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Panthers Hold Off Furious Eagle Comeback, Notch 66-58 Rivalry Series Win Over GS Women's Basketball

Eagles erase a 15-point second-half deficit, but Georgia State makes plays late to take the win

Women's Basketball

Posted: 2/17/2018 4:14:00 PM

STATESBORO, Ga. - The Georgia Southern women's basketball team erased a 15-point second-half deficit to take a three-point lead with five minutes to play, but Georgia State made key plays late to come away with a 66-58 Sun Belt Conference victory on Saturday afternoon at Hanner Fieldhouse.

The win gives the Panthers (7-18, 3-11 SBC) a season sweep in the series with the Eagles (5-20, 2-12 SBC), as well as a point in the 2017-18 Southern vs. State Rivalry Series. After this weekend's basketball games, Georgia State now has a 9.5-1.5 lead in the yearly competition between the two schools. Georgia Southern will next travel to UT Arlington for a 1:30 p.m. Sun Belt contest with the Mavericks on Thursday, February 22nd, in Arlington, Texas.

A back-and-forth first quarter had the Eagles leading late, 18-14, thanks to an [Alexis Brown](#) three-pointer. Georgia State scored the final five points of the quarter, however, to take a 19-18 lead into the second. A fastbreak layup by [Amira Atwater](#) had the Eagles back to within a point, 24-23, with 5:33 left until halftime, but Georgia State would embark on a 12-0 run over the next five minutes to take a 36-23 lead. [Trellanie English-Lurry](#)'s three-pointer at the buzzer would make the halftime deficit 10 points, 36-26.

Georgia State opened quick in the third quarter to take its largest lead of the game, 43-28, on a pair of Francesca Minali free throws with 6:51 left in the third quarter. Georgia Southern battled back to make the deficit eight, 48-40, at the end of the third, then went on an 14-4 run to open the fourth quarter, taking the lead on [Rhein Beamon](#)'s three-pointer that made the score 54-52 with 5:07 left to play.

The Panthers answered by getting a Janessa Murphy three-pointer to retake the lead, 56-54, with 4:24 left and Georgia State ended up scoring on seven of its eight last possessions of the game to close out the win. Georgia Southern went 1-for-8 from the field in the final three minutes of the game.

"I thought we just played harder," Georgia Southern Head Coach [Kip Drown](#) said about his team's run to erase the 15-point deficit. "All week we've been talking about pressure on the basketball and creating turnovers. We thought we were doing that in the first half, but we didn't. We addressed it at halftime, and it took until the six minutes of the third quarter for us to start getting out and getting after people a lot more. That's where we got a little momentum going.

"They had a big three on us," Drown said about the Murphy shot that gave Georgia State the lead back. "We left a kid open in the corner. That was a killer."

[Alexis Brown](#) led the Eagles offensively on the day with 12 points, while [Hailey Dias-Allen](#) had 10 points and seven rebounds. Georgia State placed three players in double figures, led by Madison Newby's 21 points, including 8-of-12 from the free throw line. Murphy finished with 16 points and nine rebounds, while Kierra Henry had 13 points.

As a team, the Eagles shot 33.9 percent from the floor (21-of-62) and 30 percent from three-point range (9-of-30), but hit only 7-of-12 shots from the foul line (58.3 percent). Georgia State, conversely, went 17-of-26 from the line (65.4 percent) while also shooting 46.8 percent from the field (22-of-47) and 5-of-17 from three-point range (29.4 percent).

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