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From The Desk Of TK

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From The Desk Of TK
AD addresses Eagle Nation in letter form
General
Posted: 3/16/2018 12:46:00 PM
Dear Eagle Nation,

As basketball season ends and we move to the spring sports full-time, we are able to look back at some of the successes from the 2017-18 season. Eagle Nation definitely showed its support for GS Basketball this year and helped Coach Byington and his squad reach 20 wins for the second time in four years and played their way to the semifinals of the Sun Belt Conference tournament. We saw an increase in season tickets to men's and women's basketball and the men's game against Georgia State game was sold out as we took down the Panthers on national TV. Next year's non-conference schedule will feature some opponents I think you all will be excited about coming to Hanner so hopefully we'll see an even larger increase in tickets for the 2018-19 season. Also, women's basketball was presented with the Sun Belt Academic Award for the highest team GPA in the league and that will be announced publicly soon.

Recently, our swimming and diving program sent three student-athletes to NCAA Zone B Championships - a program best, especially when considering the divers were two freshmen and a sophomore. We are currently searching for a new head swimming & diving coach after coach [Laura Thomas](#) offered her resignation earlier this month, and we have received interest from a number of viable candidates. We hope to be able to announce a new hire in the next few weeks.

Our softball team is off to one of its best starts in their program's history, sitting at 17-7 overall after taking two victories in Orlando on Wednesday against UTSA and UCF. Head coach [Kim Dean](#) and her team took two of three games at Troy last weekend to open Sun Belt play and are at home this weekend against South Alabama. Coach Hennon and his baseball squad have dropped some close games early on, but get started in conference play this today against Louisiana. Hopefully, you'll get a chance to come out and support both teams this weekend.

As spring season continues, we're already preparing for the fall. Football season tickets renewals are at 80 percent with over 100 new, pre-ordered season tickets sold. If you haven't purchased your season tickets, visit [GSEagles.com/Tickets](#). It's important to fill our stadiums for recruits to provide a home-field advantage for our teams and for potential businesses that want to invest in marketing with us. More importantly, it's paramount to show our student-athletes support. Don't forget, as approved by the [Athletic Foundation Board](#), season ticket prices did not increase, even with us having six home games slotted for 2018. It should be an energetic experience with both of the 2017 Sun Belt co-champs coming to Paulson in Appalachian State and Troy.

The nation-wide search for our new Executive Director for the Athletic Foundation is underway with many candidates having ties to Georgia Southern or the state of Georgia, as well as Power 5 experience. As approved by the [Athletic Foundation Board](#), we will no longer be hosting the Bishop Pregame Social prior to home football games this fall. If you'd like access to the Gene Bishop Field House on game day, season tickets are available - but they are going fast. A benefit of being a Bishop ticket holder is access the building when the gates open, having the only field-level access to watch pregame warm-ups and complimentary beverages and snacks throughout the game. The 2018 Coaches Caravan schedule is almost finalized. We'll be sending information soon regarding the upcoming schedule and will and will also post it online at [GSEagles.com/Caravan](#).

In the meantime, I hope you take advantage of the current 'Matching Gift Challenge' that was initiated by a True Blue family. While they wish to remain anonymous, they have pledged to match donations made to the Coaches Continuity Fund or scholarship endowments - up to \$750,000. This challenge has the potential to raise \$1.5m for Georgia Southern Athletics, which would be instrumental in securing, and retaining, successful coaches here at Georgia Southern. We are thankful for this opportunity and need Eagle Nation [to step up in a big way](#) and match the \$750K. If you'd like to donate, [please click here](#).

If you're in Statesboro this weekend, be sure to join us for the [baseball](#) series against Louisiana, [softball's](#) series against South Alabama and cheer on men's golf at the 39th annual [Schenkel Golf Tournament](#) located at Forest Heights Country Club. Eagle Baseball will also be at the Russ Chandler Stadium in Atlanta in a few weeks to face Georgia Tech.

As always, HailSouthern and GATA

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tom Kleinlein".

[Tom Kleinlein](#)

Director of Athletics, Georgia Southern University

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