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GS Women's Basketball Loses Triple Overtime Heartbreaker, 88-81, In Sun Belt First Round
No. 11-seeded Eagles fall to the No. 6-seeded Louisiana Ragin' Cajuns on Tuesday in New Orleans
Women's Basketball
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NEW ORLEANS, La. - The No. 11-seeded Georgia Southern women's basketball team saw its season come to a close in the first round of the 2017-18 Sun Belt Conference Championships with a heartbreaking 88-81 triple overtime loss to No. 6-seeded Louisiana on Tuesday evening at Lakefront Arena in New Orleans.

Louisiana (16-15) meets third-seeded UT Arlington on Thursday, March 8, in the Quarterfinals at 8:30 p.m. ET. Georgia Southern finishes the season with a 5-25 record. It was the longest game in GS women's basketball history since the Eagles defeated ETSU, 104-101, in four overtimes on January 12, 1998.

Sophomore [Hailey Dias-Allen](#) scored eight of the first 11 points for the Eagles as Georgia Southern jumped out to an 11-7 lead after the first six and a half minutes of play. Sophomore [Nakol Franks](#) then took over from long range, knocking down four of five three-pointers to help Georgia Southern take a 36-31 lead into halftime.

Georgia Southern shot 50 percent from the floor in the first half (15-of-30) and knocked down 6-of-10 three-pointers. Louisiana kept things close by going 7-of-10 from the line in the first half.

Louisiana stepped up the defensive pressure in the second half, holding the Eagles to just 4-of-15 shooting from the floor (26.7 percent) in drawing even at the end of the third quarter, 45-all. The fourth quarter saw the Eagles score the first seven points of the period - five from [Alexis Brown](#) - over the first four minutes, but Louisiana embarked on a 10-0 run over the next two and a half minutes to retake the lead, 54-52, with 3:23 left.

A three-pointer from [Alexis Foulks](#) with 2:43 left gave the Eagles back the lead, 55-54, and a free throw from Atwater put GS up by two, 56-54, with 1:48 to go. Atwater then found [Trellanie English-Lurry](#) behind the press for a wide open layup to push the lead to four, 58-54, with 1:32 left.

Nakia Jones' layup cut the Eagles lead to two, 58-56, with 52.6 seconds left. Jasmine Thomas at the line with 6.5 seconds left hits both free throws to tie the game at 58-all. The Eagles turned the ball over on the inbounds, but Louisiana missed a game-winning three chance at the buzzer to send the game to overtime.

In the first overtime period, each team put up six points. In the second overtime, the Eagles took the lead on a pair of [Alexis Foulks](#) free throws with 1:38 left, but Fields knocked down a pair of three throws for Louisiana to tie the game with 1:23 left, then a layup by Jones put Louisiana in front, 74-72, with 48 seconds left. A turnover by the Eagles, followed by a free throw by Thomas gave the Ragin' Cajuns a three-point lead, 75-52, with 25.8 seconds left.

[Alexis Brown](#) made one free throw, then on her second attempt, it hit off the front rim and Dias-Allen tipped it back in for the reverse three-point play to tie things up at 75-all with 17.2 seconds left. A missed shot off the front of the rim by Troi Swain sent it to triple overtime.

With Louisiana leading by three in the third overtime, Swain canned a three-pointer with 1:21 left to give the Ragin' Cajuns the largest lead for either team, and Louisiana held on for the win.

"I thought it was a heck of a college basketball game," Georgia Southern Head Women's Basketball Coach [Kip Drown](#) said. "I'm so proud of our kids for the effort they put forth. We didn't get a couple of things to go our way down the stretch at the end."

Dias-Allen led four Eagles in double figures on the night with a career-high 18 points on 9-of-13 shooting from the floor. Brown finished with 17 points, while Franks finished the night with 14 points, including 4 of 8 from three-point range. She finishes the season with 55 three-pointers, the sixth-most in a single season in Eagle history. Foulks added a double-double in her final game as an Eagle with 12 points and 14 rebounds.

Atwater also collected 11 assists, her third 10+ assist game this season, moving her onto the single-season assist chart. Her 125 assists this season are the most for a Georgia Southern player since 2003 and are the 9th-most in a single season.

"We didn't shoot the ball very well the first time we played them," Coach Drown said about the first meeting this season between the two teams, when Louisiana won 58-48 in Statesboro. "Nakol comes out tonight and really got on fire early, she hit some threes and that sparked us. We're maturing as a basketball team, growing up a lot over these last four, five, six weeks."

Georgia Southern loses three players to graduation - Foulks, [Trellanie English-Lurry](#) and [Jakyvea Akins](#) - and returns 10 players for the 2018-19 season.

"I'm proud of our seniors, who kept us together through some tough weeks in January when we weren't playing well," Drown said. "For our young kids, it's such a huge confidence boost to see they can come in here and compete. I told them, 'you walk out of here with your heads held high.' I thought we played a heck of a game. One play here, one play there, and we're playing here on Thursday. I think it's something we can grow off of."

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