

2-18-2017

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Georgia Southern University

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Recommended Citation

Georgia Southern University, "McWhorter's Walk-Off Evens Series with Middle Tennessee" (2017). *Athletics News*. 913.
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Frank Fortune

Game Recap: Baseball | 2/18/2017 9:04:00 PM

McWhorter's Walk-Off Evens Series with Middle Tennessee

The Freshman's 10th inning liner seals a come-from behind 7-6 win

STATESBORO, GA. - Georgia Southern Baseball erased a six-run deficit at the seventh inning stretch to take the team's first win of the season in walk-off fashion on Saturday at J.I. Clements Stadium. Freshman Mason McWhorter sealed the win with a walk-off liner to center in the 10th inning, capping a 2-for-2 day that started as a pinch hitter in the ninth. Georgia Southern and Middle Tennessee return to the diamond on Sunday for the rubber match at 1 p.m.

McWhorter did the damage in the 10th, but the spark for the Eagles came from

sophomore transfer [Tyler Martin](#), who snapped a 0-for-5 start to the season with a leadoff triple in the seventh inning. An RBI single from [Mitchell Golden](#) opened the scoring, while two wild pitches brought the Eagle third baseman in to score and cut the lead to 6-2.

"I was really proud of our guys for continuing to play and competing hard today," said Head Coach [Rodney Hennon](#). "The first six innings were pretty frustrating offensively, Tyler Hasper really dominated us with the fastball. [Tyler Martin](#) really sparked us today, he had a tough night last night, but he kept playing hard and it got us going with that triple in the seventh and the home run in the ninth. Hitting really can be contagious and our guys started stepping up to the plate with some confidence late in the game."

Martin kicked off the ninth inning with Georgia Southern's first home run of the season, a leadoff job to left field that cut the lead to 6-3. Golden followed with a single to left on the next pitch, as did McWhorter two batters later following an infield fly. [Evan McDonald](#) worked a walk to load the bases with one out. A strikeout reduced the Eagles to their final out with Preseason All-Sun Belt selection [Ryan Cleveland](#) walking to the plate. The lefty ripped a double down the right field line to clear the bases and tie the game at 6-6, forcing extra innings for the second-straight day.

In the top of the 10th, Middle Tennessee got a rally started thanks to a well-placed infield hit and a fielding error by the Eagles. A double play, however, ended the threat and opened the door for the Eagles in the home half of the 10th.

Golden opened the 10th with his second-straight single to left. A walk to [Cal Baker](#) along with two wild pitches put both runners in scoring position for the freshman McWhorter. The single to right center sparked the celebration as Georgia Southern took its first walk-off win since May 14th, 2016 when [Jordan Wren](#) walked it off with a single against Clemson.

The story of the day early was the pitching of Middle Tennessee starting pitcher Tyler Hasper who frustrated the Eagle batters early, holding the hometown nine to just two hits over the first six innings with 11 strikeouts. He left the game with a 6-0 lead, but nine hits off the Blue Raider bullpen sealed the Georgia Southern comeback.

Eagle starting pitcher [Jacob Condra-Bogan](#) made his debut with the blue and white after three seasons at Wofford. The graduate transfer went 4.0 innings while scattering six hits and three runs, two earned. The other three runs were scored off relief pitcher [Seth Shuman](#) who also made his debut on the diamond for the Eagles. The multi-sport pitcher started one game this season for the Georgia Southern Football team at quarterback. He fanned four in 2.1 innings while working around seven hits and three runs.

Sophomore [Zach Cowart](#) had a solid outing, working 2.2 no-hit innings to keep the Blue Raiders to just six runs on the day. He entered with the bases loaded in the seventh and got a double play to extricate the Eagles from the jam. The win, however, went

to [Connor Simmons](#) who worked a one-hit 10th inning to improve to 1-0 on the young season.

First pitch on Saturday was delayed by an hour due to a line of rain which quickly passed through after the teams took infield.

Georgia Southern and Middle Tennessee will return to the hallowed turf of Jack Stallings Field at J.I. Clements Stadium for the rubber match of the series on Sunday afternoon at 1 p.m. The Georgia Southern Sports Network and Voice of the Eagles [Danny Reed](#) will provide the radio call of the game with live video available at GSEagles.com/Watch.

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