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Spring Practice Kicks Off In Statesboro

Eagles go through intense first practice under Summers' watch

Ethan Flynn

Play Video



Football | 3/24/2016 9:16:00 PM

Story Links

STATESBORO - The Georgia Southern Eagles were officially back in action Thursday during their first day of Spring Practice for the 2016 season. With high expectations for recently announced head coach, [Tyson Summers](#), the three month wait to see his football program take to the practice fields was soon-to-be over. In line with the values that Summers plans to instill, the first player to cross the bridge at Beautiful Eagle Creek at 3:05 p.m. was none other than senior safety [Vegas Harley](#).

Summers hopes his seniors motivate the younger players to be the best they can possibly be throughout Spring Practice and the upcoming season. The Summers Era began with a 150-minute practice during a seemingly perfect 82-degree and breezy March afternoon.

Over 100 Eagles took to the field with Summers and his staff. The gear they wore was basic: helmets, jerseys, shorts and cleats. The first Spring Practice consisted of the basics: stretching, individual periods, various position oriented drills, kicking periods and then implementation of some of the offensive and defensive schemes during the team periods.

"I think it was good," Summers said. "It felt good for us and our staff to get out there with the kids and I thought early on, there was a lot of anxiety with them...first day... jittery...trying to do everything right and trying to be perfect and what I told them to start with was to go as hard and fast as you can and you'll be alright. There will be mistakes, we'll coach you up. Believe in the process and we'll wind up where we need to be, but certainly we're a long way from that."

Summers made sure it was clear the Eagles realized they're going to work tirelessly but that they should also have fun in the process of becoming the championship caliber team he hopes to have.

During the first Spring Practice, there were roughly a dozen or so fans there to support him and the Eagles as they practiced. Two of the biggest fans in attendance were Georgia Southern Hall of Fame players – Adrian Peterson and [Tracy Ham](#).

What was different from past Spring Practices? Summers decided that he wanted a DJ booth playing popular hip hop/rap songs incorporated into the practice. What was his reasoning? "I like that the music makes everybody communicate. When it's loud, it creates chaos, to be honest with you. It makes coaches have to very deliberate in what they're saying. It makes the players, particularly in the no-huddle offense, have to be very deliberate...There are perks of it because it certainly keeps momentum and makes it certainly seem more fun but most importantly, I like it because it creates a little chaos."

When speaking about the future of the Eagles and what's expected out of the younger players, two senior leaders of the Eagles had the following to say: "We want to win more and go and do bigger things than win the GoDaddy Bowl this year," said redshirt senior quarterback [Favian Upshaw](#). "This isn't as serious as Fall Camp, everybody gets reps out here, show us what you can do. We need to know we can depend on you come Fall. I want to be a better leader. I'm getting kind of old now, so I need to be a vocal leader and show these guys I know what I'm doing. I lead by example."

"There's going to be a little 'jazz'," said redshirt senior defensive end [Nardo Govan](#). "There's a great vibe with the music and everything. We're dealing with little change ups

but it'll be good for us. We've always had a really great defense since the Erk Era. Stay humble and don't come in with a big head. Being coachable is key."

The Eagles will look to continue making progress they next time they take to the practice fields of Beautiful Eagle Creek this upcoming Saturday morning.

Sat., March 26; 9:15-11:30 AM

Tues., March 29; 3:15-5:30 PM

Thurs., March 31; 3:15-5:30 PM

Sat., April 2; 9:15-11:30 AM

Tues., April 5; 3:15-5:30 PM

Thurs., April 7; 3:15-5:30 PM

Sat., April 9; 9:15-11:30 AM

Tues., April 12; 3:15-5:30 PM

Thurs., April 14; 3:15-5:30 PM

Sat., April 16; Noon ... SPRING GAME ... Statesboro High (location subject to change to Paulson Stadium pending turf completion)

Tues., April 19; 9:15-11:30 AM

Thurs., April 21; 3:15-5:30 PM

Sat., April 23; 9:15-11:30 AM

Mon., April 25; 3:15-5:30 PM

Spring Football Practice Policies and Procedures

1) Fans must enter the Beautiful Eagle Creek Practice Fields through the gate off Tillman Road. Upon entry, fans will check in and receive a pass. All those entering must have a state- or government-issued ID and will sign in.

2) For safety reasons, fans will be allowed only in the marked areas. These areas will be painted and easily visible.

3) There will be no photos allowed at any time once practice begins. Fans are requested to leave their cell phones and cameras in their cars, but if they must bring them in, they have to remain in their pockets. Violation of this rule may result in being asked to leave the premises.

4) Fans are asked to not report on any facets of practice via social media during or after practice. This includes specifics that occur during any periods. Specifics include, but are not limited to, coach-to-player comments, player-to-player comments, coach-to-coach comments, description of formations, drills or plays, or any "live" updates on injuries

5) Practice dates/times/locations are subject to change based on weather or other factors.

6) The GS Football Program or Athletics Department reserve the right to change these policies and procedures at any time.

Tailgate Cook-Off Set for Spring Game April 16

It's time once again to showcase your skills at the [Third Annual Spring Football Tailgate Cook-Off](#) on Saturday, April 16 right before the annual Blue-White Spring Game, which starts at noon.

The top-place tailgate and grill masters will claim the title of 2016 Spring Football Tailgate Cookoff

Champion, a one-of-a-kind trophy, a one-night stay at a hotel, plus two tickets to the Georgia Southern vs. Georgia Tech game in Atlanta on Oct. 15, 2016, and of course, bragging rights.

To enter the contest, a team or individual must register online by Wednesday, April 13, 2016 and pay a \$20 cash fee per entry on site on April 16. All teams or individuals are responsible for providing their own food and equipment for grilling/cooking and will be allowed only one vehicle inside the cook-off zone. Participants are encouraged to grill, cook, steam, etc. their best food for fans to enjoy. Participants need only provide a sampling of food (not a full meal).

Punt, Pass and Kick Contest Added to Spring Game Activities

Newly added to the activities of the Spring Football Game this year is the [Punt, Pass, and Kick Contest](#) for kids ages 5-12. Little Eagles (boys and girls) will have an opportunity to showcase their football skills on the field before the game. The event is FREE, every child will receive a T-shirt and the winners receive their very own trophy. Participation is limited though so parents must register their child online by Thursday, April 14.

2016 Season Tickets are on Sale

Football season tickets are on sale and can be purchased by visiting GSEagles.com/tickets or calling 1-800-GSU-WINS. Save 140 percent by buying season tickets. Tickets start as low as \$75 per person for the season.

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](https://www.facebook.com/GSAthletics), twitter.com/GSAthletics, iOS app Georgia Southern Eagles and Android app Eagles GATA. Tickets to Georgia Southern athletics events can be purchased by visiting GSEagles.com/tickets.

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