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Georgia Southern University Athletics



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Georgia Southern returns home to host Georgia State next weekend

Chris Little

Football

Posted: 11/23/2019 6:50:00 PM

JONESBORO, Ark. - Arkansas State scored 35 first-half points and held on in the second half for a 38-33 victory over Georgia Southern Saturday afternoon in Sun Belt Conference football action at Centennial Bank Stadium behind four passes from Layne Hatcher.

Key Moment: After falling behind 21-3, Georgia Southern marched 63 yards on 10 plays for a touchdown, but Kirk Merritt returned the ensuing kickoff 94 yards for a touchdown to snatch the momentum right back. The Eagles would battle back in the second half to get it within five points, but couldn't complete a last-minute drive as the furious rally fell just short.

Key Scoring Plays:

- A 56-yard run by [Wesley Kennedy III](#) set up a 26-yard field goal by [Tyler Bass](#) to give the game its first points. GS 3, ASU 0.
- Layne Hatcher hit Jonathan Adams on a deep pass for the 32-yard score to gain the lead. GS 3, ASU 7.
- Hatcher threw deep again to Adams as the clock expired in the first for the 63-yard touchdown. GS 3, ASU 14.
- Following a [Matt LaRoche](#) fumble, Layne Hatcher hit Omar Bayless for the 32-yard score. GS 3, ASU 21.
- The Eagles capped a 10-play, 63-yard drive with a [Shai Werts](#) 10-yard run. GS 10, ASU 21.
- The Red Wolves' Kirk Merritt took the ensuing kickoff 94 yards for the touchdown. GS 10, ASU 28.
- Following a costly kick catch interference penalty by the Eagles on a punt, Hatcher connected with Merritt for 27 yards on the first play. GS 10, ASU 35.
- Hatcher is sacked in the end zone for a safety by [Raymond Johnson III](#), which eventually led to an 11-yard touchdown pass from Werts to [Malik Murray](#). That drive was highlighted by a successful fake field goal with [Tyler Bass](#) hitting [Anthony Beck II](#) on a lob pass on fourth and 3. GS 19, ASU 35.
- Werts threw his second touchdown pass of the game, this one to [Mark Michaud](#) for the 8-yard score. Werts hit Michaud again for the 2-point conversion. GS 27, ASU 38
- Aided by several defensive penalties, the Eagles went down and scored with 4:50 left on Werts' 25-yard pass to Michaud. GS 33, ASU 38.

Key Stat: Leading 7-3 in the first quarter, Arkansas State scored touchdowns on four consecutive touches to bust it open for a 35-10 lead. The Red Wolves scored on the first play of two drives and returned a kickoff for a touchdown in that span. The Eagles outscored A-State 23-3 from that point on.

Of Note: Werts tied his career high with three touchdown passes while throwing for 175 yards while also running for 159 yards and a score ... Michaud set a new career high with six receptions for 96 yards and also tied his career high with two touchdown catches.

Up Next: The Eagles (6-5, 4-3 SBC) close the 2019 regular season at home against Georgia State (7-4, 4-3 SBC) on Nov. 30. The game time will be announced later this weekend. Tickets are available through GSEagles.com.

Gallery: (11/23/2019) Football at Arkansas State

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