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Georgia Southern University Athletics



WBB Weekend Preview: Eagles Open Season at Home Against North Carolina A&T and Thomas
Georgia Southern plays at home Friday night at 7 p.m. and Sunday afternoon at 2 p.m.

Women's Basketball

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[2016-17 GS WBB Quick Facts \(PDF\)](#)

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STATESBORO – The Georgia Southern women's basketball team opens the 2016-17 season at home this weekend with a pair of games inside Hanner Fieldhouse. The Eagles will first play host to the Aggies of North Carolina A&T on Friday, Nov. 11 at 7 p.m. before turning their attention to the Night Hawks of Thomas University and a 2 p.m. game on Sunday, Nov. 13.

Friday night's season-opener against the Aggies will feature a special deal for veterans in honor of Veteran's Day. All vets will be admitted for free to the game between the Eagles and the Aggies and family members will get in for \$5.

FRIDAY SNAPSHOT

North Carolina A&T vs. Georgia Southern

Friday, Nov. 11 | 7 p.m. EST | Hanner Fieldhouse (Statesboro, Ga.)

[Live Stats](#) | [Live Video \(GS All-Access\)](#) | [Live Audio \(GS Sports Network\)](#)

SUNDAY SNAPSHOT

Thomas University vs. Georgia Southern

Sunday, Nov. 13 | 2 p.m. EST | Hanner Fieldhouse (Statesboro, Ga.)

[Live Stats](#) | [Live Video \(GS All-Access\)](#) | [Live Audio \(GS Sports Network\)](#)

SCOUTING THE AGGIES (@LadyAggieBall)

Friday night marks the season opener for both the Eagles and the Aggies of North Carolina A&T. The two programs have met just one time on the hardwood with Georgia Southern winning 74-50 on Nov. 23, 1996, in the Lady Bucs Classic held in Johnson City, Tenn.

Earlier this year, the Aggies were picked to win the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference by the league's coaches and sports information directors for the third year in a row after sharing the 2015-16 regular-season title with Bethune-Cookman. North Carolina A&T won the 2016 MEAC Tournament crown and

claimed the automatic bid into the NCAA Tournament where they bowed out in the first round to the No. 1 seed in its region, nationally-ranked Notre Dame. The Aggies are coached by fifth-year head coach Tarrell Robinson who boasts a record of 85-40, including last season's 19-12 campaign.

While NCAT advanced to the NCAA Tournament last season, the Aggies lost eight letterwinners, including three starters, four of the top-six scorers and the top two rebounders from that team. Included in the seven returners is Dana Brown, who was named to the Preseason All-MEAC second-team. Brown, a fifth-year guard, was the Aggies' leading scorer in six contests last season and finished the season second on the team with 11.5 points per game. She started 28 of the 31 games she appeared in and shot 36.2% from the field and 33.5% from three-point range. Also back is the third-best scorer, Kala Green, who averaged 9.8 points per contest a season ago.

[2016-17 NCAT Roster](#)

[2016-17 NCAT Schedule](#)

[2015-16 NCAT Statistics](#)

SCOUTING THE NIGHT HAWKS (@NightHawksWBKB)

Sunday afternoon's game against Thomas University will be the first-ever meeting between the two programs. The Night Hawks are members of the Sun Conference at the NAIA level and are already 2-2 on the year with wins over Coastal Georgia and Truett-McConnell. The Night Hawks opened the year with a pair of wins at home, but have dropped their last two. They also play Jacksonville on Friday night. Both games against Division I opponents will be considered exhibitions for Thomas, but will count for Jacksonville and Georgia Southern.

Thomas is led by fourth-year head coach Coretta Brown. She is 35-50 with the Night Hawks, including 14-14 last season. Micah Garvin and J'Nyiah Daniels have been the leading scorers so far for the Night Hawks, averaging 14.5 and 14.0 points per game through four games. Arianna Anderson, who has two double-doubles already this season, leads the team with 35 rebounds, an average of 8.8 per outing.

[2016-17 TU Roster](#)

[2016-17 TU Schedule](#)

[2016-17 TU Statistics](#)

YEAR TWO FOR DROWN AND COMPANY

When [Kip Drown](#) took over the reins of the Georgia Southern women's basketball program over a year ago, he knew the rebuild would be a process that required him, his staff and the players to be patient. After the first year, the Eagles are looking to take the next step in building a successful program and they will have plenty of experience to draw from both on the coaching side as well as on the court.

