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SBAL Preview: Eagles Play Gamecocks in Columbia Tuesday on the SEC Network+

GS and SC will play a single game in Columbia, S.C. at 6 p.m. Tuesday night



Softball | 4/18/2016 2:58:00 PM

Story Links

[**GAME NOTES \(PDF\)**](#)

ROAD WARRIORS

Georgia Southern hits the road once again, this time for a six-game road swing that will take the Eagles through South Carolina, into Alabama and back into Georgia. The

Eagles, who are 5-9 in true road games this season, start the trek off with a single game at Southeastern Conference opponent South Carolina on Tuesday, April 19 at 6 p.m. The game against the Gamecocks will be available on the SEC Network+ and it will be the fourth SEC opponent for the Eagles this season. Following the bout with SC, Georgia Southern will travel to Troy, Ala. this coming weekend for a three-game Sun Belt Conference series at Troy. The series will get started on Saturday, April 23 with a 2 p.m. ET doubleheader before concluding with a single game at 1 p.m. ET on Sunday. The Eagles will close out the six games on the road with a mid-week doubleheader at Savannah State on Wednesday, April 27. The twinbill in Savannah is slated to start at 5 p.m.

FACILITY INFO

Tuesday's single game against South Carolina will take place at Carolina Softball Stadium at Beckham Field in Columbia, S.C. The address is 1318 Heyward St., Columbia, S.C., 29208.

[Live stats](#) will be available through South Carolina and live video of the game will also be available via the [SEC Network+](#).

SCOUTING SOUTH CAROLINA

The Gamecocks of South Carolina (32-12) went 2-2 last week taking a 1-0 game over USC Upstate before falling 2-1 in a conference series at home to Mississippi. The Gamecocks are 27-2 against non-conference opponents this season and have won their last 18 in a row over non-SEC teams. South Carolina holds a 39-0 record all-time against Georgia Southern, including a 20-0 record in Columbia. The two programs have faced off on the softball diamond in each of the last three years with two of those taking place in Columbia.

On offense, the Gamecocks are batting .320 as a team. Only two players have started all 44 games for SC and those are Kaylea Snaer and Alaynie Page. Snaer and Page are just two of six Gamecocks who are batting .300 or better heading into Tuesday's game. Snaer leads the way with a .398 average in 133 official at-bats. She boasts 53 hits, including a team-best 21 doubles, and five home runs. She has batted in 33 runners - second on the team - and has scored 16 runs herself. She boasts a .669 slugging percentage and a .461 on-base percentage. Just behind her is Alexis Mack who is currently batting .370 through 40 games. Mack is second on the team with 12 stolen bases in 14 attempts. Page is third on the team with a .343 batting average but she leads the team with 38 runs scored, 36 RBI, 13 stolen bases, eight home runs and three triples. She is slugging .601 and boasts a .433 on-base percentage.

In the circle, South Carolina has utilized four pitchers so far this season, but two have carried most of the load as the Gamecocks' pitching staff boasts a 2.73 earned run average. SC is led by Nickie Blue with a 2.37 ERA in 36 appearances. She takes a 15-9 record into Tuesday, has made 17 starts, pitched eight complete games and has three shutouts to her name, but has helped with seven more. She has five saves on the year and has pitched 141.2 innings while striking out 94 batters. Jessica Elliott is the other

workhorse for the Gamecocks with a 2.46 ERA in 36 appearances. She has made 27 starts, helped Blue secure the seven shutouts and has a 16-3 record in 139.2 innings of work. She has struck out 103 batters.

[SC ROSTER](#)
[SC SCHEDULE](#)
[SC STATISTICS](#)

UP NEXT

The Eagles will next travel to Troy, Ala. for a Sun Belt Conference series against the Trojans of Troy this weekend. The series will get started on Saturday, April 23 with a 2 p.m. ET doubleheader before concluding with a single game at 1 p.m. ET on Sunday.

WEEKLY AWARD FOR RALEY (4/12/16)

Georgia Southern softball player [Dixie Raley](#) was named the Madness Sun Belt Softball Player of the Week by College Sports Madness.

Raley, a freshman from Milledgeville, Ga., had a stellar weekend on the mound for Georgia Southern, securing two of the Eagles' three wins over longtime rival Appalachian State – including a shutout in game-3 – while setting a new career-high for strikeouts. She was so effective on the mound, that her opponents hit just .146 against her over the 14 innings she pitched and she finished the weekend with a 1.00 earned run average and 18 strikeouts, six looking. Raley is now tied for second in the conference with 16 wins and she is third in strikeouts (139) as well as strikeouts looking (48), fourth in innings pitched (135.2) and fifth in opposing batting average (.228).

