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2/18/2017 | 2 PM

Game Recap: Women's Basketball | 2/16/2017 9:30:00 PM

UTA Finds a Way to Top Hot-Shooting Eagles

Georgia Southern shot 48 percent from 3-point range but falls 69-60

STATESBORO, Ga. – Cierra Johnson recorded 14 points and eight rebounds, and UTA forced 22 turnovers to earn a 69-60 Sun Belt women's basketball victory over Georgia Southern Thursday night in Hanner Fieldhouse.

[Angel McGowan](#) had 16 points, with 13 coming in the second half, along with six rebounds, three assists and four steals for Georgia Southern (11-14, 7-7), and [Patrice Butler](#) tallied 14 points and four boards. [Alexis Brown](#) finished with 10 points and five rebounds.

Christina Devers collected 14 points and four steals for UTA (17-6, 10-3), and Rebekah VanDijk registered 12 points and five rebounds in a foul-plagued 16 minutes. Crystal Allen scored 11.

THE STORY

Georgia Southern shot a blistering 48 percent from 3-point range, hitting 11 of 24, but GS committed 22 turnovers that UTA turned into 27 points. The Mavericks also owned a 14-4 edge on the offensive glass and scored eight second-chance points.

With the Mavericks ahead by two, Devers hit a 3-pointer as the final buzzer sounded to end the first half, and UTA outscored the Eagles 16-7 over the first 7:36 of the third period to open a 46-32 advantage. Lauren Billie hit another triple as the buzzer sounded to end the frame, and UTA took a 53-38 cushion into the fourth quarter.

The margin grew to 18 points on a Billie 3-pointer midway through the quarter, before Butler netted seven points in a 10-0 run that got the Eagles back into the contest. The senior's conventional 3-point play made the score 63-55 with 2:58 remaining.

McGowan hit a layup to make the score 65-58 with 1:49 to go, and the Eagles got a defensive stop. But Butler's 3-pointer from the top of the key came off the rim, UTA got the rebound and the Eagles were forced to foul with under a minute to play. UTA went 4 for 4 from the free throw line and got two defensive stops to seal the win.

QUOTABLES FROM HEAD COACH KIP DROWN

On giving up just two offensive rebounds in the second half

"We just challenged our kids to play harder. Rebounding is about effort most of the time. Sure, there's a technique to it – put a body on somebody – but a lot of it is go get the ball. Every time the ball hit the floor, they were getting it, and that was disappointing. They scored 37 of their 69 points from turnovers and second-chance points. So we limited them in half-court offense, but it was other things we didn't do well."

On VanDijk's foul trouble

"Our game plan was to try to out-quick her a little bit and just be aggressive. I felt like last year at their place, we were too passive, and she blocked a lot of shots. We wanted to attack her with quick moves, and we were able to do that a little bit. She's not foul prone but committed a couple early. We put ourselves in position, but we didn't take advantage of it."

Overall

"I felt like we didn't compete with them early. I felt like - a lot like last Thursday - they came out and got after us and that was disappointing. When you are chasing people in the standings, you have to come out hungry, and I felt like we didn't do that today."

NEXT UP

The Eagles play their home finale Saturday against Texas State at 2 p.m. in the front end of a doubleheader with the men's team. It's Senior Day, and the Eagles will honor seniors [Patrice Butler](#), [Jessica Marcus](#), [Angel McGowan](#) and [Alexis Sams](#) prior to the contest.

OTHER PROMOTIONS

Women's Basketball Alumni Day - All women's basketball alumni are invited back for a fun weekend!

Cheerleader for a Day - Any child ages 4 to 14 has the opportunity to spend the day with the GS Cheerleading team. Participants will learn cheers, chants and important cheerleading skills from the very best, our own five-time National Champion Georgia Southern Eagle Cheerleaders.

Halftime - Enjoy a special performance from our Cheerleader for a Day participants.

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. For tickets to Georgia Southern athletics events, visit GSEagles.com/tickets.