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Milledge Austin

Game Recap: Women's Basketball | 1/7/2017 5:32:00 PM

Troy Hangs on to Top Women's Basketball 89-86

Four Eagles scored in double figures

STATESBORO, Ga. – Kayla Robinson scored 17 points, and Jayla Chills hit a huge jumper with 21.1 seconds left as Troy held off Georgia Southern 89-86 in Sun Belt Conference women's basketball action Saturday afternoon in Hanner Fieldhouse.

Georgia Southern trimmed a 20-point second-half deficit down to two points on a 3-pointer by [Alexis Sams](#) with 49 seconds left. Chills dropped in the pull-up jumper with the shot clock winding down, and Sams missed a triple try from the wing on the Eagles' trip down the floor. GS was forced to foul, and Chills made 1 of 2 free throws with eight seconds left. [Sierra Butler](#) scored a layup with one second remaining, but the Trojans inbounded the ball without incident and time ran off.

[Patrice Butler](#) collected 24 points, one off her career high, and matched her career best with 11 rebounds for Georgia Southern (4-10, 0-3). [Sierra Butler](#) tallied 14 points and

matched her career-high with 14 rebounds, and [Alexis Brown](#) scored a career-high 17 points. [Angel McGowan](#) scored 19, and Sams netted eight off the bench, all in the second half.

Robinson made 6 of 10 from the field, and Chills finished with 13 points, six rebounds and five assists for Troy (10-4, 3-0). Amanda Mendoza scored 12, and Claresa Banks chipped in 11. Caitlyn Ramirez finished with 9 points and 11 rebounds.

THE STORY

Trailing 70-50, Georgia Southern scored 11 straight points, with Butler netting the final five, to trim the margin to nine near the end of the third quarter. Brown netted five points in a 9-4 Eagle run to start the fourth, and her conventional 3-point play on a fast break made the score 78-70 with 7:30 to go.

Troy pushed the margin back to 12 points before GS tallied the next nine, and a pair of free throws by Sams made the score 84-81 with 2:10 remaining. Chills got free for a layup with 1:13 to play before [Sierra Butler](#) dug out an offensive rebound and fed Sams for the triple at the top of the key.

Troy started the second period with a 16-4 run and took a 44-31 lead on a 3-pointer by Robinson midway through the quarter. Mendoza hit three triples during the stretch, and Ramirez added another. The Trojans outscored the Eagles 12-5 over the first three minutes of the third quarter and opened a 66-47 lead on a jumper by Chills. Robinson hit a layup to give Troy a 70-50 cushion with 3:14 left in the third quarter.

QUOTABLES FROM HEAD COACH KIP DROWN

"I'm really proud of our kids. We really fought hard and competed hard. This is one of the top-3 rebounding teams in the country and we out-rebounded them by five. We worked the glass, particularly in the second half, really hard. You have to credit them, they shot it 10 for 20 from three in the first half. The thing I'm proud about with our kids is that in the past, that would have broke us and it didn't break us tonight. We fought through that and we stayed with it. I told our kids that it sounds crazy for a loss to spring board you, but if we take this the right way, this can really spring board our season. We competed, and that's where it all starts when you are trying to build a program. Stepping up night after night and competing with people nose to nose."

"This is the defending champion of the Sun Belt, this is the team that's picked number one in the Sun Belt and this is a team averaging 86 a game. This is a really good basketball team, and we just played them to the end. They walked off the floor knowing that we went after them. I think it's a confidence thing. I think for our kids it's 'hey, we just took the best team in this league to the last possession.' It's a positive for us. I hate the loss for our fans and our kids, but it's a positive for us because I think we grew up a lot as a basketball team. I think that's the best 40 minutes of competing that we have put together in the last year and a half. I'm excited about what I saw tonight and where

we're going."

NEXT UP

Georgia Southern goes on the road for the Sun Belt Louisiana swing next week. The Eagles play at ULM Thursday at 7 p.m. ET and at Louisiana Saturday at 6 p.m. ET.

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