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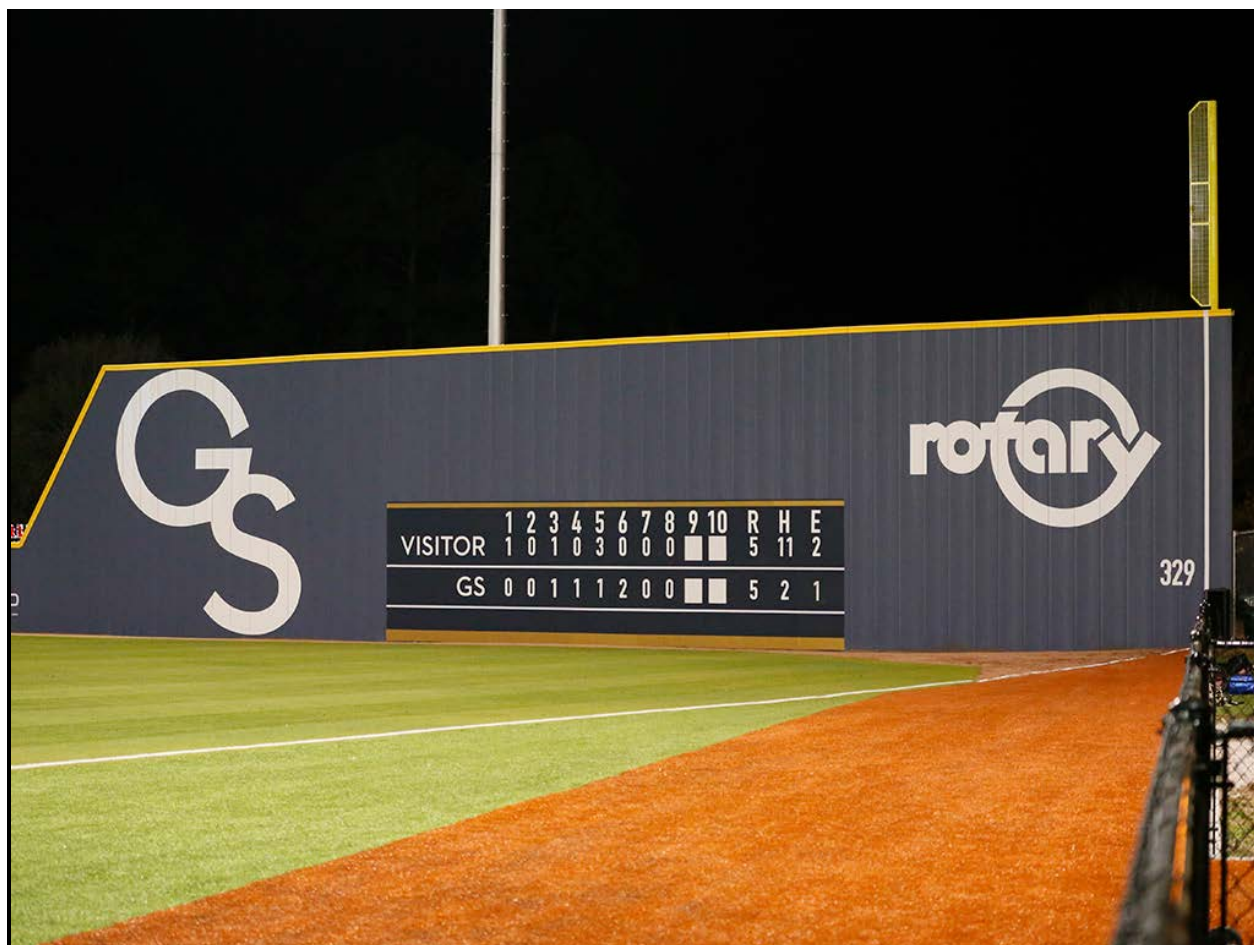
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Frank Fortune

W: CONN, Devin (1-0) L: [Landon Hughes](#) (0-1) S: HOLCOMBE, Tyler (1)

Game Recap: Baseball | 2/17/2017 11:58:00 PM

Eagle Baseball Drops Season Opener in 10 Innings

Blue Raiders and Eagles return for Game Two on Saturday at 3 p.m.

STATESBORO, GA. - Georgia Southern Baseball kicked off the 2017 Baseball season on Friday, dropping 10-inning decision to Middle Tennessee, 6-5. The Eagles were held to just three hits, but worked 12 walks to open the year. Georgia Southern and Middle Tennessee return to the diamond on Saturday for game two of the three-game series at 3 p.m.

Ryan Kemp opened extra innings with a leadoff walk and made it to second with a two-out stolen base. An RBI single from Brad Jarreau delivered what proved to be the winning run as Middle Tennessee improved to 1-0 on the year.

Georgia Southern had chances down the stretch, first in the ninth inning when a leadoff walk put [Ryan Cleveland](#) on first base. A hit batter moved Cleveland into scoring position, but [Jordan Wren](#) lined out to short as Cleveland was caught out on the bang-bang play.

"Obviously we didn't get a lot of hits tonight, but I thought we had some good at bats," said Head Coach [Rodney Hennon](#). "We walked a lot, (Ryan) Cleveland had some good at bats, (Jordan) Wren had some good at bats as well. We had chances to score, but we've got to do a better job of scoring with runners in scoring position."

The Eagles again got a runner into scoring position in the 10th inning thanks to a C.J. Ballard single to the outfield. He moved up to second on a sacrifice bunt, but a strikeout and a fly out to right ended the game.

Middle Tennessee got a run in the first and third innings off starting pitcher [Brian Eichhorn](#) who went 4.0 innings allowing four hits with one walk and three strikeouts.

Georgia Southern got on the board in the third when [Evan McDonald](#) reached on a fielding error by the Blue Raider third baseman. A double from [Ryan Cleveland](#) drove in the run and cut the lead to 2-1. The Eagles drew even in the fourth thanks to a sacrifice fly by freshman [Mitchell Golden](#) who started at third base in his collegiate debut. He plated fellow freshman [Steven Curry](#) to level the game at 2-2.

A two-out fielding error by [Evan McDonald](#) opened the door for a three-run Middle Tennessee fifth inning. A walk and two more hits dealt the damage as the visitors stretched the lead to 5-2.

Georgia Southern had an immediate answer, scoring a run in the fifth and two more in the sixth. Cleveland's leadoff walk in the fifth turned into a run thanks to two wild pitches. Four-straight walks in the sixth plated a run while [Tyler Martin](#)'s fielder's choice to short sent the second run to tie the game.

[Landon Hughes](#) took the loss to fall to 0-1 on the year. The run conceded ends a run of 14.0 consecutive scoreless innings for the senior which dates back to May 10, 2016. He worked three innings on Friday night, allowing three hits with five strikeouts.

Friday night's contest clocked in at 4:16, making it the second-consecutive home opener to last more than four hours. The 2016 home opener was a 4:50 affair which also went into extra innings, lasting 16 frames.

Georgia Southern and Middle Tennessee return to the diamond on Saturday for the second of three games. First pitch is set for 3 p.m. from Jack Stallings Field at J.I. Clements Stadium. Live video of the contest can be seen live on GS All-Access, but there will be no radio coverage of the game due to conflicts with Georgia Southern Basketball.

Georgia Southern Athletics provides up-to-date information on all its sports through its official website, GSEagles.com, through social media channels [facebook.com/GSAthletics](https://www.facebook.com/GSAthletics),

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