

Freshman David Roberson goes up against Winthrop in the Kimmel Arena last Wednesday, Jan. 22
Photo by Jorja Smith - Photography Co-Editor

Bulldogs basketball steps up to Big South

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UNC Asheville's men's basketball feel the pressure to produce wins within the Big South Conference as the season progresses.

"At the beginning of the season we set a lot of team goals for ourselves and we always want to strive to play in the post-season," said first-year men's basketball head coach Nick McDevitt. "The only way that we're going to get to the post-season is through conference play."

After a slow, 1-7 start to the season and a slew of injuries, the UNCA Bulldogs have won nine of their last 12 games and are 6-1 at home.

"I think our non-conference schedule was very difficult this year. The early season challenges were mainly all

road games and that really helped us to prepare for conference play," said McDevitt.

The Bulldogs overcame Charleston Southern, picked to finish first in the Big South Conference, and the team chosen to finish second, Gardner-Webb.

"We have started off conference play pretty well. If you're going to win your conference then you have to steal some wins on the road. To go to those places and win was huge for us," McDevitt said.

The men's Bulldog program has made four post-season trips including competing in the NCAA Tournament three times: 2003, 2011, 2012; and the NIT once in 2008. UNCA also won three Big South Conference Tournament championships while securing three Big South regular-season titles.

"I think in part we were able to start conference play well because we were challenged so much in our non-conference schedule," said McDevitt, a UNCA alumnus and former player. "By having to go to Duke, to Kentucky, to College of Charleston, to Charlotte and teams like Rhode Island and East Carolina really helped make us battle tested for conference play."

UNCA heads into the week with a 4-2 record in conference play.

"I think the biggest thing is you have to keep on getting better," McDevitt said. "If we continue to get better, I think we'll have as good a shot as anyone else to obtain a tournament bid."

See **BIG SOUTH** on page 8

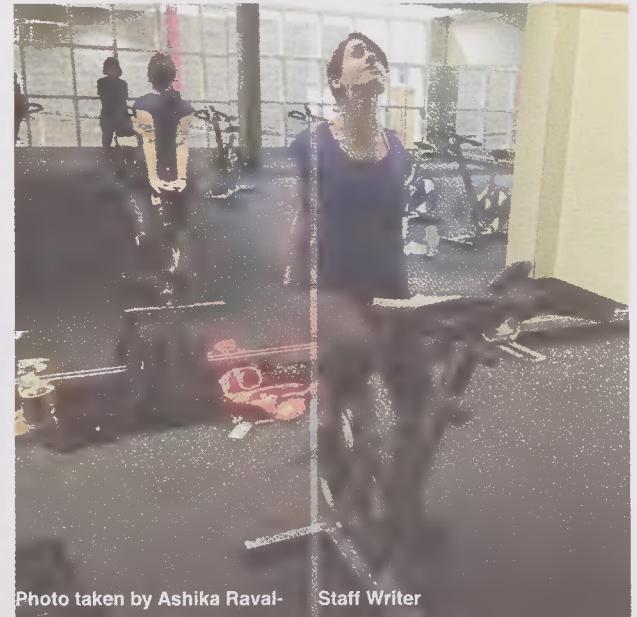


Photo taken by Ashika Raval - Staff Writer
Candice Bangham leading her spin class in the Sherrill Center

Inspired new spin instructor

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Watching her dad recover from major injuries, with the help of spin classes, Candice Bangham takes on becoming a spin instructor.

As most students settle in to spring semester classes, Candice Bangham, a sophomore, takes on another challenge: being a spin instructor.

After years of spinning on her own and with her family, Bangham decided to share her love for the activity with others.

"My dad is the one who really inspired me to start spinning. He was in a pretty bad accident when I was younger, spinning helped him recover," Bangham said.

In 2003, Bangham's father got into an accident at work, which left him with a torn ligament in his right knee. After a couple of days on crutches, he attempted to go down the stairs on his own and the crutches fell out under him, causing him to fall down the stairs and hit the front door, knocking him unconscious.

"He almost died. I know falling down the stairs doesn't sound like a big deal, but it was. He had a big concussion, broke all the bones in his arm

and tore like every ligament. It was really scary and it was such a long recovery," said Bangham.

After multiple surgeries on his arm and leg and months of intense physical therapy and treatment, he was still experiencing pain and had trouble walking. A friend advised her dad to take up spinning and he decided to give it a try.

"The first class left me feeling pretty sore and intimidated as it is very intense exercise; however, I was determined to give it another try. The second class led to the third and I was hooked. After a couple of months, my limp disappeared and so did the pain. Not only I was walking better but I started to feel stronger and more energized with each workout," said Russ Bangham, Candice's father.

He enjoyed it so much, he decided to get his whole family to join him. Starting off by taking classes together at the YMCA, they all became involved in spinning and 10 years later, Russ continues to spin both indoor and outdoor. Candice, continues to join her dad when she is home, as well as in Asheville.

"I just kept doing it. I really
See **SPIN** on page 8