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A Southern Life: Seeing is believing

The Georgia Southern Cheerleaders complete sports vision testing

Tricia Fishbune

STATESBORO, Ga.— For student-athletes, vision is a critical part of their success in their sport and in their studies. Dr. Horace Deal, a long-time supporter of Georgia Southern athletics, specializes in sports vision and offers vision tests and training to Eagles players and coaches.

"Every athlete will come in and do an initial evaluation, just like a regular eye exam," Deal said. "We check on things like depth perception and focus. If there are some deficits there, then we recommend either sports vision or vision training if needed."

The Georgia Southern Cheerleaders went through the training at Vision Source which
helps them and other Eagles perform at the highest level.

"Sports vision goes beyond vision training. We specifically look at reaction time based on what elite athletes should have," Deal said. "We bring the athlete in and tailor it specifically to what they want to work on whether it's peripheral, balance, reaction time, focusing, how they track the ball in flight or how they perceive the environment around them."

Going through these lesson plans have helped numerous athletes—both at the collegiate and high school levels— including some who performed better in the classroom after improving their vision.

"We've even had a lot of athletes who had trouble following the flight of the ball or catching the ball and went on to lead the team in receptions after vision training. "It gives me a tremendous sense of satisfaction helping out the athletes," Deal said.

For the cheerleaders, they said vision is critical especially while stunting. During their session, they were able to work on the peripheral vision they use the most during flight and on the ground.

Each episode of "A Southern Life" gives fans the chance to live a day-in-the-life of some of their favorite Eagles. Keep an eye out on GSEagles.com for all the latest episodes on All Access.