

## Penny Hardaway bolsters basketball with transfers from sports page 1

career at Texas Tech (2019-2021) where he played one season and redshirted another. He then spent the next two years at Oklahoma State (2021-23) as a key reserve, playing 14.6 minutes per game across 66 contests. He has one final season of eligibility.

Smith played in all 33 games (13 starts) and put up career highs across the board in his lone season as a Mustang with 8.2 points and 5.4 rebounds in 19.1 minutes per game. He finished third in the American Athletic Conference in blocks per game (1.7) and fifth in field goal percentage (58.4%; 104-of-178) for a team that improved their win total by 10 games from the previous season to finish 20-13 and earn a berth to the National Invitation Tournament (NIT). In the classroom, he earned CSC Academic All-District honors.

The Baton Rouge, Louisiana native averaged 11.0 points (64.2% shooting), 5.0 rebounds, 2.0 blocks and 2.0 steals in two games against Memphis last season.

In his two seasons in Stillwater, Smith earned 16 starts (66 games) and averaged 5.2 points, 4.4 rebounds and 0.9 blocks per game while shooting 61.4 percent from the floor (113-of-184).

### MOUSSA CISSE

The 7-foot big man will close his collegiate career right where it began.

As a five-star, top-10 prospect in the 2020 recruiting class, Cisse played his final season of high school basketball at Lausanne and led the Lynx to a state championship. He then signed with the Tigers in 2020-21 and helped

guide Memphis to a 20-8 record and a NIT title while earning AAC Freshman of the Year honors.

Cisse transferred to Oklahoma State for the next two seasons (2021-23) before playing for Ole Miss in 2023-24. He averaged 4.5 points, 4.6 rebounds and 1.4 blocks with 17 starts in 26 games for a Rebel squad that went 20-12.

He has appeared in 115 games at the Division I level and has proven to be one of the elite rim protectors in the country. He was named the Big 12 Defensive Player of the Year for Oklahoma State in 2021-22 and has blocked 198 shots in his career for an average of 1.7 per game. Over four collegiate seasons, Cisse has averaged 6.3 points (56.3% shooting) and 6.4 rebounds.

With Memphis in 2020-21, Cisse averaged 6.6 points, 6.3 rebounds and 1.6 blocks and started all 28 games as the Tigers ranked No. 1 in the nation in adjusted defensive efficiency, per KenPom.

A native of Conakry, Guinea, Cisse posted 7.2 points, 6.5 rebounds and 1.9 blocks as a sophomore in his first season in Stillwater. Then followed up with 6.8 points, 8.0 rebounds and 1.9 blocks per game in 2022-23, earning himself a spot on the Big 12 All-Defensive Team for a second-consecutive campaign.

For complete information on Memphis Tiger Men's Basketball, visit [www.GoTigersGo.com](http://www.GoTigersGo.com) and follow the team's social media channels on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.

## Showboats' Daewood Davis named All-UFL honoree; Championship game on June 16

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### 2024 All-UFL Team

#### Offense

Quarterback - Adrian Martinez, Birmingham Stallions  
Running Back - Jacob Saylor, St. Louis Battlehawks  
Wide Receiver - Hakeem Butler, St. Louis Battlehawks; Daewood Davis, Memphis Showboats  
Marcus Simms, Michigan Panthers  
Tight End - Jace Sternberger, Birmingham Stallions  
Offensive Tackle - Jaryd Jones-Smith, St. Louis Battlehawks; Bobby Evans, Arlington Renegades  
Offensive Guard - Zack Johnson, Birmingham Stallions; Kohl Levaio, San Antonio Brahmas  
Center - Mike Pnasiuk, St. Louis Battlehawks

#### Defense

Defensive Line - Carlos Davis, Birmingham Stallions; Daniel Wise, Michigan Panthers  
Edge/Outside Linebacker - Chris Odom, Houston Roughnecks; Breeland Speaks, Michigan Panthers  
Inside Linebacker - Tavante Beckett, San Antonio Brahmas; Willie Harvey, St. Louis Battlehawks

Cornerback - Deandre Baker, D.C. Defenders; Nate Brooks, Michigan Panthers; Ajene Harris, Arlington Renegades  
Safety - Kai Nacua, Michigan Panthers; A.J. Thomas, Birmingham Stallions

#### Special Teams

Kicker - Jake Bates, Michigan Panthers  
Punter - Marquette King, Arlington Renegades  
Long Snapper - Jordan Ober, Michigan Panthers  
Return Specialist - Chris Rowland, D.C. Defenders

The 2024 UFL season will conclude with the Championship game, presented by the U.S. Army, on June 16th, hosted at The Dome at America's Center in St. Louis.

Tickets to the 2024 UFL Conference Championship games and the UFL Championship are available at [theufl.com](http://theufl.com). The United Football League (UFL) is the premier spring football platform, formed by the merging of the XFL and USFL in 2024. The UFL has eight teams in Arlington (TX), Birmingham (AL), Detroit (MI), Houston (TX), San Antonio (TX), Memphis (TN), St. Louis (MO), and Washington D.C.

## The Business of Sports...

# NFL expands league-wide initiative to partner locally and nationally with underrepresented businesses

*NFL Source Creates a Standardized and Equitable Process for the League and its Clubs in Procuring Underrepresented Suppliers Year-Round*



NEW YORK, N.Y.— The National Football League (NFL) announced at the Spring League Meeting held on May 21 the roll-out of NFL Source, an evolution of the league's supplier diversity commitments which seek to standardize how the NFL and its partners support working with underrepresented businesses locally and nationally, year-round.

