

# The Post and Courier

## Cougars welcome chance to rinse bad taste away

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It's not the NCAA Tournament, and the College of Charleston isn't facing the University of Kentucky. If the Cougars had been able to script their season, that's where they would be playing this week.

Instead, it's on the road in the College Basketball Invitational (CBI), and the opponent is Eastern Kentucky. But the Cougars are happy to have this opportunity after falling flat on their faces in the Southern Conference Tournament semifinals against Appalachian State.

"This is what we need. We have a bad taste in our mouths from the last game," said junior guard Andrew Goudeock, referring to the Cougars' 23-point loss. "We didn't play like we usually play. We played our worst game of the season. That game was a blowout."

Charleston will be without the services of senior starting forward Casaan Breeden along with Rashad Wright, Garrett Campbell, Jordan Turok and Quasim Pugh for tonight's contest. Cremins said they stayed behind to concentrate on their academic work.

Senior point guard Tony White Jr. said Charleston had bigger goals in mind, winning the SoCon Tournament and earning a spot in the NCAA Tournament.

"But that's the good thing about basketball. You get another opportunity to show what you're made of," White said. "After this (tournament), it's pretty much over with. You'd love to end on a good note. We don't want (Appalachian State) to be the last game of the season that we're remembered by. We want to play the best basketball we're capable of playing."

White said ending his career without a SoCon title was extremely disappointing.

"Looking back, we really had some chances," he said. "I played in the championship game my freshman and junior years and get beat in the semis, one game away from the finals, my sophomore and senior years. It's something I think about and I have not stopped thinking about since we left Charlotte."

Cougars coach Bobby Cremins also is happy for the opportunity for his team to redeem itself in a tournament that includes such good teams as Virginia Commonwealth, Duquesne, Saint Louis and, of course, Eastern Kentucky.

"We wanted to play in the Big Dance," Cremins said. "But these two new tournaments (the CBI and the CollegeInsider.com Tournament) are fun. They help teams who have good seasons but maybe come up short at the end. They give them a chance to play and win a tournament, play for another day.

"We were disappointed the way the season ended. But it's time to forget that."

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