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Football 7/22/2021 5:05:00 PM

Trio Represents Georgia Southern at Sun Belt Media Day

Lunsford, Bradley-Glenn, King take center stage in New Orleans

PURCHASE TICKETS

2021 FOOTBALL SEASON PRESENTED BY
MORRIS BANK

NEW ORLEANS - With the start of preseason camp two weeks away, Georgia Southern head football coach [Chad Lunsford](#), along with senior running back [J.D. King](#) and senior linebacker [Todd Bradley-Glenn](#) represented the Eagles at the 2021 Sun Belt Media Day, held in the New Orleans Sheraton and Mercedes-Benz Superdome on Thursday. The event, normally held entirely at the Dome, had to be moved to the Sheraton due to construction.

After arriving on Wednesday, the players got to put their cooking skills to the test against each other at the New Orleans Cooking School, while coaches, administrators and media had a private event at House of Blues.

On Thursday, the three went through the car wash of media interviews throughout the morning and into the afternoon and headed back to Statesboro on Eagle One Thursday afternoon so the players can finish up off-season workouts and head home for a few days before returning for the start of camp on Aug. 6.

For Lunsford, he did several radio interviews, an ESPN3 studio shot, Facebook Live with the GS Radio Network, and also did several one-on-ones with local and regional outlets. A wide range of topics included COVID-19 and vaccinations, N.I.L., playoff expansion, transfer portal and even about the upcoming season.

Toward the end of the day, the group got to go over to the Dome to the Sun belt's new digital studio. It was the first time the Eagles had been in the stadium since their big win against Louisiana Tech in the New Orleans Bowl last December.

A few nuggets from the day:

- Commissioner Keith Gill announced in his state of the conference speech that if a team cannot play a game due to COVID-19 issues, it will be declared a "no contest" if it's a non-conference game but it will be a forfeit if it's a conference game. This result would count toward bowl eligibility and would factor into conference standings.
- [J.D. King](#) said he is fully cleared after suffering a torn ACL against Troy last year. He has been working out to build up the strength in his leg so he's 100% for camp. Part of making sure he would be ready for the opener meant him sacrifice any time home or vacation so he could stay in town to rehabilitate the knee.
- [Todd Bradley-Glenn](#) is taking advantage of the new Name, Image and Likeness parameters. After already graduating, he's now pursuing a second degree in construction and is already putting it to use with Bradley-Glenn construction. The avid fisherman is also still looking for a fishing deal, but will continue to fish for the love of the sport in the meantime.
- Coach Lunsford is all for the playoff expansion, saying it's good for Georgia Southern and the Sun Belt. Getting eight extra spots in the playoff, with six spots going to the highest conference champions, positions the champion of the Sun Belt to potentially be part of the Big Dance, something that's never happened before. Last year, if the new proposed playoff would have been in place, Coastal Carolina would have been the 12 seed, opening up at No. 5 Notre Dame with the winner playing No. 4 Oklahoma.
- When asked who could eat the most at Thanksgiving, he went with offensive lineman [Lawrence Edwards](#) and inside linebackers coach [Travis Cunningham](#). He also said his favorite Thanksgiving food is sweet potato suefflé.
- The players will break for the end off off-season workouts on Friday and will be back on campus on Aug. 1. Camp begins Aug. 6 but the staff is planning a few fun things for the team in the five days before they hit Beautiful Eagle Creek on the morning of the 6th.
- Director of Athletics [Jared Benko](#) said to be on the lookout for the game times of the last four home games to be announced next week on social media. The first two were voted on by the fans and announced already.

Quotes from today:

Coach [Chad Lunsford](#)

"New Orleans has been a good place for us. The last time we were here back on December 23rd for the New Orleans Bowl, and we were able to come down here and play Georgia Southern football and walked away with a championship. We have two guys up here who were a part of that and who exemplify what we talk about when we talk about Georgia Southern men. I hope everybody has an opportunity to dig into them and hear their stories. I'm very proud of them and you couldn't pick better people to represent our program. Georgia Southern football is the most epic story in college football, when you start talking about coach Erk Russell and how the program was built from nothing, didn't have a stadium, didn't have equipment, didn't even have a football for his first press conference. 1981 was the start of something very, very special, six national championships at the FCS level, 14 conference championships, the ability to move up to the FBS and go into the Sun Belt, win bowl championships and win a Sun Belt championship, and just compete at a high level every year. It's something we don't take lightly, the brotherhood at Georgia Southern is something special and it's our job to continue that legacy and keep adding to our winning tradition. The last three years at Georgia Southern I've been blessed to be the head football coach, 2016-17 we had only five wins between those two season, then in '18 something special started to happen, three straight bowl games and two bowl championships. However, we're not satisfied with that. We want to compete for a Sun Belt championship every year, we want to win Sun Belt championships.

