

Singler Leads Duke Past Georgia Southern, 97-54

[box score](#)

DURHAM, N.C. – Finally, a blowout that Kyle Singler and No. 8 Duke could enjoy.

Singler scored 19 points for the second straight game and the Blue Devils rolled into the 2K Sports Classic semifinals by routing Georgia Southern 97-54 on Tuesday night.

Nolan Smith added 13 points, and Gerald Henderson and Greg Paulus each finished with 11 for the Blue Devils (2-0), who weren't satisfied in the slightest with their 31-point rout of Presbyterian 24 hours earlier.

"We won the game, it was kind of more negative stuff," Henderson said. "We felt like we could be having more fun out there."

So, after getting back to their trademark brand of basketball, they did.

The Blue Devils cranked up the pressure on their hostile home floor, turning 17 Eagles turnovers into 24 points and sparking two overwhelming runs to claim their 61st straight nonconference victory at Cameron Indoor Stadium.

"That's going to be a staple of ours, where our defense kind of fuels our offense," Singler said.

Now they will play host to Rhode Island this weekend before heading to Madison Square Garden -- where last season's team suffered its first loss -- to meet the Massachusetts-Southern Illinois winner.

Willie Powers scored 17 points and Julian Allen had 10 to lead Georgia Southern (1-1). The Eagles went at least 5 minutes between field goals twice in the first half, and they shot just 28 percent while allowing Duke to shoot 48.5 percent.

"Our team is obviously not ready to play a game of this caliber," Georgia Southern coach Jeff Price said. "We just weren't ready for a game of this magnitude against a really, really good team."

The Blue Devils opened with a 16-4 run and took command late in the first half by running off 15 straight points over a 2-minute stretch. That pushed their lead past 20 points for good, and it grew to 30 just 12 seconds into the second half on Smith's 3-pointer.

"Our guys just hustled, and they made some great hustle plays, and all of a sudden, it was like a pinball machine -- boom, boom, boom," Hall of Fame coach Mike Krzyzewski said. "Double bonuses. The lights were going on, and, 'Holy mackerel, we're up by a lot of points.'"

They won this one mostly without their three blue-chip freshmen. Miles Plumlee, Elliot Williams and Olek Czyz spent the entire first half on the bench after they were a combined 3-for-9 with five turnovers against Presbyterian.

Krzyzewski said he leaned on his veterans for much of the way because he wanted them "to show the leadership of how we wanted to play for 40 minutes."

Then again, nobody at Duke was terribly content with that win, because the Blue Devils had 21 turnovers in that one and were too sloppy on both ends of the court for Coach K's liking. They were sharper this time, giving it away only 11 times.

"We're going to commit some turnovers, because we play fast and there are a lot of possessions," Krzyzewski said. "Stats are so superficial that if you have 11 turnovers in this game, it's like having five in a slow game. I'm pretty good about where we're at as far as handling the ball."

Singler keyed the game-opening spurt with seven quick points, and David McClure closed it at the 13 1/2-minute mark by grabbing the rebound of Paulus' missed 3 and slamming it home. Then, Jon Scheyer and Smith hit 3s during the 15-0 run, and Singler capped it with a fast-break dunk with 42 seconds left to put Duke up 50-22.

"You just want to try to hang in there," Price said. "It just got away from us. It's a hard place to play, a tough atmosphere for a young team. ... That was obviously the part of the game that totally broke it open."

Still, the Blue Devils weren't perfect, and most of their lapses took place at the free-throw line, where they were 25-for-49 -- and that doesn't count the three misses by Henderson that were wiped out by Georgia Southern lane violations.

"I hope I'm not starting to get a hitch like Shaq," said Henderson, a career 66 percent free-throw shooter.