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Season Preview: Men's Basketball Aims to be Different with Similar Results

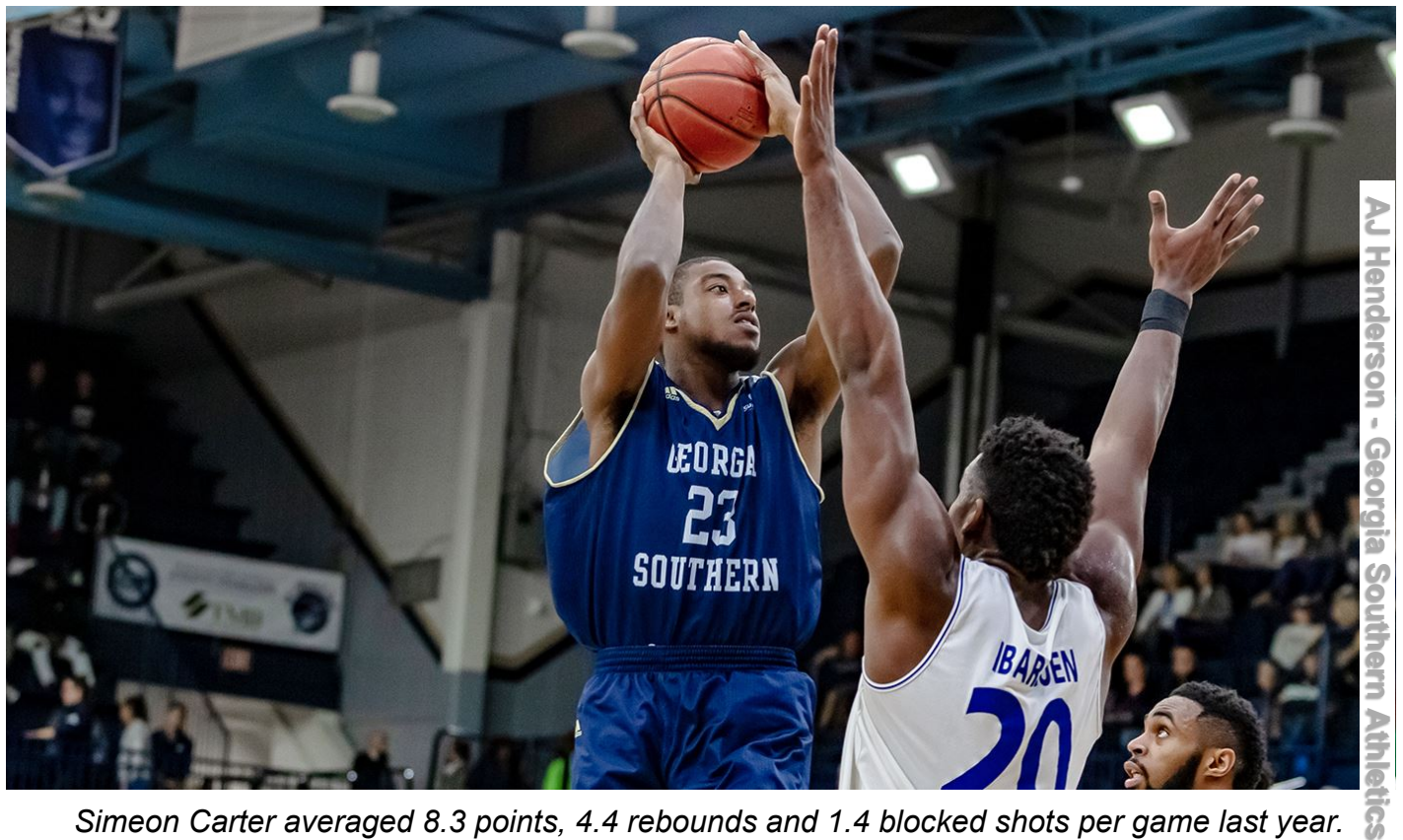
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Simeon Carter averaged 8.3 points, 4.4 rebounds and 1.4 blocked shots per game last year.

Season Preview: Men's Basketball Aims to be Different with Similar Results

The last in a three-part men's basketball season preview.

By Marc Gignac
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STATESBORO - It is not very often in this day and age of a college basketball that a team loses two four-year starters with 247 career games played and 211 starts between them.

That experience is what walked across the stage with Tookie Brown and Montae Glenn on graduation day last May at Georgia Southern and yet, the Eagles return 10 lettermen with a wealth of experience to the 2019-20 squad. Plenty of pure basketball talent resides on the Eagle roster, but in order for Georgia Southern to have success this year, the departed intangibles will have to be replaced and the vacated leadership roles will have to be filled.

Glenn's leadership manifested itself in becoming a tremendous communicator, especially on defense, and he was great at getting guys in the right place at the right time. Part of that responsibility will fall on the shoulders of Simeon Carter and Trey Dawkins.

"People don't understand how valuable to the team a lot of the things Montae did were," said Georgia Southern coach Mark Byington. "He was a very, very good offensive rebounder and extremely smart. He anchored down our defense and did a lot of things that would help us during the game. Simeon and Trey really have to step up. They are both fifth-year seniors so they have a lot to prove, not only to themselves, but to their team and to the game of basketball. This is going to be their opportunity, and it's going to be right there for them and they need to make sure they are ready for the opportunity."

Brown displayed his leadership through action. He had the ball in his hands 90 percent of the time, got the Eagles into a set play when needed and made something positive happen when things broke down. Senior David-Lee Jones Jr. and sophomore Calvin Wishart will shoulder that burden but will likely do it differently.

"Tookie was so good and so talented and came through all the time that I leaned on him and so did his teammates," said Byington. "You're not going to replace him, but the positive thing is that some guys can do more things than they had a chance to show. Last year, we started Calvin off the ball because he can make shots, and David-Lee Jones played both positions. We emphasize position-less basketball, where multiple guys can do different things so we'll be fine with them both on the court together or one on and one off the court. The good thing is that they are experienced, so they will be able to handle that responsibility."

