

3-4-2017

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### Recommended Citation

Georgia Southern University, "Georgia State Holds On to Defeat Women's Basketball 63-62" (2017). *Athletics News*. 990.  
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## Georgia State Holds On to Defeat Women's Basketball 63-62

*The Eagles will travel to New Orleans to play in the first round of the Sun Belt Tournament on Tuesday*



**ATLANTA, Ga.** - The Georgia Southern women's basketball team (13-16, 9-9 SBC) dropped a heartbreaker to rival Georgia State (12-17, 8-10 SBC) on Saturday afternoon to close out regular season play. The Eagles and Panthers kept it close until the final buzzer inside of the Georgia State Sports Arena, changing leads a total of ten times and only being able to extend the largest lead of the game to a mere eight points. Georgia State was able to capitalize on second-chance points and sink timely shots late in the game to defeat the Eagles, 63-62.

Senior [Angel McGowan](#) led the Eagles with 20 total points on the day, including a clutch three-pointer with only 16 seconds remaining in the fourth quarter. McGowan also led the team in rebounds with eight, and totaled three steals on the day. Freshman [Alexis Brown](#) shot an outstanding 4-6 from three-point range and scored 14 points for

GS. Patrice Butler added 13 points on the day and tallied five rebounds. Heading into today's matchup, Butler had grabbed a total of 499 career rebounds between her time at Furman and GS. Her five today allowed her to break through the 500-mark and extend her career total to 504.

Makeba Ponder carried the Panthers, scoring 20 total points, 12 of which came from beyond the three-point arch. Ponder was able to sink five timely three-pointers in the second half to propel the Panthers to the win. Freshman Jada Lewis contributed 17 points and three assists while Haley Gerrin led State from down low with a total of eight rebounds.

## **THE STORY**

Georgia Southern and Georgia State battled from the first blow of the whistle on Saturday afternoon. The Panthers came out of the gates shooting a hot 42.9% (6-14) from field goal range throughout the first quarter, but only hitting one of their seven three-point attempts. State held the lead by only one point at the end of the first quarter but was able to hold Georgia Southern to a mere 28.6% (4-14) percentage from field goal range despite a 37.5% (3-8) percentage from beyond the arch.

The Eagles continued to look for open shots from the field throughout the beginning of the second quarter while both teams continued the back-and-forth action. GS hit a hot streak towards the end of the first half, extending their lead to seven points with two minutes remaining in the second quarter, the largest GS lead of the ball game. Panthers standout freshman Jada Lewis ended the half by hocking up a long-range three-pointer and minimizing State's deficit to only two points, 32-30.

Georgia State went on a 9-0 run, extending their lead to eight points with just under three minutes to play in the third quarter. The eight-point Panther lead in the third ended up being the largest from either team throughout the entirety of the game, and it didn't last long. The Eagles came out of a time out in the final minutes of the third on fire, going on a 10-1 scoring run, highlighted by a couple of clutch three-pointers from freshman Alexis Brown. A free throw by Alexis Foulks gave Georgia Southern the lead heading into the final ten minutes of play, 47-46.

Georgia State's Makeba Ponder was the game-changer in the fourth quarter. The senior nailed back-to-back-to-back three-pointers in the start of the fourth, causing the Georgia State Sports Arena to erupt and giving the Panthers a 57-52 lead with five minutes left in the game. The Eagles were able to hold State to a scoring drought of over three minutes in the final moments of the game - but offensive rebounds, second-chance points and a long-range three-pointer from Ponder with 4.6 seconds on the clock sealed the deal for Georgia State.

## **QUOTABLES**

*Head Coach Kip Drown*

"There's a lot of frustration from the team after this game because this is our arch rival.

This is the second year in a row that we have lost by one here in Atlanta and we lost by four at home earlier this season after giving up a 15-point lead. We have had two close games with this Georgia State team where we have not been able to get over the hump with, and they wanted to win this game bad. We played really hard, we competed all day long and in the end, they made one more play than we did."

"You have to tip your hat to them and even though the result is disappointing, but we still live to play on Tuesday. We are heading straight down to New Orleans to get ready for the Sun Belt Tournament here tonight. We have some fun stuff planned for the girls while we are down there, but we are looking forward to finding out who we will face later tonight, and then just getting on the court on Tuesday and competing hard."

### **NEXT UP**

Georgia Southern travels down to New Orleans to gear up for the Sun Belt Conference Tournament beginning next week. The Eagles will play in the first round on Tuesday, March 7. The full tournament bracket will be released on Saturday night after the conclusion of each of the team's regular season slates.

*The 2017 Sun Belt Conference Men's and Women's Basketball Championships are scheduled for a week of March Madness in the Big Easy. New Orleans will once again be home to the two championships that will take place at Lakefront Arena from March 7-12 and ticket books can now be purchased from your our ticket office. For more information, visit the Sun Belt Conference's championship central websites - [Men's Championship](#) – [Women's Championship](#) – and be sure to follow the @FunBelt on social media - [@SunBelt](#).*

*Georgia Southern Athletics provides up-to-date information on all its sports through its official website, [GSEagles.com](http://GSEagles.com), through social media channels [facebook.com/GSAthletics](https://facebook.com/GSAthletics), [twitter.com/GSAthletics](https://twitter.com/GSAthletics), iOS app Georgia Southern Eagles and Android app Eagles GATA. Fans can purchase tickets to Georgia Southern Athletics events by visiting [GSEagles.com/Tickets](http://GSEagles.com/Tickets).*