NFL Source will expand the league's day-to-day procurement efforts and is designed to increase access, identify potential qualified partners and drive economic impact locally and nationally across the league and clubs — creating equitable processes to ensure underrepresented businesses have increased exposure and the ability to compete for and win viable league and club contracts.

The league will look to increase partnerships with certified and underrepresented businesses that are 51% owned and operated or led by a veteran, woman, minority, person with disabilities or LGBTQ+. "NFL Source provides the league with an opportunity to reinvest funds back into the communities that our clubs and offices reside in and gain exposure to an increased number of businesses," said Jonathan Beane, senior vice president and chief diversity & inclusion of-

ficer at the NFL. "Doing business with the NFL can provide unparalleled exposure for businesses and boost local economic mobility."

For more than 10 years, the NFL has made a concerted effort to focus on inclusive event-based suppliers, working with Super Bowl Host Committees through programs such as Emerging Business and Business Connect, which focused on subcontracting spend opportunities for tentpole events.

The program supports businesses serving as a pathway to visibility and access to NFL procurement groups. This is done by providing NFL procurement stakeholders at the front office and club levels with the tools, processes, and guidance on how to run equitable procurement programs. Today's announcement marks the start of a multi-phase rollout that includes:

**Training sessions and adoption** by all procurement leads at the league, beginning in June 2024. For all clubs, there will be a two-part training in partnership with Supplier.io — an enrichment partner with the NFL that offers data and tools to monitor, track, and support supplier diversity program performance. These virtual

and in-person supplier-diversity education sessions with NFL staff will help educate NFL procurement stakeholders on the impact of supplier diversity on the business and communities;

**Distribution** in September 2024 of a supplier diversity playbook for clubs who opt-in to the program, that includes best practices, RFP process recommendations, and a list of partners to consider; and

**Mandatory adoption** of the program for NFL tentpole events by the host club and host/local organizing committees, in addition to networking and match-making events in their market, and more.

To drive economic impact as a league-wide unit, there will be procurement standards and procedures that include business eligibility criteria, strategic best practices for setting up a local program, and more. Several clubs participated in an NFL Source local market tests ahead of the official rollout, including the Atlanta Falcons and Detroit Lions.

"The adoption of expanding the NFL's supplier diversity program aligns with our vision to continue to uplift and provide opportunities to local and diverse businesses," said Atlanta Falcons Owner and Chairman, Arthur M. Blank. "The Falcons have and will continue to work diligently, alongside the league, as we all work toward the official launch of NFL Source."

Additionally, the NFL will part-

ner with the U.S. Black Chambers, Inc to help local businesses across the country obtain the certifications necessary to do business with the league.

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*"Supplier Diversity is about recognizing the value of local supply chains and small businesses, which are the backbone of the American economy," said Talisha Bekavac, Executive Vice President of the United States Black Chambers, Inc. (USBC). "USBC remains energized to partner with entities like the NFL to continue creating wealth and economic mobility in Black communities through entrepreneurship."*

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To learn more about the program and to join the NFL's directory, please visit at [source.nfl.com](http://source.nfl.com). Companies will join a pool of qualified businesses for year-round and subcontract consideration, including for upcoming tentpole events such as the 2025 Super Bowl.

## Kody Norris Show now open at Bluegrass Music Hall ... from sports-ent. 5

made this possible."

Hall of Fame Executive Director Chris Joslin comments, "Here at the Hall of Fame we are storytellers, and the exhibitions often focus on those who, looking back, shaped the genre of bluegrass in profound ways. This new exhibit is about looking forward and celebrating the bluegrass journey of The Kody Norris Show, and it's a journey that is just getting started. The exhibit will help us understand what brought them to this part of their career, but it's even more about looking forward at a stellar career that is blossoming before

our very eyes. I often say the future of bluegrass music is in very good hands. When I say that, I'm talking of artists like The Kody Norris Show."

The band recently brought home seven trophies from SPBGMA for Entertainer of the Year, Instrumental Group of the Year, Album of the Year, Song of the Year, and Band (Overall) of the Year. Adding to the wins, Mary Rachel Nalley-Norris was named Fiddle Performer of the Year, and Josiah Tyree won Banjo Performer of the Year.

Of the twelve songs included on The Kody Norris Show's latest

album, Rhinestone Revival, four are penned by frontman Kody Norris: "Baltimore I'm Leaving," "Please Tell Me Why," "Gotta Get My Baby Back," and their latest single, "Fiddler's Rock." Last October, the first single, "Mountain Rosalie," was released along with an accompanying lyric video. New elements to Rhinestone Revival include a track sung by Kody's fiddling "sweetie" Mary Rachel Nalley-Norris, who steps out on "Endless Highway," a tune Alison Krauss made famous in 1990. In addition, the band's banjo ace, Josiah Tyree, takes the lead on

their current single, "I Call Her Sunshine." Charlie Lowman rounds out the group, keeping perfect time on bass.

Located in Owensboro, Kentucky, the Bluegrass Music Hall of Fame & Museum is a nonprofit dedicated to the history and preservation of bluegrass music. Among the many community and educational events produced by the Hall of Fame is the annual ROMP Festival, a four-day bluegrass music festival attended by over 25,000 annually. Learn more about the Bluegrass Music Hall of Fame & Museum at [bluegrass-hall.org](http://bluegrass-hall.org) and connect with on social media @bluegrasshall.

An Editorial Comment from The Mid-South Tribune:  
"Real women should play in women's sports!"

We will NOT LIE to our CHILDREN. There are only two sexes.  
MOMS for LIBERTY  
Stop Biden's Title IX Rule Change: [momsforliberty.org](http://momsforliberty.org)