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Game Recap: Baseball | 3/24/2016 10:29:00 PM

## Challenger's 10 Ks Stymie Arkansas State in 8-3 Road Victory

*Redshirt junior records a career-best strikeouts to open the series*

**JONESBORO, ARK.** – Georgia Southern Baseball opened its three-game series at Arkansas State with an 8-3 win on Thursday night. Georgia Southern picked up its fifth-straight road win to improve to 14-7 and 5-2 in league play behind a career-high 10 strikeouts from starting pitcher [Evan Challenger](#). The Trojans fell to 10-11 on the year and 2-5 in Sun Belt play. Game two of the series is set for Friday night at 7 p.m. (ET)/6 p.m. (CT).

Thursday's game featured a 20 mph breeze blowing out to left field to make it a rare hitter's day at Tomlison Stadium in Jonesboro.

## QUOTABLES

### HEAD COACH RODNEY HENNON

"We got the four-spot in the second inning and they helped us out with a couple of errors. We took advantage of that and got some big at bats from the bottom of the lineup. Those guys gave us some good at bats and got some good hits. I thought (Evan) Challenger got better as the game went on. He wasn't very sharp the first few innings, but he settled in and pitched well for us. We've got to come out and play with a sense of urgency again tomorrow. I liked the energy tonight, it was a good start, but we've got to bring it again tomorrow night."

### PITCHERS OF RECORD

WIN – Evan Challenger (4-2)

LOSS – Tyler Zuber (2-2)

SAVE – None

### PLAYER OF THE GAME

Evan Challenger – LHP – R-JR - Mount Dora, Fla.

7.2 IP – 6H – 3R – 3 ER – 2BB – 10K

Evan Challenger delivered an outstanding outing on a hitter's day in Jonesboro. The redshirt junior gave up just six hits and three runs to pick up his fourth win of the season. He walked two and struck out a career high 10 batters.

### CRUCIAL MOMENTS

**TOP 2nd** – Georgia Southern capitalized on two Red Wolf errors to take an early 4-0 lead. CJ Ballard scored one with a double to left while Lawson Humphries tallied his first collegiate hit to plate Ballard. A sacrifice fly from Evan McDonald and an infield single by CJ Brazil did the rest of the damage to provide some early run support for Evan Challenger.

**BOTTOM 2nd** – A-State responded immediately with a run of their own in the second, loading the bases with a walk and two hits. An RBI ground out by Neil Lambert

**TOP 3rd** – Three doubles in the third opened the door for the Eagles to score two more in the frame with Logan Baldwin and Ballard coming in to score.

**TOP 4th** – Brazil clubbed his fourth double of the season to open the frame, but it was a sacrifice fly from Ryan Cleveland that drove in the Eagle catcher to extend the lead to 7-1.

**BOTTOM 4th** – A leadoff walk came back to haunt the Eagles with Joe Scheimpf lofting a two-run home run to left. The ball got into the gale blowing out to left and carried just over the wall to cut the lead to 7-3.

**TOP 8th** – CJ Brazil tagged his third hit of the game with a solo shot to left to extend the lead to 8-3. It marked the second-straight game that the Eagle backstop has hit a home run.

### NOTES

- Ryan Cleveland extended his hit streak to 11-straight games. He went 1-for-3 to improve to 13-43 over the last 11 games where he is hitting .302.

- The bottom three hitters in the Eagle lineup combined for six hits, tallying two

each. Lawson Humphries went 2-for-4 with a double to take his first career hits. Cal Baker was 2-for-5 with a run scored while CJ Ballard got two hits (both doubles), two runs scored and two RBIs.

- Leadoff hitter Evan McDonald's 11-game hit streak came to an end on Thursday night when he went 0-for-3. He got an RBI off a sac fly and opened the game by getting hit on the second pitch of the game.

- Georgia Southern had six extra base hits in the game, surpassing their previous season high by two. The Eagles tied their season-high in just the fourth inning.

- The Eagles tallied 13 hits in the game, one off of a season-high 14 against College of Charleston on March 1st.

### **NEXT GAME**

The Easter Weekend series continues on Friday night with game two starting at 7 p.m. (ET)/6 p.m. (CT) in Jonesboro. Video streaming is available at [AStateRedWolves.com](http://AStateRedWolves.com) with radio coverage from the Georgia Southern Sports Network available at [GSEagles.com/showcase](http://GSEagles.com/showcase).

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