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Game Recap: Baseball | 3/8/2016 11:24:00 PM | Kristina Horsley

Eagles Clip Kennesaw State on Walk-Off Balk in 12 Innings

Georgia Southern opens league play on Friday at Appalachian State

STATESBORO, Ga. – In a back-and-forth midweek contest, Georgia Southern won 10-9 against Kennesaw in 12 innings. There were a total of six lead changes and five ties throughout the game, but a balk in the bottom of the 12th inning gave the Eagles the victory and closed out a 10-game homestand. The Eagles (8-5) visit Appalachian State this weekend to open league play.

QUOTABLES

HEAD COACH RODNEY HENNON

"I'm proud of our guys for continuing to play hard and hanging in there. We overcame a

lot of mistakes to win tonight, but we have to get back to playing good, clean baseball. I don't like the way that we played tonight. We did some good things on the bases but we made some costly mistakes, too. We have to get back to some of the things we were doing well last week. It would have been easy to let this game get away from us tonight, but the guys hung in there and continued to play and we were able to make some good things happen."

PLAYER OF THE GAME

C.J. Ballard // OF // Fr. // Williamson, GA

Ballard went two-for-three on the night, with a pair of runs scored, one walk and two sacrifice bunts to help lead the Eagles to their 10-9 victory over Kennesaw.

CRUCIAL MOMENTS

TOP 2ND – The Owls gained an early 2-0 lead over the Eagles to start the second inning. Their first run scored on a sacrifice bunt and a bobble by Eagle pitcher [Lawson Humphries](#), while a second crossed on a sacrifice fly.

BOT 3RD – A pair of wild pitches and an error by the Owls put the Eagles on the scoreboard late in the inning. [Kent Rollins](#) struck out swinging, but reached second on a wild pitch and a throwing error. Lead-off batter C.J. Ballard crossed on the throwing error, scoring the first run for Georgia Southern. The second wild pitch of the inning put [Ryan Cleveland](#) on first and plated Rollins from third. Cleveland advanced later in the inning to score the run that put the Eagles up, 3-2.

TOP 4TH – Kennesaw took its second lead of the night in the fourth, going up 4-3. With two outs and runners in scoring position, Matt Erwin singled to send both runners home.

BOT 4TH – The Eagles evened the score at 4-4 with a run off a grounded out to first. [Cal Baker's](#) lead-off walk and stolen base put him in scoring position before two back-to-back ground outs by Ballard and McDonald allowed him to score.

BOT 5TH – Another Eagle run by Cleveland put Georgia Southern back on top, thanks to [Logan Baldwin's](#) RBI single.

TOP 6TH – The Eagles gifted Kennesaw State a run in the sixth to tie the game again. A dropped fly ball in centerfield allowed a run to score and tied the game at 5-5.

BOT 6TH – Georgia Southern seized its third lead of the night with two runs in the sixth. [Evan McDonald](#) dropped a bunt in front of the plate and reached as the Owls tried to get Baker at the plate. The throw was late and the Eagles had their first run of the inning. Rollins followed with the RBI single that plated McDonald to put the Eagles up by 2.

TOP 7TH – The lead swapped again as the Owls scored three more runs in the top of the seventh.

BOT 9TH – [Tarez Miller](#) scored the equalizer in the bottom of the ninth on a ground out to send the game into extra innings.

TOP 10TH – Lead-off batter Matt Mixon doubled to open the door for the first run in extra innings. Back-to-back sacrifice bunts plated Mixon to put the Owls up by one heading into the bottom of the frame.

BOT 10TH – Ballard started the inning with a walk, but advanced to third on [Eric Furphy's](#) single through the left side. An error by the leftfielder gave Ballard the green light to tie the game again, this time at 9-9.

BOT 12TH – [Eric Furphy](#) got the Eagles in business in the 12th with a leadoff hit by pitch. He made his way around to third on a pair of wild pitches. After a walk to pinch hitter [Drew Kelley](#), the Owls went to the bullpen for reliever Logan Hutchinson. Before Hutchinson's first pitch, he faked a pickoff move to first base for a game-ending balk.

NOTES

- Lasting 4 hours and 50 minutes, this contest is the longest lasting game of the season for both teams..
- The Eagles had a season-high five errors in the game.
- [Will Hudgins](#) is on a 5-game hitting streak and batting .257 for the season.
- Either team scored at least one run in nine of the 12 innings.
- Georgia Southern stole seven bases, a season-high behind a career-best three from [Ryan Cleveland](#).

NEXT GAME

Georgia Southern ventures to Boone, N.C. this Friday to face Sun Belt Conference opponent Appalachian State in a three-game weekend series. First pitch is set for 6 p.m. on Friday, with games at 3 p.m. Saturday and 1 p.m. Sunday.

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, 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.

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