

Sports

Cheerleaders make presence at Nationals

John Olson
Pilot Sports Editor

Gardner-Webb's cheerleaders are looking to the 2004-2005 season with anticipation as this year's competitive season came to a close on April 4 at the NCA and NDA National Championships in Daytona, Fla. The championships started on March 31.

The GWU team placed nineteenth in the small coed classification of the competition. The University of Houston finished first in the small coed division.

"This year was a learning experience," said Team Co-Captain Collette DuPree.

Team captains Chena Camp and DuPree led the 18-active member squad into the competition. "It was a learning experience (this year)," said DuPree.

GWU's cheerleading squad consists of 20 members. "We came together and

did the best we could," said Crystal Burwell. "I don't think we had anything to be ashamed about."

Over 200 squads were at the 2004 competition. The cheerleaders placed second in the preliminaries at the 2003 competition.

The trip to nationals for the Bulldog was not easy as the team raised the funds to go to the competition along with receiving funds from GWU. The team was also required to send a performance video to event organizers by Jan. 13 to see if the team was ready for the competition.

GWU suffered a tragedy a day before leaving for Daytona as Kelly Bodman suffered a knee injury, causing the squad to redo their routine. "In cheerleading that hurts because you have to redo the entire routine," said DuPree.

In preparation for the competitive season the

cheerleading squad practices competitive cheering three hours a day, five to six days a week. Along with the competitive practices the team lifts weight and runs for conditioning purposes.

Other competitions that took place were a mascot national championships, a group stunt competition and a partner stunt competition.

GWU's competitors in the small co-ed division included Florida Atlantic, UNCA, UNCC, Virginia Tech, Florida International and Coastal Carolina.

Kelly Sterner is the cheerleading coach at GWU. Sterner joined the GWU staff in the summer of 2003. Sterner works at Greenville Gymnastics in South Carolina.

"She knows what to expect from us next season," said Carrie Johnson.

Following a one week break the cheerleading squad is hosting tryouts from April 16-18 in the



Photo Courtesy of GWU Cheerleaders

Gardner-Webb cheerleaders compete at the NCA championships in Daytona, Fla., March 31-April 4.

Lutz-Yelton Convocation Center. "We have a lot of recruits coming in for tryouts," said DuPree. "We are hoping to get a lot of well-rounded cheerleaders."

Assistant basketball coach accepts job at Lander

Sean Hubbard
Pilot Staff

After a four-year tenure at Gardner-Webb University, Assistant Men's Basketball Coach Bruce Evans has left for a head coaching position at Lander University. Evans, a first time head coach, shows little hesitation in taking on the role.

"I'm really excited," said Evans. "It is a great opportunity for me to have my hands on every aspect of the game."

While Evans stressed his appreciation for GWU and Head Coach Rick Scruggs, he is excited about having a little more pull in the decision-making.

"Everyone has someone



Evans

above them, but now I make the final decisions," said Evans.

As head coach at Lander Evans will be able to pick and choose which players he wants to sign. If he had

already seen an athlete play, he is now in the position where he doesn't have to send an assistant to take a look at him, he can make the call by himself.

Making the move to Lander is a bit of a homecoming for both Evans and his wife as he will be only thirty or forty minutes from his hometown, while his wife is moving closer to home is well.

"This is a great opportunity for my family and I," said Evans.

The Bulldogs are beginning to take applications now for a replacement for Evans, however Evans' time here was greatly appreciated by Scruggs.

"He was a good friend and a great coach," said

He was a good friend and a great coach, He was good to the program, and it is a great tribute to our program that he was able to move up.

- Rick Scruggs

Scruggs. "He was good to the program, and it is a great tribute to our program that he was able to move up."

After being under Scruggs for his years at GWU, Evans feels ready to make the step up to head coach.

"(Scruggs) did an excel-

lent job of preparing me for this," said Evans. "He gave me more responsibilities than ever. I am very grateful for my four years at GWU, Rick Scruggs and the players that have come through there. Without my successful time at GWU, I probably wouldn't even have gotten a look anywhere else."

Watching Evans and coaching with him over the years, Scruggs is confident in his abilities in being a head coach.

"He was loyal and helped us to a new level," said Scruggs. "He was more than ready to step into a head coaching position."

Scruggs hopes to have a replacement by June 1.