

Georgia Southern defeats Houston, 65-63

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[box score](#)

DURHAM, N.C. – Georgia Southern held Houston scoreless for the final 2:42 and got a career-high 19 points and 11 rebounds from senior Trumaine Pearson (Stuart, Fla.) to win 65-63 Monday night at Cameron Indoor Stadium.

The game, which opened the 2008-09 season, was a part of the 2K Sports Classic benefitting Coaches vs. Cancer. The Eagles will now play the winner of Duke-Presbyterian Tuesday night at 9 p.m. The game will be broadcast live on ESPNU.

"It was obviously a hard-fought win," said GSU head coach Jeff Price. "You had two teams with a lot of new players early in the season and two teams that really struggled offensively. We were really solid on the defensive end. Our zone was good in the first half and we had to get stops in the second half with our man-to-man and we did."

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GSU held a 65-50 lead with just under four minutes left on a tip-in by senior Julian Allen (Waterbury, Conn.). Desmond Wade hit a long 3-pointer with 2:42 to play, but the Cougars missed their last three shots and committed two turnovers in the last 1:31.

"You could really tell our defense was way ahead of our offense at this point in the season," said Price. "I thought our zone threw them off in the first half then we switched defenses a little bit in the second half. Our man-to-man, when we had to get stops at the end of the game, we did. We showed a lot of heart and were really scrappy."

Five of Georgia Southern's six newcomers saw action, including junior Sandy Perry (Perth Amboy, N.J.) who scored 12 on 6-of-10 shooting.

"I thought Sandy Perry was really good – he stood out and played well," said Price. "Antonio Hanson (Fort Worth, Texas) struggled a little bit from the field but he's going to be a good player. We played our two freshmen in the first half – not a lot – but we wanted them to get a feel for the game. We just have to continue to play those guys."

Pearson notched his first career double-double and shot 7-for-10 from the floor, including 2-for-3 from long range.

"He's been outstanding," said Price. "He's shown consistency through two scrimmages and now the first game so we're really happy with his play."