



PREVIEW

DEFENSIVE OUTLOOK

The Redhawk defense brings back six starters for the upcoming 2020 season.

Each season that Bryce Saia has been defensive coordinator, Southeast Missouri finished among the top two in the Ohio Valley Conference in either red zone defense, sacks, turnover margin, third down defense or interceptions.

In 2019, SEMO led the OVC and ranked 20th nationally in interceptions (14). The Redhawks were also second in the league in red zone defense and posted 24 takeways, which rated third among OVC teams.

Defensive Line

Seniors **Datteraion Richardson (Liberty, Mo.)** and **Bryson Donnell (Antioch, Tenn.)** return to anchor the defensive line in SEMO's 4-3 set.

Richardson started 12 games and registered 22 tackles, 14 solo stops and 1.5 tackles for loss a year ago.

Donnell will start at the other defensive tackle spot after collecting 30 tackles, 3.5 tackles for loss and two sacks in 12 contests last season.

Transfers **Matt Hanson (Iowa Central CC)** and **LaWilliam Holmes, Jr. (Copiah-Lincoln CC)** are behind Richardson and Donnell.

Hanson notched 31 tackles and one forced fumble in 12 games at Iowa Central Community College in 2019. Prior to that, he spent two years at Mid-American Conference member Akron.

Holmes, Jr. played two seasons at Copiah-Lincoln Community College. He tallied 32 tackles, 1.5 tackles for loss and 1.5 sacks a year ago.

At nose tackle, **Lunden Manuel (Cordova, Tenn.)** is expected

to make his starting debut after redshirting as a true freshman.

Isaiah Hunt (Northeast Mississippi CC) will also look to contribute at nose tackle.

Hunt joins the Redhawks from Northeast Mississippi Community College, where he had 17 tackles last season.

Inside Linebackers

Despite the loss of First-Team All-OVC selection and All-American Zach Hall, SEMO remains strong at linebacker.

Sophomore **Mike Matthews (Fayetteville, N.C.)** and senior **Brandon Mincey (Plantation, Fla.)** take over at the Will and Mike spots, respectively.

As a true freshman, Matthews played in 13 games and started four of the final six contests during the 2019 season. He tallied 24 tackles with 17 solo stops en route to earning Third-Team Phil Steele Freshman All-America honors.

Like Matthews, Mincey also logged four starts a year ago. He finished with 25 tackles, 2.5 tackles for loss and a sack.

Returnees **Rasean McCauley (Louisville, Ky.)** and **Izeal Terrell (Alton, Ill.)**, and newcomer **LaDarrius Rule (Northwest Mississippi CC)** will also be in the rotation at middle linebacker.

McCauley played in all 13 games as a true freshman and posted 19 tackles and one sack.

Terrell redshirted his rookie campaign.

And, Rule comes to SEMO from Northwest Mississippi Community College. He tied for second on the team with 59 tackles in 2019.



Outside Linebackers

Veterans **Omarrick Douglas (Louisville, Ky.)** and **Bryant Pirtle (Louisville, Ky.)** are SEMO's starting outside linebackers.

Douglas started 10 of 13 games for the Redhawks last season. He ranked eighth on the team with 31 total tackles. Douglas also added three tackles for loss, a sack and returned his only interception 32 yards for a touchdown.

Pirtle, too, saw action in all 13 contests. He led SEMO with five sacks and ranked third on the team with seven tackles for loss. Pirtle was slightly ahead of Douglas with 34 tackles.

Juniors **Derrick Calhoun (St. Louis, Mo.)** and **Rashad Hughes (Overland, Mo.)** along with sophomore **Anthony Ballard (Milan, Tenn.)** round out the front seven depth.

Calhoun started three games and finished sixth on the team with 36 tackles.

Hughes saw action in eight contests mainly on special teams.

Meanwhile, Ballard appeared in 13 games with the majority of his playing time on special teams.

Safeties

Senior **Bydarrius Knighten (Tunica, Miss.)** and junior **Lawrence Johnson (St. Louis, Mo.)** are the returning starters at safety.

A Preseason All-OVC pick, Knighten is SEMO's top returning tackler at the free safety position.

Knighten ranked third on the team with 75 tackles, including 53 solo stops. He had 1.5 tackles for loss and led the Redhawks with three interceptions. Knighten finished the 2019 season at 23rd in the OVC in tackles and seventh in interceptions.

At strong safety, Johnson started 11 games and was fourth on the team with 53 stops. He had two tackles for loss and three pass breakups, as well.

Senior **Robert Hatchett III (Lithonia, Ga.)** and sophomore **Jontae Dobson (Indianapolis, Ind.)** each saw significant playing time during their first year at SEMO in 2019.

Hatchett III participated in 12 games and tallied nine tackles with eight solo stops.

Dobson turned in 16 tackles in 13 contests. All but six of his tackles were solo.





2020 Defensive Depth Chart

Defensive Tackle

- 99 Daterraion Richardson, 5-11, 290, Sr.*
- 90 Matt Hanson, 6-3, 295, Jr.

Nose Tackle

- 50 Lunden Manuel, 6-2, 290, R-Fr.
- 10 Isaiah Hunt, 6-1, 300, Jr.

Defensive Tackle

- 93 Bryson Donnell, 6-1, 290, Sr.
- 91 LaWilliam Holmes, 6-2, 284, Jr.

Outside Linebacker

- 6 Bryant Pirtle, 6-2, 227, Sr.
- 18 Derrick Calhoun, Jr., 6-1, 235, Jr.

Inside Linebacker (Will)

- 11 Mike Matthews, 6-1, 235, So,*
- 33 Rasean McCauley, 6-2, 225, So.

Inside Linebacker (Mike)

- 12 Brandon Mincey, 6-0, 230, Sr.
- 45 Izeal Terrell, 6-3, 220, R-Fr.
- OR -
- 30 LaDarius Rule, 6-1, 220, Jr.

Outside Linebacker

- 4 Omarerrick Douglas, 6-3, 221, R-Sr.*
- 31 Rashad Hughes, 6-1, 225, Jr.
- OR -
- 32 Anthony Ballard, 6-2, 211, So.

Cornerback

- 1 Al Young, 5-11, 175, R-Sr.*
- 21 Kareem Gaulden, 5-11, 185, Sr.

Strong Safety

- 13 Lawrence Johnson, 6-0, 194, Jr.*
- 28 Robert Hatchett III, 6-0, 185, Sr.

Free Safety

- 2 Bydarrus Knighten, 6-0, 190, R-Sr.*
- 3 Jontae Dobson, 5-9, 165, So.

Cornerback

- 24 Shabari Davis, 6-0, 180, Sr.
- 25 Trai Hodges, 5-10, 170, Jr.

* - Returning Starter

Cornerbacks

SEMO is also experienced at cornerback with the return of seniors **Al Young (Cape Girardeau, Mo.)** and **Shabari Davis (Garden City, Ga.)**.

Young's 2019 season was cut short due to an achilles injury. He started the first four games notching 10 tackles and two interceptions before receiving a medical hardship.

Davis started six games and recorded 25 tackles and 21 solo stops. He had five pass breakups, forced a fumble and had one interception.

Behind Young and Davis are transfer **Kareem Gaulden (Stony Brook)** and junior **Trai Hodges (Rome, Ga.)**.

Gaulden played the last two seasons at Colonial Athletic Association member Stony Brook. He saw action in 12 games and had at least two tackles in four contests during the 2019 campaign.

Hodges played in all 13 games collecting nine tackles and eight solo stops a year ago.



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