"At Georgia Southern that is the expectation. I'm very proud of what we did last year when you start talking about COVID, and you start talking about social injustice, you start talking about the things that everybody in the country had to deal with, I'm very proud of our staff, our administration and players for what they did. Being one of only two teams to play 13 games

last year and getting all 12 regular season games in, it showed we had a disciplined group of guys that really wanted to do a great job for Georgia Southern football and Eagle Nation. 8-5 and a bowl championship, again very proud of what we did but not satisfied. We want to make this year our mission to make sure we're making Eagle Nation proud of what we're doing and making sure we make Georgia Southern proud. We have something to prove, we have a chip on our shoulder. There's not many people right now that believe in Georgia Southern other than our university, our fan base and the guys in that locker room. But we kind of like it like that, we like having that chip on our shoulder, and we like having the opportunity to go prove what we're about. I like our team going into this year, I think we have a great mixture of experience and young talent, and I think we have guys that are willing to commit and sacrifice. When you play the ultimate team game of football, that's what it takes. Offensively we're a spread gun option attack, we want to be more an attacking, we made some changes on the offensive staff going into this season and I think you'll see a more attacking offense. On defense we base out of a 3-4 and defensively I'm fired up about us because of the continuity we've had with our coaching staff and how we've grown as a defense year in and year out. Very excited about that. We want to be a very efficient special teams group, we want to make sure we're changing the game with field position when we start playing special teams.

"We have a great schedule this year, I love our out of conference schedule. We're going to open up with Gardner-Webb, got an opportunity to go down to Florida Atlantic, we get to go play Arkansas at Arkansas and then we got BYU coming to Paulson. But then when you start talking about our conference schedule, you heard Commissioner Gill's comments about what the Sun Belt has done over the last few years. I have a great respect for every coach in this league, I have a great respect for all the players in this league, because I know game in and game out you have to come to play each and every week, it's not one of these things where you're going to show up and it's going to happen, you have to be ready to play and you gotta be ready to go. A lot of that showed last year, we had a lot of close games last year, out of our five losses there were a grand total of 31 points in those losses that we came up short with, so this year it's about putting ourselves in a position to win football games and making sure that we finish those games. A lot of respect for the Sun Belt Conference, a lot of respect for what we have to do to get ready each and every week. I'm so excited about the opportunity to be 100 percent capacity in our stadiums, especially at Georgia Southern because the power of Paulson is real and it's a place where Georgia Southern football likes to make sure they take care of business.

Inside Linebacker [Todd Bradley-Glenn](#)

On his leadership role: "I always felt like I was in a leadership role even when I was out mentoring the young guys while being injured. I'm ready to take it all in and hopefully be the guy on defense that helps everybody out. It's a role I embrace, especially inside my room with a lot of young guys in the room. A lot of young guys are coming in on the team on defense, a lot of them look up to me so I try to lead them the right way. "

On NIL: "For me, It's like I'm not going to chase deals outside of anything that I do. I like fishing and I like power tools and construction, so if it's not in the realm of my daily thing or something that I actually have interest in, I'm not going to go out and chase money. I'm going to stay in my realm and stay in my lane, and if somebody sees that I like fishing and tools and want to come and talk to be to work with them, I'd be interested in. As far as our team chemistry, with NIL, I always say to keep the main thing the main thing as far as on the field, play ball on the field and all those deals will come. When you get the name on the field, that's when people want to come after you and see your name. That's all I tell them, keep the main thing the main thing, the rest will take care of itself."

Running Back [J. D. King](#)

On knee injury recovery: "That helped me grow as a man and a football player when I had to go through that, it helped me establish myself as a leader, and then to get to come back and be with the team and try to win a championship.

On NIL: "Like Todd said, we have to keep the main thing the main thing, treat it like it was last year like it never has come about, because it can become a really big distraction, as everybody can see. We have to keep our composure and not chase and fall into traps, and just be the bigger person in a lot of situations. Wait on it and let things develop, because we really don't know that much about it right now, so best thing to do is focus and let that unfold. Having the whole offensive line is exciting because chemistry is everything up there, if you're able to trust the man at the left and the right, just imagine how faster you're going to play, how smarter you're going to play and play without any regrets. "

On QB [Justin Tomlin](#): "I notice a lot from this year and last year, since I've been at Georgia Southern, that he's hungry, he feels he has a lot to prove, we all know that and we understand that, and we're accepting his role on the team, where he's going to play or not going to play, we just know it's next man up, and I feel like he's trying to take that role and gain our trust."

As mentioned, camp begins on Aug. 6 as the Eagles prepare for their season opener on Sept. 4 at home against Gardner-Webb. Season tickets are on sale now and can be purchased at GSEagles.com/Tickets.

