court and really pressure the ball, and it's tough for one guy to carry that load all season, so we're looking to play all three guys there. But pressuring all the time is what we want to do."

### What does Leonard Mendez bring to your team?

"He's an exceptional shooter, but he's going to have to not only be a shooter for us, he's going to have to be a scorer. So we've really been working on his mid-range game as well as his ability to score off the dribble. We're also depending on him to be one of our team leaders. Last year he was a team captain; this year, he's going to have to earn it again, but he's working toward that."

### Who else will play on the perimeter?

"Norman Mitchell is very versatile. He's a very good ballhandler, pretty decent shooter, and a very good defensive player. He's long, athletic and defensive-minded, so he can do a lot of things for us. The things that I like in a wing player, he possesses from a physical standpoint, and now we've got to turn that potential into action.

"Jihad Ali, a freshman, is another long, athletic wing, another lefty. He's very intelligent, what I would call a high IQ player. He just needs strength. He plays with a lot of confidence. Right now, he's probably more of a scorer than a shooter, but I think he can become a good shooter."

### Rashad Chase has shown that he can be a force. What is the next step for him?

"Consistency is the key for him. I've been impressed with how he worked over the spring and summer. He seems to have

Starters Returning *					
Name Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	CI.	PPG	RP
Rashad Chase F Led State, 11th in CAA in reboun	6-7 ding; 200	235 OG CAA All	Jr. -Rookie	8.5	5.
Deven Dickerson F Third in school history with 101 c	6-9 career blo	260 cks, 1.68	Sr. pg in 200	4.9 6-07	4
Leonard Mendez G 47.5% three-point shooting (led	6-5 CAA); 13	180 th in CAA	Jr. in scoring	13.8 ]	4
Started 15 or more games in 2006-0	7				
Other Key Returnees					
Justin Billinsglea F	6-8	235	Sr.	2.3	2
Trae GoldstonG	6-0	175	So.	3.2	0
Norman MitchellG	6-4	180	So.	2.2	1
Kevin Lott F	6-7	210	So.	2.1	1.
Michael MoynihanG	6-0	170	So.	1.2	0
Ousman Krubally F	6-6	195	So.	1.0	1
Key Losses NamePos.	Ht.	Wt.	PPG	RPG	
	6-8	210	15.6	5.0	
Lance Perique F	6-5	210			
Brandon Cartwright F Ron Larris G			5.7	3.9	
	5-10	185	5.0	2.1	
Ryan McBride F	6-6	180	6.2	3.1	
Newcomers					
Jihad Ali G Atlanta, Ga. (M.L. King HS)	6-4	185	Fr.		
D.J. Jones G Hinesville, Ga. (Wilkinson County	6-2 HS)	180	Fr.		
	08-09)				
Transfers (Eligible in 20		175	Jr.		
<u> </u>	6-1 /Wake Fo				
Joe DukesG Cuthbert, Ga. (Randolph-Clay HS/	/Wake For		Jr.		
Cuthbert, Ga. (Randolph-Clay HS, Trey Hampton F	/Wake For 6-7 opi) 6-10	225 230	Jr. Jr.		

dedicated himself to becoming the player that everyone thinks he can be. He's a guy that I think we can play both out on the wing and inside. He's a very good ball-handler for his size, and he's improved his outside shooting."

### You lack size, but talk about the experience you have in the post with Justin Billingslea and Deven Dickerson.

"Justin Billingslea is a very good defensive player and rebounder. We're really working on his offensive game, which I think has improved. He's another guy who fits what I like to do because he's a post player who can get up and down the floor and he should be very active in our press. And he's shown great leadership.

"Deven Dickerson has battled injuries, but he gives us size, obviously, so we really need for him to stay healthy. Last spring, when he was healthy, he showed a lot of progress."

### What about depth in the frontcourt?

"Kevin Lott is one of our better athletes. He's a good standstill shooter, and we're really working with him on his ball skills and his rebounding. Ousman Krubally is one of our hardest workers. He can help us in situations and give us some depth."

### What can we expect next year from the four transfers who are sitting out - Joe Dukes (Wake Forest), Trey Hampton (Mississippi), Xavier Hansbro (Mississippi) and Bernard Rimmer (Mississippi State)?

"We're talking about the future of Georgia State basketball with this talented group. They will help us get to that next level. They have all had outstanding prep careers and played at the highest level of Division I NCAA basketball. Their impact in practices will help us immediately and will benefit us in that way this year. These four guys are talented, athletic and versatile players."

### What are your observations of the **Colonial Athletic Association?**

"The overall balance of the CAA has turned into a competitive one that is like the BCS leagues with the depth and quality of the teams and coaches. To win, you have got to be really focused for all league games and fight through adversities to get to the top. You have got to have talented players to be able to win a championship in this league. The league has really stepped up the past few years and shown the country how good the programs are."

### **NOTING THE PANTHERS**

### MENDEZ CONNECTS FROM LONG RANGE

Junior guard Leonard Mendez led the Colonial Athletic Association in three-point shooting last season, connecting on 47.5 percent from the beyond the arc. Mendez hit 58 of 122 three-pointers to set a school-record for three-point accuracy in a season. That performance raised his career mark to 48.8 percent (63-138), which would be a Georgia State record if he can maintain that pace.

Mendez averaged 13.8 points per game, good for 13th in the CAA, and also ranked sixth in the league in overall field goal percentage (.487) and 13th in steals (1.3 per game).

### **356 AND COUNTING**

Entering the 2007-08 season, Georgia State has made at least one three-point field goal in 356 straight games, dating back to late in the 1994-95 season. The last team to hold the Panthers without a trey was Stetson on Feb. 18, 1995.

### **DICKERSON ON THE BLOCK**

Center Deven Dickerson enters his senior season as one of just three players in school history with 100 or more career blocked shots. With 101 rejections, he currently stands third in the Georgia State record, trailing Zavian Smith (128) and Nate Williams (113).

Last season, Dickerson ranked fifth in the Colonial Athletic Association with 1.68 blocks per game. His total of 47 blocks is third-best in school history. Dickerson had 46 blocks as a sophomore, giving him two of the top four season totals in Panther annals.

### **SCHEDULE NOTES**

TRAE GOLDSTON Sophomore Guard

Georgia State's 2007-08 schedule features a minimum of nine games against teams that participated in either the NCAA Tournament or National Invitation Tournament in 2007, including at least five games against NCAA teams.

Highlighting the non-conference slate are contests against Atlantic Coast Conference teams Georgia Tech and Florida State and a matchup with UAB, in the season opener and first game for head coach Rod Barnes. Georgia Tech visits the Georgia State Sports Arena for the first time since 1973 and just the second time ever. State travels to FSU in the second year of a four-game contract; the Seminoles played

at the Sports Arena last year and will return next season.

The Panthers will play another quality non-conference game on the road in the third annual BracketBusters event, scheduled for Feb. 23, with pairings announced Feb. 4.