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Georgia Southern University Athletics



Southern Travels to State for Final Sun Belt Series
Baseball

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STATESBORO, Ga. – The Georgia Southern baseball team travels to Atlanta for their final Sun Belt Conference series of the year. The Eagles will square off with the Georgia State Panthers in a matchup with conference seeding implications for both squads.

The series begins a day earlier than normal due to the 2015 Sun Belt Conference Tournament beginning on Wednesday, May 20. The two teams will play a pair of night games at 6 p.m. on both Thursday and Friday before wrapping up the series on Saturday at 2 p.m.

The Eagles (28-24, 16-11) currently sit in third place in the league and are two wins ahead of the Panthers (28-23, 14-11) in the win column. Georgia State enters the weekend in fifth place in the league standings.

Both squads are looking to improve upon their seeding with a series victory this weekend.

The Eagles hold a 58-17 record in the all-time series but the two squads have not met since 2007. The Eagles are 22-4 against the Panthers under Head Coach [Rodney Hennon](#) and are 25-7 at the GSU Baseball Complex.

GS stepped out of conference play last weekend and dropped a series to the Clemson Tigers. The Eagles won Sunday's series finale 7-4 but fell 8-5 to Kennesaw State on Tuesday.

Georgia State had the mid-week off and was swept last weekend by the Troy Trojans. The Panthers are 19-12 at home this season.

The Eagles are hitting .260 as a squad. Former Panther and now Eagle [Kody Adams](#) leads the team with a .328 batting average. Adams leads the team with 14 doubles and is slugging .459. Adams played for Georgia State as a freshman in 2012 before transferring to Darton State College.

The pitching staff holds a 4.29 ERA. [Jason Richman](#) ranks third in the league with seven wins and first with 33 pitching appearances. [Evan Challenger](#) continues to lead the league with a 1.69 ERA.

Challenger will make the series-opening start on Thursday. Senior righthander [Tripp Sheppard](#) will start the second game, while freshman lefthander [Connor Simmons](#), who has made every weekend start, will pitch the series finale on Saturday.

The Panthers are hitting .278 as a squad. Matt Rose ranks sixth in the NCAA with 15 home runs and leads the Sun Belt Conference with 42 RBI. Ryan Blanton leads the team with a .330 batting average and is slugging .540.

The pitching staff holds a 4.17 ERA. Nathan Bates has twice been named Sun Belt Pitcher of the Week and leads the team with a 4.34 ERA.

Bates will get the call on Thursday. Kenny Anderson will counter Sheppard on Friday and is 5-3 with a 4.65 ERA on the year. The Panthers have not announced a starter for Saturday.

Links to live audio and stats are available at gseagles.com.

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 calling 1-800-GSU-WINS or by visiting GSEagles.com.

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