In Raley's first appearance of the weekend, a 6-2 win in game-1 on Saturday, Raley pitched the complete game and surrendered just four hits and a pair of runs while striking out four batters. In that game, she did not surrender a hit through the first two innings and gave up just two hits over the final four frames.

The next day, Raley was outstanding in the circle as she guided the Eagles to a 3-0 victory to secure the weekend sweep over the Mountaineers. Raley pitched the complete game in her third shutout of the season and allowed just three hits and three walks while striking out a career-high 14 batters, four looking. She led off the game by securing the Eagles' first 6 outs via strikeout and then proceeded to strike out two batters in each of the next three innings. Over the final four innings of the game, Raley gave up just one hit and did not walk a single batter.

WEEKLY AWARD FOR WITKOWSKI (3/15/16)

Georgia Southern softball player [Lydia Witkowski](#) was named the Sun Belt Conference Community Coffee Student-Athlete of the Week as released by the conference office on Tuesday, Mar. 15.

A redshirt freshman from Alpharetta, Ga., Witkowski led Georgia Southern on offense in the Eagles' Sun Belt Conference opening series at Texas State as the Eagles went 2-1

in San Marcos. The Eagles' starting left fielder went 6-for-11 (.545) at the plate with a triple and an RBI and scored a pair of runs herself. She slugged .727 with eight total bases and finished the three games with a .545 on-base percentage.

In the field, she recorded four putouts and had an assist in the first game when she gunned down a runner tagging up at third, trying to make it home. The throw out at home from left field completed one of the Eagles' two double plays on the weekend.

In the first game of the series, Witkowski went 4-for-4 at the plate with three singles and a triple for a 1.500 slugging percentage. She also batted in a runner and scored a pair of runs herself as the Eagles defeated Texas State 6-1. Witkowski followed that up by going 2-for-4 at the plate in the Eagles' 5-4 win over the Bobcats in the first game of a Sunday doubleheader, sealing the series victory for the Eagles. The win also pushed the Eagles' longest winning streak of the season to eight games.

YEAR NO. 5

Georgia Southern head coach [Annie Smith](#) is in her fifth season at the helm of the Eagles. Her tenure in Statesboro has taken the Eagles to new heights with two SoCon Regular Season Championships and two SoCon Tournament Championships as well as overseeing the transition to the Sun Belt Conference in Smith's four previous seasons. During her tenure, Smith has advanced to the NCAA Tournament twice (2012 and 2013) as the Eagles have quickly made a name for themselves within the regional and national landscape.

Smith has an overall career record of 147-129. In 2014, she became the fastest coach in Georgia Southern history to reach 100 career wins when her team posted a 4-0 victory over Appalachian State on April 5.

Smith joined Georgia Southern with 16 years of experience as a collegiate assistant coach, serving at Missouri for six seasons before heading to Mississippi State for nine years, handling all aspects of the program. In 2006, Smith was promoted to associate head coach of the Bulldogs.

RANDOM STATS AND NOTES

Career Games Started - by position (active)

[A.J. Hamilton](#): 214 total - 214 C

[Emily Snider](#): 151 total - 151 OF

[Morgan Robinson](#): 148 total - 148 1B

[Taylor Rogers](#): 116 total - 81 OF; 35 DP

[Alesha Mann](#): 95 total - 57 SS; 31 2B; 7 DP

[Michelle Mazur](#): 51 total - 42 3B; 5 OF; 3 DP; 1 2B

[Kierra Camp](#): 39 total - 39 P

[Rowan McGuire](#): 31 total - 30 DP; 1 OF

[Heather Felt](#): 15 total - 15 P

[Hannah Farrell](#): 44 total - 44 3B

[Lydia Witkowski](#): 44 total - 41 OF; 3 INF

India Davis: 40 total - 39 2B; 1 SS

Dixie Raley: 25 total - 25 P

Macy Weeks: 21 total - 13 DP; 8 OF

Haley Carter: 5 total - 5 DP

EAGLES BY STATE (18)

Georgia: 13

Florida: 2

Illinois: 2

Tennessee: 1

EAGLES BY CLASS (18)

Seniors: 1

Juniors: 6

Sophomores: 6

Freshmen: 5 freshmen (3 redshirt)

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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