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Setting the Scene Game Preview

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SETTING THE SCENE

Game Preview

Site: Alico Arena (4,500)

Tipoff: 5 p.m.

Listen: GS Sports Network (pregame show starts a half hour before tipoff)

TV: ESPN+

Series: Tied 1-1

Last meeting: 12/13/16, W 72-59

Probable Starters:

#2 - Elijah McCadden

#3 - Ike Smith

#5 - Trey Dawkins

#13 - Quan Jackson

#24 - David-Lee Jones Jr.

- Georgia Southern plays its last of three contests in the Hilton Garden Inn FGCU Classic in Alico Arena as the Eagles take on host Florida Gulf Coast (2-7) in the final game of the tourney Sunday at 5 p.m. That game will be broadcast on ESPN+.
- The Eagles enter the weekend having won their last two and are coming off a 98-88 home win over Mercer Nov. 19. GS has had a nine-day break in between contests.
- Georgia Southern was picked third in the Sun Belt in the conference's Preseason Men's Basketball Coaches Poll. Quan Jackson was named first-team All-Sun Belt, Ike Smith was named second-team all-league and Isaiah Crawley was named third team all-conference.
- The Sun Belt poll follows a trend of preseason praise for the Eagles. Athlon, Lindy's, Street & Smith's and The Blue Ribbon College Basketball Yearbook all have the Eagles picked in the top-3 of the conference.
- The Eagles posted 20 wins in consecutive seasons for the first time in 30 years. The last time GS won 20 games two years in a row was in 1987-88 (24-7) and 1988-89 (22-6). GS has three 20-win seasons in the last five years.
- GS ranked fourth in the country in field goal percentage (.499) and 15th in scoring, averaging 82.6 points a game last year. The Eagles scored 80-plus 18 times, 90-plus seven times and over 100 three times. GS has shot 50 percent or better in two games this season.
- Senior Ike Smith received a medical hardship waiver to regain a year of eligibility. Smith scored five points against Reinhardt Nov. 8 to pass 1,500 for his career and had four rebounds vs. Radford Nov. 15 to become the fifth Eagle with 1,500 career points and 500 rebounds, joining Jeff Sanders (1,861 pts, 893 reb), Kevin Anderson (1,843 pts, 986 reb), Matt Simpkins (1,684

pts, 642 reb) and Louis Graham (1,581 pts, 908 reb).

- Smith has been named to the Lou Henson Award Preseason Watch List. The award is given annually to the nation's top Division I Mid-Major player.
- Elijah McCadden was named Sun Belt Player of the Week Nov. 26 after tallying 28 points, four rebounds, two steals and block against Mercer.
- GS has seen success in its last two in-season tournaments. The Eagles won the Islands of the Bahamas Showcase last year, their first in-season tourney title since 2003. GS advanced to the championship game of the 2017 Gulf Coast Showcase at Germain Arena in Estero, Fla., where the Eagles fell 70-67 to Towson.
- GS is 14-10 in neutral site contests during head coach Mark Byington's tenure.
- Florida Gulf Coast is coming off a 73-59 home win over Florida Tech Nov. 26.
- FGCU was picked third in the Atlantic Sun Preseason Poll. The Eagles have won three of the last six regular-season titles and has won six ASUN Championships, either regular season or tournament, in the past seven years.
- The Eagles have a 208-70 record in Alico Arena including a 101-27 record over the last eight years.