Despite being chosen 10th in the Preseason Sun Belt Conference Coaches' Poll, the team isn't looking to just roll over. The Eagles return plenty of talent and are a year older with more experience overall while also adding key pieces at every position. Last season, the Eagles had plenty of depth at certain positions, but were inexperienced at others. With at least three players at every position this year, and some players cross-trained at multiple positions, GS is prepared to take the next step.

EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS 2016-17 TEAM

Last season, the Eagles went 7-22 overall and 4-16 in Sun Belt Conference play, but they could have just as easily been 15-14 overall and in the top half of the league. GS had nine games that were decided by 10 or fewer points and went 1-8 in those games, including five losses decided by five points or less, four in conference games. Those are the games that Drown hopes his players learned the most from and are ready to win this year.

To get over the proverbial hump, the Eagles will turn to their experienced veterans who have played a collective 518 games, including 234 games started. The group of 10 returners have corralled in 1,325 rebounds and scored 2,818 points.

Included in the 10 returners are five players who started a majority of the games last season for the Eagles as well as the top three scorers and top three rebounders. Seniors [Angel McGowan](#), [Patrice Butler](#) and [Alexis Sams](#) highlight the veteran group and will be relied upon even more heavily than a year ago.

McGowan was voted a first-team Preseason All-Sun Belt Conference selection by the league's coaches earlier this month and Butler was tabbed a third-team selection. The duo were the team's leading scorers and Butler was also one of the top rebounders on the squad a year ago. Last season, Sams rarely left the court while running Drown's offense from the point despite being more comfortable as a shooting guard. McGowan, an All-Sun Belt Conference Second-Team selection in 2015-16, also rarely left the court and was also asked to take on a slightly different role at times, but this year, both will be able to move back into their more familiar positions.

Also returning are [Trellanie English-Lurry](#), [Rhein Beamon](#), [Sierra Butler](#), [Alexis Foulks](#), [Jessica Marcus](#) and [Bri Reece](#), all of whom were key components last season and contributed at key moments. Last season, English-Lurry worked at transitioning from a shooting guard into a second point guard for the Eagles and will continue that role in the upcoming campaign. Fellow juniors [Sierra Butler](#) and Foulks as well as Beamon, a sophomore, will also see an expanded role as the Eagles look to push the tempo of the game and give teams different looks both on offense as well as defense.

Rounding out the Eagles' 10 returners, redshirt sophomore [Jakayvea Akins](#) returns to run the offense from the point, a move that will allow Sams and McGowan to slide back over to their familiar spots and will give Drown and staff the opportunity to turn the tempo up.

FIVE NEWCOMERS LOOKING TO MAKE A SPLASH

Last season, the Georgia Southern women's basketball team had to shuffle personnel around at times, forcing some players to play at positions they were not fully comfortable with. During the off-season, the Eagles added five fresh faces to the program, and all five freshmen fill voids for the Eagles and will add depth across the board, setting the Eagles up for growth not just this season, but well into the future. The five newcomers include guards [Amira Atwater](#), [Alexis Brown](#) and [Nakol Franks](#) along with forwards [Hailey Dias-Allen](#) and [Victoria Stavropoulos](#).

MCGOWAN AND BUTLER EARN PRESEASON ALL-SUN BELT HONORS

Georgia Southern women's basketball student-athletes [Angel McGowan](#) and [Patrice Butler](#) have earned Preseason All-Sun Belt Conference honors as voted on by the league's coaches. McGowan, a senior guard from Greenville, S.C., earned first team honors and Butler, a senior forward/center from Norcross, Ga., was named to the third team.

EAGLES OPENING SEASON AT HOME

Georgia Southern women's basketball is 23-20 all-time in the season-opener. Friday night marks the 27th time that the Eagles will have opened the season at home. In the previous 26 games, the Eagles are 16-10, including winning seven straight from 1986 to 1992. That stretch included the final season under Jeannie Milling and the first six season openers under Drema Greer.

NEXT UP

Following the pair of home games to open the season, the Eagles will hit the road for a stretch of four games over two weeks and three different states. Georgia Southern will first travel to Clemson, S.C. for a mid-week game against the Tigers of Clemson on Wednesday, Nov. 16. That game will be featured on the ACC Network Extra and will tip off at 6 p.m. Following the game with the Tigers, the Eagles will travel to Jacksonville State, Alabama and IUPUI before returning home for the final game of November at home against Mercer.

Georgia Southern Athletics provides up-to-date information on all its sports through its official website, GSEagles.com, through social media channels facebook.com/GSAthletics, twitter.com/GSAthletics, iOS app Georgia Southern Eagles and Android app Eagles GATA. Fans can purchase tickets to Georgia Southern Athletics events by visiting GSEagles.com/Tickets.

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