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W: [Landon Hughes](#) (1-1) L: Garcia,Jarrid (1-2)

Game Recap: Baseball | 4/22/2016 10:38:00 PM | Kristina Horsley

## Walk-Off Single Secures 3-2 Win Over Little Rock

*CJ Ballard's ninth inning heroics give Eagles fifth-straight win*

**STATESBORO, Ga.** – C.J. Ballard hit a walk-off single with two outs in the ninth to give Georgia Southern a 3-2 victory over Little Rock Friday night. The Eagles (24-15, 10-9 Sun Belt) will face Little Rock (18-15, 11-8 Sun Belt) once again in the friendly confines on Saturday evening at 7 p.m. Saturday's game is Superheroes Day with all fans encouraged to wear costumes to the game.

The Eagles held the Trojans scoreless over five innings, but a two-run double in the sixth gave Little Rock the lead. Georgia Southern leveled the game in the seventh, but a leadoff walk to [Will Hudgins](#) in the ninth proved costly for the visitors. Ballard hit a perfectly placed roller in front of the second baseman which he beat out as Hudgins

crossed to win the game and give the Eagles their fifth-straight win.

## QUOTABLES

### HEAD COACH RODNEY HENNON

"I thought it was a good ballgame tonight. Both teams really competed with good pitching on both sides. (Evan) Challenger gave us a strong effort and [Landon Hughes](#) was outstanding tonight coming in behind him. I'm just proud of the guys for hanging in there and continuing to fight. I thought we had some really good bats early in the game and hits some balls on the nose. We just didn't have anything to show for it, but we kept plugging. We talked about it a lot – in a Friday night game there is very little room for error, so we were fortunate to play well and come out on top."

### PLAYER OF THE GAME

[Landon Hughes](#) // RHP // Jr. // Marietta, Ga.

3.1 IP // 0H // 0R // 4Ks // WIN

[Landon Hughes](#) threw three and a third innings of perfect relief to stymie the Little Rock offense. He struck out four batters and picked up his first Division I victory, improving to 1-1 on the year. Hughes entered the game with a runner aboard after a two-run double gave Little Rock the 2-1 lead. He got the out in the sixth on one pitch and only tossed 39 total pitches on the night.

## CRUCIAL MOMENTS

**BOTTOM 2ND** – Leadoff batter [Ryan Cleveland](#) opened the door for the Eagles' first run with a double to left center. An RBI single by [Jordan Wren](#) followed, bringing Cleveland around to score.

**TOP 6TH** – The Eagles held Little Rock scoreless over five innings, but a double to center field plated two runs for the Trojans, giving them a 2-1 lead at the top of the sixth.

**BOTTOM 7TH** – A one-out walk to [C.J. Brazil](#) in the seventh kicked off Georgia Southern's bid to tie the game. Another walk to [Drew Kelley](#) put two runners on, but heads up baserunning from Brazil on a wild pitch got him over to third. [Evan McDonald](#) dropped a sacrifice bunt to the right side, allowing Brazil to score with nobody covering the dish.

**BOTTOM 9TH** – The dreaded leadoff walk came back to bite Little Rock in the ninth. [Will Hudgins](#) reached on the free pass and moved up thanks to a sacrifice bunt. A ground out to third would have likely left him at second, but Hudgins was alert, swiping the bag on the throw. With two outs, [CJ Ballard](#) hit a soft chopper to the perfect spot in front of the second baseman. He was forced to barehand the ball to get the speedy Ballard. The second baseman missed the ball, but the throw would have been late as the Eagles got the single to win the game, 3-2.

## NOTES

- Georgia Southern's five-game win streak matches a season-high win streak which ran five games between February 27th and March 5th. The Eagles are also nine games above the .500 mark, a new season-high.
- Georgia Southern was cut down by four Little Rock double plays, a new season-high for both teams.

- [Ryan Cleveland](#) and [Jordan Wren](#) each had two hits in the game. It was the fifth-straight multi-hit game for Cleveland who also owns a 10 game hit streak on which he is hitting .388 (14-for-36).
- First pitch was delayed 16 minutes due to rain during batting practice. The field was tarped while the Eagles hit on the field, forcing both teams to take their pregame cuts in the batting cage. Once the tarp was removed, both teams took standard fielding warmup before first pitch at 7:16.
- The walk-off single was the first walk-off base hit for the Eagles this season and the third walk-off play, joining the walk-off Balk on March 8th against Kennesaw State and the walk-off fielder's choice against Radford on February 27th.

### **NEXT GAME**

The Eagles continue the series against Little Rock on Saturday evening at 7 p.m. Fans can watch the game on GS All-Access on GSEagles.com or listen live on Georgia Southern Sports Network.

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://facebook.com/GSAthletics), [twitter.com/GSAthletics](https://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](https://GSEagles.com/Tickets).

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