

5-20-2016

Eagles Split Doubleheader with Panthers

Georgia Southern University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/athletics-news-online>



Part of the [Higher Education Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Georgia Southern University, "Eagles Split Doubleheader with Panthers" (2016). *Athletics News*. 1896.
<https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/athletics-news-online/1896>

This article is brought to you for free and open access by the Athletics at Digital Commons@Georgia Southern. It has been accepted for inclusion in Athletics News by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@Georgia Southern. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@georgiasouthern.edu.

Play Video



W: [Evan Challenger](#) (6-4) L: [Wages, W.](#) (4-6) S: [Landon Hughes](#) (4)

Game Recap: Baseball | 5/20/2016 5:16:00 PM | Michael Fennell

Eagles Split Doubleheader with Panthers

Georgia Southern faces Georgia State in Saturday's regular season finale

STATESBORO, Ga. – Georgia Southern split a doubleheader against Georgia State, winning game one 6-0 and losing game two 5-4.

A fantastic pitching performance by Georgia Southern starting pitcher [Evan Challenger](#) helped lead the Eagles to a game one victory. Challenger struck out four and allowed three hits in seven shutout innings on 91 pitches.

"I thought Challenger gave us a great effort," Coach [Rodney Hennon](#) said. "Overall I thought we played pretty solid baseball behind him."

[Ryan Cleveland](#) hit a home run in his third straight game with a solo shot to right field in the bottom of the eighth inning for his 15th homer of the season.

Evan McDonald got the Eagles started with a leadoff double in the bottom of the first. Logan Baldwin got hit by a pitch, and a Ryan Cleveland groundout to first advanced both runners. A Jordan Wren single scored the first runs of the game to put the Eagles in the lead 2-0.

A strong inning for the Eagles in the bottom of the fourth led to two more runs for the Eagles. Cal Baker walked and CJ Ballard reached on a throwing error to put runners on first and second. McDonald hit a sacrifice bunt to move the runners over for Baldwin to single up the middle to bring them in for a 4-0 lead.

The visitors got two runners on in the eighth with the Eagles staked to a 4-0 lead as Landon Hughes came on to pitch. The junior righty came in for the save opportunity and got the final two outs of the inning on four pitches.

The home run from Cleveland was followed by a second solo home run off the bat of Jordan Wren. His second of the season was part of the Eagles' second back-to-back home runs sequence this season which pushed the lead to 6-0.

In the ninth, Hughes worked a 1-2-3 inning to earn his fourth save of the season. Challenger (6-4) earned the win as Georgia Southern posted its fifth shutout of the season.

Chase Cohen started game two for the Eagles, striking out four and allowing four hits in four and one-third innings on 72 pitches. Marc-Andre Habeck started for the Panthers, allowing just three hits in six strikeouts in 108 pitches in six innings.

Baldwin flashed the leather twice in the outfield for the Eagles in game two. A diving catch in the second inning set Twitter ablaze as he robbed a sure double from Jarrett Hood. Later in the game, Baldwin made a nice running catch at the wall to take another extra base hit. This time, his throw from center helped double off a Panthers runner who was too greedy on the play.

Ballard got the offense going for Georgia Southern in the third when Ballard hit a grounder to short, leading to a two base error. McDonald walked and Baldwin grounded out to second to advance the runners. Cleveland struck out leaving both runners in scoring position. An inning later, the Eagles loaded the bases in the bottom of the fourth, but failed to bring any runners across the plate.

The Panthers moved runners into scoring position in the top of the fifth after a sacrifice bunt by Brandon Gonzalez, ending the day for Cohen. Left-handed pitcher Connor Simmons came in for relief. Jaylen Woullard knocked in the first Panther run of the day to give Georgia State a 1-0 lead. Will Kilgore then scored on a wild pitch to make it a 2-0 game.

Ryan Blanton started the sixth with a leadoff walk, scoring off a one out triple by Darius Sewell. Right-handed pitcher Adam Kelly came in for Simmons, allowing a single by

Jack Thompson to score Sewell which pushed the lead out to 4-0.

The Panthers played small ball for their fifth run, executing a safety squeeze bunt to make the lead 5-0.

Georgia Southern opened the bottom of the eighth with back-to-back singles, putting runners on the corners. A ball four wild pitch walked Baker and scored Wren to cut into the Panther lead. Ballard walked to load the bases for the second time in game two. McDonald hit a bases-clearing double to make the score 5-4 with the Panthers still in front. McDonald finished the day 5-7 with three RBI in the doubleheader.

Wren got on base in the bottom of the ninth, but was caught stealing on a pickoff for the second out. That was all the Eagle offense would muster as Cohen was saddled with the loss to fall to 4-3 on the year.

"We just didn't really put any pressure on their starter," Coach Hennon said. "I mean, give (Marc-Andre Habeck) credit. He gave them a strong effort. We got a big hit from [Evan McDonald](#) late to get back in it, but didn't get it done."

The rubber match of the series Saturday at 1:00 p.m. at J.I. Clements Stadium. The game will decide the final regular season point of the 2016 Southern vs. State Rivalry Series.

Prior to the game, Georgia Southern Athletics will honor five seniors for their contributions to Eagle Baseball. [Chris Brown](#), [Ryan Frederick](#), [Drew Kelley](#), [Kent Rollins](#) and [Hunter Thomas](#) will be recognized at approximately 12:40 p.m. Be in your seats early to join in the celebration of their careers.

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.

[Print Friendly Version](#)