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# SBAL Preview: Eagles Travel to Georgia State for Weekend, Rivalry Series

*GS and GSU will play single 5 p.m. game on Friday, 1 p.m. doubleheader Saturday*



Softball | 5/5/2016 11:54:00 AM

## Story Links

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

### **RIVALRY SERIES**

Georgia Southern will close out the regular-season on the road this weekend, traveling to in-state rival Georgia State for both a critical Sun Belt Conference series as well as a critical showdown in the [Southern vs. State Rivalry Series](#). One point will be on the line

in the series. To date, Georgia State leads the 2015-16 series 11-6. The two will play a single game at 5 p.m. on Friday, May 6 and will then play a 1 p.m. doubleheader on Saturday, May 7.

### **RECORD CLIMBING**

- Senior catcher [A.J. Hamilton](#) ranks sixth all-time with 22 career home runs. She is also now in sole possession of 10th all-time with 90 career RBI after her home run against No. 8 UL Lafayette this past weekend.
- Junior outfielder [Emily Snider](#) has 90 runs scored for her career, ranking 9th all-time in program history.
- Junior first baseman [Morgan Robinson](#) currently has 105 runs batted in for her career and ranks fifth all-time for RBI. Her 47 RBI this season ranks tied for third most RBI in a single season.
- Redshirt freshman outfielder [Lydia Witkowski](#) is currently tied for third in single-season triples with five triples this season. She is also eighth all-time for runs scored in a single season with 39 runs this season.
- Freshman pitcher [Dixie Raley](#) recorded her 22nd win of the season on Sunday against #8 UL Lafayette. The 2s wins marks the most by a freshman pitcher in program history and also has her in sole possession of second all-time for most wins in a single season. Raley is also currently tied for sixth in the single season record book with two saves, in sole possession of sixth with 176 strikeouts on the year, and is tied for sixth with 31 starts and as well as tied for fourth with 39 appearances on the year.

### **150 WINS**

On Wednesday, Apr. 27, head coach [Annie Smith](#) recorded her 150th career win at the helm of the Georgia Southern softball program with a 1-0 victory over Savannah State. Smith now boasts a record of 151-134 (.530) in her fifth season.

### **FACILITY INFO**

This weekend's three-game, Sun Belt Conference series against Georgia State will take place at the Robert E. Heck Softball Complex in Decatur, Ga. The address is 2401 Wildcat Road, Decatur, GA 30034. ([Directions HERE](#))

[Live stats](#) and [live audio](#) will be available through Georgia State.

### **SCOUTING THE PANTHERS**

The Panthers of Georgia State (28-25, 11-10 SBC) enter the weekend having won their last two games and four of their last five, including winning series over both UL Monroe and UT Arlington. The Panthers and Eagles have squared off 54 times on the softball diamond with Georgia State owning an all-time record of 40-13-1 in the series.

The Panthers are currently batting .286 for the year led by four players with batting averages over .300. Ivie Drake leads the team with a .354 average and a .703 slugging percentage. She also boasts the team's highest on-base percentage of .498. In 158 at-bats, Drake has team highs of 56 hits, 50 runs scored, 14 home runs and 111 total bases. She has also drawn 45 walks. Drake is second on the team with 247 putouts in

the field and is also second on the team with 11 doubles. Behind her, Brenna Skalski is batting .324 with 48 hits and 23 runs scored. She and Reagan Morgan lead the way on the base paths with 12 stolen bases each. Morgan Brown is third on the team with a .307 batting average and Kensey Caldwell is fourth, batting at a .303 clip. Caldwell is second on the team with 53 hits, 44 runs batted in and eight home runs, but she leads the way with 15 doubles.

On the mound, Georgia State has utilized six pitchers this season. The pitching corps has combined for a 3.81 earned run average, 192 strikeouts and an opposing batting average of .273. Leading the way is Katie Worley with a team-best 2.954 ERA, 13-9 record and 30 appearances. She has made 26 starts and pitched six complete games while compiling 121 innings of work and 106 strikeouts. Opponents are batting .201 against her. Amanda Chance has matched Worley's appearances with 30, but she has made just six starts. She has two saves on the season to go along with a 4.48 ERA, third-best on the team. Annie Davis is second on the team with a 3.65 ERA and is 5-6 on the year in her 26 appearances. She has made 16 starts, pitched four complete games and has 34 strikeouts on the year. Chance and Davis both have pitched 84.1 innings.

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

### ***UP NEXT***

Georgia Southern will next compete in the 2016 Sun Belt Conference Tournament held in Mobile, Ala. The tournament will be hosted by South Alabama. It begins on Wednesday, May 11 with a single elimination round and will then progress with a double elimination format from Thursday, May 12 through Saturday, May 14.

### ***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 151-134. 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: 223 total - 223 C

Emily Snider: 160 total - 160 OF

Morgan Robinson: 157 total - 157 1B

Taylor Rogers: 125 total - 85 OF; 40 DP

Alesha Mann: 104 total - 67 SS; 31 2B; 7 DP

Michelle Mazur: 52 total - 42 3B; 5 OF; 3 DP; 2 2B

Kierra Camp: 41 total - 41 P

Rowan McGuire: 32 total - 31 DP; 1 OF

Heather Felt: 16 total - 16 P

Hannah Farrell: 53 total - 53 3B

Lydia Witkowski: 53 total - 50 OF; 3 INF

India Davis: 48 total - 47 2B; 1 SS

Dixie Raley: 31 total - 31 P

Macy Weeks: 21 total - 13 DP; 8 OF

Haley Carter: 13 total - 8 OF; 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](https://www.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://www.GSEagles.com/Tickets).

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