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Georgia Southern Holds First Preseason Football Practice

Eagles just 33 days away from opener against Savannah State

Michael Chastain



Football | 8/1/2016 4:30:00 PM

Story Links

STATESBORO, Ga. - Overcast skies and a pleasant 80 degree temperature greeted the Georgia Southern football team Monday morning as sophomore receiver [Malik Henry](#) was the first to cross over Beautiful Eagle Creek at 9:47 a.m. Monday, officially ushering in the 2016 Georgia Southern football season. The Eagles exited the famed yellow school buses and new head coach [Tyson Summers](#) huddled them in front of the

bridge over Beautiful Eagle Creek, leading them through a crisp morning practice under the Statesboro skies.

Dressed in no pads and only helmets, the players immediately broke off into position groups and starting teaching sessions. The coaches began hands-on instruction with their respective position corps and the information was well received.

"They are a very coachable group," Summers said. "They certainly want to be good, and I think they are sponges. They try to take everything they got and do it exactly the way you want it."

One of the biggest stories entering the new season is the quarterback position. As expected, seniors [Favian Upshaw](#) and [Kevin Ellison](#) evenly split the first team reps during the first day. The competition spreads throughout the team and the coaches guarantee nobody a starting position.

"It's a competition," Summers said. "We don't want anyone feeling overly comfortable. At the end of the day you have to be comfortable feeling uncomfortable."

The Eagles will have to adapt to scheduling this season and Summers is already preparing the players stating, "We have some mid-week games and some things that get us out of kilter, we have to get use to that right now."

As the practice continued throughout the morning, the weather began to heat up significantly which gave the freshmen a taste of the Summer sun in Statesboro.

"There is a mental aspect with it being so hot, said senior defensive leader [Ironhead Gallon](#). "You have to be able to maintain your composure and make sure you keep everybody on the same page."

The team will meet Monday afternoon and have a walk-thru Monday evening before gathering for character education, a team meeting and wrapping up with a snack. Practice No. 2 is scheduled for 9:30 a.m. Tuesday on the banks of Beautiful Eagle Creek. Dates, times and locations of football practices are subject to change and may be impacted by weather conditions. Practices are open to the public, but any filming, recording or photography is limited to members of the media only. The full schedule is below.

Georgia Southern won the 2015 GoDaddy Bowl in its first bowl-eligible season, finishing 6-2 in the conference and 8-4 overall. The Eagles, who return 37 lettermen and 12 starters to the 2016 squad, were picked to finished third the Sun Belt in the league's preseason coaches' poll.

Fans can purchase 2016 season tickets and select their seats online, by calling 1-800-GSU-WINS or by visiting the ticket office in the Cowart Building adjacent to Paulson Stadium (203 Lanier Drive). Ticket office hours are Monday-Friday from 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Season tickets prices start as low as \$75 for all five games.

Meet the Eagles Fan Fest

The GS Football Team will hold its annual Meet the Eagles Fan Fest on Saturday, Aug. 13. Gates will open at 8:30 a.m. and the football team will hold an open scrimmage from 9-11:30 a.m. at Paulson Stadium before the event. The Fan Fest will be from noon-2 p.m. The public is invited to the scrimmage and fans will be allowed to come on the field at noon. The North Concourse will be the only side open and fans may enter through Gate 12 near Bishop Field House.

Between the end of the scrimmage and the start of Fan Fest, fans can expect to hear a few words from head football coach [Tyson Summers](#) after he dismisses the team to their locker room. The event will be the last preseason scrimmage and the athletics department will have activities on the field after the scrimmage, including inflatables for the kids, 2016 football posters and schedule cards, a dunk tank, face painting, ticket information, cheerleaders, and the fall sport teams will be available for autographs. Concessions will be available during the scrimmage and during the Fan Fest. Additionally, the University Store will be open for fans to purchase all of their adidas gear to get ready for the season.

Fans will be allowed to get autographs from their favorite football players and Coach Summers at the festival. In addition, the soccer squads and volleyball team, along with all three respective coaches, will also be in attendance, grouped on the field. Fans can bring in outside items to be signed and posters from each sport will be provided free of charge to those who wish to get one signed. Fans will also be able to mingle with the student-athletes during the autograph session and kids can play catch, kick a ball or pass a volleyball around with the players. Also, the lobby area of the Ted Smith Family Football Center will be open during Fan Fest from 12-2 p.m.

Meet the Eagles Fan Fest is free and open to fans of all ages. Parking is also free.

Season ticket holders may also come and pick up their season ticket packets beginning that day. Additionally, donors may pick up their benefit packets at this event.

Georgia Southern Preseason Practice Schedule

Date (Time, Location)

Tues., Aug. 2 (9:30 AM- 12 PM, Eagle Creek)

Wed., Aug. 3 (9:30 AM- 12 PM, Eagle Creek)

Thurs., Aug. 4 (9:30 AM- 12 PM, Eagle Creek)

Fri., Aug. 5 (9:30 AM- 12 PM, Eagle Creek)

Sat., Aug. 6 (TBD)

Sun., Aug. 7 (TBD)

Mon, Aug. 8 (9:30 AM- 12 PM, Eagle Creek)

Tues., Aug. 9 (9:30 AM- 12 PM, Eagle Creek)

Wed., Aug. 10 (9:30 AM- 12 PM, Eagle Creek)

Thurs., Aug. 11 (9:30 AM- 12 PM, Eagle Creek)

Fri., Aug. 12 (9:30 AM- 12 PM, Eagle Creek)
Sat., Aug. 13 (9:30 AM- 11:30 AM, Paulson); Fan Fest (12-2 PM, Paulson)
Sun., Aug. 14 (TBD)
Mon., Aug. 15 (4:15-6 PM, Eagle Creek); Day 1 (8 PM, Paulson)
Tues., Aug. 16 (7:30-10 AM, Paulson)
Wed., Aug. 17 (4:15-6 PM, Eagle Creek)
Thurs., Aug. 18 (7:30-10 AM, Paulson)
Fri., Aug. 19 (4:15-6 PM, Paulson)
Sat., Aug. 20 (TBD)
Sun., Aug. 21 (TBD)
Mon., Aug. 22 (4:15-6 PM, Eagle Creek)
Tues., Aug. 23 (7:30-10 AM, Paulson)
Wed., Aug. 24 (4:15-6 PM, Eagle Creek)
Thurs., Aug. 25 (7:30-10 AM, Paulson)
Fri., Aug. 26 (4:15-6 PM, Eagle Creek)
Sat., Aug. 27 (TBD)
Sun., Aug. 28 (TBD)

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