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Georgia Southern University

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# Georgia Southern Announces Men's Basketball Schedule

*Eagles play 17 games in the state of Georgia.*

Marc Gignac



**Frank Fortune**

Mark Byington and the Eagles play 17 games in Georgia this season.

Men's Basketball | 9/1/2016 9:47:00 AM

**STATESBORO, Ga.** – Seventeen games in the state of Georgia, three contests in Savannah and 12 games in refurbished Hanner Fieldhouse highlight the Georgia Southern men's basketball schedule, announced by coach [Mark Byington](#) today.

In addition to nine Sun Belt and three non-conference contests at home, Georgia

Southern plays two games at the Savannah Civic Center as part of the Savannah Invitational and travels to Savannah State, Mercer and conference rival Georgia State.

The Eagles face defending Atlantic Sun Tournament champion Florida Gulf Coast in a home-and-home series and travel to Winthrop, which advanced to the Big South Championship a season ago. Georgia Southern also travels to Power 5 opponents NC State and Minnesota early in the campaign and plays at Akron, which advanced to the Mid-American Championship last season.

"I am very excited to coach this team, and I gave them an extremely-challenging schedule," said Byington. "My main goal is always to prepare us to compete for a Sun Belt Championship. I wish we could play more home games, but seven of our non-conference games will be in the state of Georgia, including three in Savannah. I am excited to see the support we receive there."

After a home exhibition contest against Lees-McRae (Nov. 3), Georgia Southern opens the season at NC State Nov. 11. It will be the Eagles' first meeting against the Wolfpack since 2009.

"We will be challenged right away at NC State," said Byington "They have one of the best point guards in the country in Dennis Smith and put together a very good recruiting class."

Following a home game against Coastal Georgia (Nov. 14), the Eagles play four games in the Savannah Invitational Nov. 20-26. The first two are at Mercer (Nov. 20) and at Akron (Nov. 22), and the last two are against Florida A&M (Nov. 25) and Radford (Nov. 26) in the Savannah Civic Center.

Georgia Southern plays a third-straight game in Savannah Dec. 1 against Savannah State before hosting Florida Gulf Coast Dec. 4. The Eagles will travel to Minnesota for the first meeting between the schools Dec. 9, before embarking on a three-game road trip at Florida Gulf Coast (Dec. 13), Florida International (Dec. 15) and Winthrop (Dec. 20).

"I think a lot of the teams on our schedule have chance to win their leagues," said Byington. "Akron is one of the top-30 teams in the country, Winthrop should be picked to win the Big South and Florida Gulf Coast was recently in the Sweet 16 and should be picked to win the Atlantic Sun Conference."

A final tune-up against NAIA opponent Fisk (Dec. 22) precedes an 18-game Sun Belt schedule. The Eagles play their first three conference tilts at home, starting against Georgia State on New Year's Eve.

Georgia Southern will play Appalachian State, league newcomer Coastal Carolina, Georgia State, ULM, UL Lafayette, South Alabama and Troy twice - both at home and on the road. The Eagles will play host to Texas State (Feb. 18) and UT Arlington (Feb.

20) and travel to Arkansas State (Feb. 25) and Little Rock (Feb. 27).

All 12 teams will travel to the 2017 Sun Belt Conference Men's and Women's Basketball Championships as the tournaments return to New Orleans and Lakefront Arena for a fourth consecutive season March 8-12.

Georgia Southern Athletics provides up-to-date information on all its sports through its official website, [GSEagles.com](http://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. For tickets to Georgia Southern athletics events, visit [GSEagles.com/tickets](http://GSEagles.com/tickets).

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