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PREVIEW: GS Men's Soccer Visits Hartwick For Sun Belt Clash Saturday

Both teams looking to get a leg up in the league standings heading into final matches of regular season

Men's Soccer

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STATESBORO, Ga. - The Georgia Southern men's soccer team returns to Sun Belt Conference play on Saturday, traveling to Hartwick College for a 3:30 p.m. matchup with the Hawks at Elmore Field in Oneonta, N.Y.

The Eagles (6-6) and Hartwick (6-6-1) are each 1-1 in Sun Belt play so far this season, so the match is key for each squad's chances at a possible league title. Hartwick has won two straight after defeating Cornell, 2-1, in double overtime on Tuesday. Georgia Southern has alternated wins and losses in its last six contests, including its 2-1 loss at UAB on Tuesday.

"It's wide open," Head Coach [John Murphy](#) said about the Sun Belt race heading into the final weeks of the regular season. "The Sun Belt season I went through last year was very competitive. And when you see the results in the non-league games, they have been quite good as well. The Sun Belt is going to be a huge challenge for any the six teams involved so you can't look beyond anybody and we're certainly not going to look beyond Hartwick."

The two teams met last season in Statesboro, with Georgia Southern claiming a 2-1 win behind goals from [Josh Bronstorph](#) and [Emil Laursen](#) on Oct. 22, 2016. The overall series between the two teams is even at 2-2, but in the only previous meeting at Hartwick, the Hawks won 3-0 on Oct. 9, 2015. Jamie O'Grady paces the Hartwick attack, as his 12 goals not only lead the Sun Belt but rank 3rd in NCAA Division I as well. He has also had a nation-best five game-winning goals.

"Hartwick has one of the great traditions in college men's soccer," Coach Murphy said. "[Former Hartwick head coaches]Timo Liekowski and Jim Lennox are real legends of the game. With the great players they've had over the years and the fantastic programs they've had, we're looking forward to that. It's going to be good soccer weather. It'll be nice and cool and conducive to people moving and getting involved."

Saturday's action wraps up a three-match road swing as the Eagles will return home for two of their last three regular season contests next week. Despite the increased importance put on getting results in these last few matches, Coach Murphy is simply looking for his team's performance to be its best.

"We look to get the right performance," Murphy said. "If we get the right performance, the result takes care of itself. That's really our philosophy and our mantra, where we focus on getting the correct performance from everybody."

Follow Saturday's match live through Hartwick's [live streaming](#) and [live stats portal](#).

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