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Players Get New Perspective at Practice

Seniors coach young guys in short scrimmage Tuesday

Michael Chastain

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Story Links

STATESBORO, Ga. - The Georgia Southern football team ended practice differently on Tuesday with a scrimmage for mostly freshmen and sophomores. The coaches took a step back to let the veteran players get an opportunity to coach the scrimmage, creating a very animated and exciting end to the day.

With the offensive and defensive units lined up on opposite sidelines, the upperclassmen took their coaching positions and engaged in a friendly competition over

the outcome of each snap. Senior quarterback [Favian Upshaw](#) and junior linebacker [Ukeme Eligwe](#) had playsheets in hand and acted as the coordinators for their respective sides of the ball, helping their younger teammates to success. Senior [Jay Ellison](#) took the role as defensive line coach, while senior [Andy Kwon](#) led the offensive line.

"It was really fun, being able to see the coaches' side and figuring out how hard that job is," Kwon said. "I want to be a coach when I graduate and I think this was a really good experience for all of us."

The star of the practice was senior linebacker [Ironhead Gallon](#) who acted as the "head coach", wearing Coach [Tyson Summers](#) hat and using his whistle. Attempting his best imitation of Summers, he moved around the field yelling at other upperclassmen to get back on the sidelines and instructing the players on the field.

Gallon rallied the team into a huddle on one knee after practice and gave an encouraging speech similar to Coach Summers, but ended it joking, "we had a great day of practice, no afternoon meetings!"

The players and coaches erupted in laughter and Coach Summers reassured the players that they will still have afternoon meetings at the Ted Smith Family Football Center as they have every day of preseason camp.

The offense scored two long touchdowns during the scrimmage coming from freshmen wide receivers [Tanner Hall](#) and [Mike Jackson](#). The entire offensive unit could be seen chasing the play down the field in comical celebration on both occasions.

"We just have to get in the film room and clean it up, I'm happy for the offense," said Gallon, still in the mindset of his head coaching role. "The defense just has to tighten up and buckle down a little bit."

After nine days of installing the system and an hour and a half of standard practice, the 30-minute scrimmage created an opportunity for younger players to showcase their skills in addition to the upperclassmen having a chance to relax physically, while still being challenged mentally.

"There were two different intentions behind it: one obviously is hoping they can have some fun, and two being able to realize what they are dealing with as far as playcalling and formation goes," Summers said. "We expect them to be able to communicate like coaches do, so that we can make adjustments on Saturdays. I think they have done a fantastic job at this point."

Practice No. 10 is scheduled for 9:30 a.m. Wednesday 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 finish third in 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 ticket 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)

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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