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Georgia Southern University Athletics

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Marcela Montoya's tally just 22 seconds into the second half the difference; GS faces ULM on Friday

Women's Soccer
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FOLEY, Ala. - Marcela Montoya's goal 22 seconds into the second half propelled the Georgia Southern women's soccer team into the 2021 Sun Belt Conference Women's Soccer Semifinals as the fourth-seeded Eagles defeated fifth-seeded Coastal Carolina, 1-0, on Wednesday evening at the Foley Sports Tourism Complex in Foley, Ala.

Georgia Southern (10-6-4) advances to face eighth-seeded ULM - 2-1 winners over top-seed Arkansas State - on Friday at 8 PM ET in the second semifinal match. Third-seeded Georgia State and second-seeded South Alabama meet in the other semifinal match on Friday. Coastal Carolina sees its season come to a close with a 7-8-2 record.

An even first half saw one excellent chance for each squad. Olivia Durham hit the crossbar with a shot in the 35th minute, while Rose Behrmann had a point-blank effort saved by the Eagles' Michaela English with just nine seconds left in the first half. The shot totals were all even at 7-apiece at the break.

The Eagles wasted no time getting on the board in the second half. After Coastal Carolina started the half with possession, Georgia Southern's back line forced the turnover, then a long ball found a streaking Faith Phillips down the right side. She drove to the end line with the ball and her service from the right found Montoya all alone just inside the box, and Montoya finished inside the upper left corner for her ninth goal of the season and the 1-0 lead.

Coastal Carolina kept the pressure on the Eagles throughout the second half, but English turned away three shots and the Eagles withstood four corner kicks in the final half hour to preserve the victory.

It's the third time Georgia Southern has advanced to the Sun Belt Conference semifinals, joining the 2014 and 2017 squads.

"It's a Sun Belt conference game, we knew it was going to be a close one," Georgia Southern Head Women's Soccer Coach Chris Adams said. "We were sitting at halftime looking at the stats and it's 7-7 in shots and 2-2 in corner kicks. At that point you really just figure, who executes more is going to be the winner. It was nice to get what we call a big five goal coming out of halftime. Absolute great play by Faith Phillips to slip behind the defense, and a really good serve. Alejandra battled to keep it alive, and Marcela hits an absolute cracker in the top corner. Then, it was about team defending, staying tight and putting a bow on it. We managed the game extremely well, I'm proud of this group for advancing and getting an opportunity to play in the semifinal against ULM on Friday."

Coastal Carolina finished the match with a 14-12 edge in total shots. English made five saves in net for Georgia Southern, while Ky Hudson made one save for the Chanticleers. Coastal Carolina held a 6-5 edge in corner kicks and the Chants were whistled for seven fouls and two offsides, while Georgia Southern was whistled for five fouls.

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