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# Eagle Softball Tabbed Fifth in Preseason Sun Belt Poll

*GS opens season at home Feb. 10*



Milledge Austin

Softball | 1/30/2017 1:48:00 PM

## Story Links

**NEW ORLEANS** – The Georgia Southern softball team has been picked fifth while the Louisiana Ragin' Cajuns softball team is the unanimous preseason favorite in the Sun Belt Conference softball preseason coaches poll heading into the 2017 season.

The Ragin' Cajuns are defending regular-season and tournament champions after making a fifth straight appearance in the NCAA Super Regionals last year.

"I always have really high expectations because I feel like you're doing your team a disservice if you don't," said head coach [Annie Smith](#). "If we do what we need to do, and keep improving, the sky is the limit. Our league is tough and it showed on Selection

Sunday last year. We were picked fifth this year and that shows a lot of respect from how far we've come in two years. The great thing about the league is that there is no break, which makes it a challenge. There are no days off. If you don't show up, you're going to lose, which makes this a great league to be in and I'm excited to get things kicked off next weekend here in Statesboro."

The Texas State Bobcats finished second in the poll with 87 points. The Bobcats enter the 2017 campaign following a 40-22 campaign and an at-large bid to the NCAA Tournament. Texas State, the runner-up of the 2016 Sun Belt Conference Softball Championship, earned its second ever at-large bid and made its first NCAA appearance since 2012.

South Alabama was third in the poll. The Jaguars, winners of the 2013 and 2015 Sun Belt tournament titles, snapped a streak of four consecutive NCAA Tournament appearances last year. In-state rivals Georgia State and Georgia Southern finished fourth and fifth in the poll, respectively.

The host university of the 2017 Sun Belt Conference Softball Championship, Troy, was sixth in the poll with 44 points. UTA finished narrowly behind the Trojans with 41 points. Newcomer Coastal Carolina was eighth in the poll with 32 points and ULM (30 points) and Appalachian State (12) rounded out the poll.

The 2017 softball season begins on Thursday, Feb. 9. The 2017 Sun Belt Conference Softball Championship is set for May 10-13 at the Troy Softball Complex on the campus of Troy University.

Georgia Southern will open its season at home, hosting the Eagle Round Robin with nationally ranked Tennessee, Tennessee Tech, UNCG and Middle Tennessee coming to Statesboro.

### **Preseason Coaches' Poll**

#### **Rank, Team, Points (first-place votes)**

1. Louisiana, 100 (10)
2. Texas State, 87
3. South Alabama, 80
4. Georgia State, 68
- 5. Georgia Southern, 55**
6. Troy, 44
7. UTA, 41
8. Coastal Carolina, 32
9. ULM, 30
10. Appalachian State, 13

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Georgia Southern Athletics provides current information on all its sports through its official website, [GSEagles.com](http://GSEagles.com), which is fully responsive across all mobile devices.

Information on Eagle athletics can also be found through social media channels [facebook.com/GSAthletics](https://facebook.com/GSAthletics), [twitter.com/GSAthletics](https://twitter.com/GSAthletics) and [Instagram.com/GSAthletics](https://Instagram.com/GSAthletics). To purchase tickets to Georgia Southern athletics events, visit [GSEagles.com/tickets](https://GSEagles.com/tickets).

In order to expedite entry and provide a safe environment for all patrons and participants, Georgia Southern Athletics has implemented a Clear Bag Policy for all ticketed sporting events, effective Aug. 1, 2017. Fans can find the complete policy as well as an FAQ section at [GSEagles.com/ClearBag](https://GSEagles.com/ClearBag).