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Amanda Korponay

Game Recap: Women's Basketball | 2/25/2016 8:26:00 PM

Jones Leads Appalachian State Past Women's Basketball

The Eagles cap the season in Louisiana next week.

STATESBORO, Ga. – Joi Jones scored 15 points, including six straight in crunch time, to lift Appalachian State to a 68-62 Sun Belt Conference women's basketball victory over Georgia Southern Thursday evening in Hanner Fieldhouse.

In a back-and-forth fourth quarter that saw four lead changes and four ties, Jones broke a 60-60 tie and put Appalachian State ahead for good with a conventional 3-point play with 1:57 remaining. [Patrice Butler](#) scored a layup for the Eagles on their next possession, but Jones was fouled going to the hoop for the Mountaineers and canned two free throws to make the score 65-62 with 1:06 to go.

[Alexis Sams](#) got free for the Eagles, but her running layup rimmed out with 42 seconds to play, and Jones was fouled on her way to the basket. The junior canned 1 of 2 to make it a four-point margin with 18.7 left. Georgia Southern tried to work it into Butler, but Madi Story snuck in and knocked the ball out of bounds with 6.2 to go. Bria Carter stole the inbounds pass as the Eagles tried to go into Butler again and made two free throws with 3.8 left to seal the win.

Sams finished with a career-high 20 points to go along with three assists and two steals for Georgia Southern (7-20, 4-14), and Butler recorded 17 points and five rebounds. [Sierra Kirkland](#) finished with nine points and seven rebounds.

Jones was 5 of 8 from the floor, 4 of 5 from the free-throw line and dished out five assists for Appalachian State (9-17, 6-11). Story collected 14 points, six rebounds, three steals and two assists, and Carter contributed nine points, 12 rebounds, five assists and two steals.

The story

App used a 10-0 run to open a 22-11 lead on a 3-pointer by Wood early in the second period. Three Mountaineer turnovers led to fast-break buckets for [Angel McGowan](#), Kirkland and [Trellanie English-Lurry](#), sparking a 9-0 run for the Eagles, and App went into halftime with a slim 33-31 lead.

Georgia Southern started the second half with an 11-3 spurt, capped by a [Sierra Butler](#) 3-pointer that gave the Eagles a 42-36 cushion. App answered right back with a 12-2 run of its own, and consecutive triples by Story and Farrahn Wood gave the Mountaineers a 48-44 lead. Sams knocked down a 3-pointer from the wing with three seconds left in the frame to set up the nip-and-tuck fourth quarter.

Quotables from coach [Kip Drown](#)

"We put them on the line six or eight times in the last three minutes, and it was all because we were trying to block shots. That's not what we teach. We teach go straight up, and never foul a shooter – make people make shots. Don't bail them out and let them shoot free throws. That's really a big thing for us."

"[Alexis Sams](#) played great. She's been an unsung hero all year, and she really stepped up tonight and filled a void when we needed it, made some really big shots and kind of put us on her back. She's really progressed this year in attacking the rim. She has gotten better as the year has gone on being aggressive and attacking the rim, and she did that tonight. At the start of the year, she was basically a spot-up 3-point shooter, and now she's being more aggressive."

"They have gone through a really tough stretch of losing games that are winnable. You keep working hard and keep trying to get better, but at some point in time, you'd like to get rewarded for that – it kind of gives you that energy. But I say this with love, we have nobody to blame but ourselves because to be honest with you, I thought they brought a

little extra juice that we didn't have."

Next Up

The Eagles cap the regular season with a pair of contests in Louisiana next week. Georgia Southern takes on ULM Thursday and UL Lafayette Saturday.

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