

Gardner-Webb Sports

Runnin' Bulldogs gearing up for conference tourney

by Carlton Hurt
sports editor

Any team in any sport must deal with the ups and downs a season has to offer. But for the Gardner-Webb Runnin' Bulldogs, this season has been a roller coaster ride like none other.

G-W has dropped three straight conference games heading into the last week of the season, and consequently has fallen to the lower half of the league standings with a 5-7 record. The team still stands at 15-9 overall, but it's a far cry from where many thought they would be.

Despite the disappointment, the Bulldogs will host their final two games as well as the South Atlantic Conference Tournament, which begins Feb. 26. So finishing strong and gaining a NCAA Division II Tournament berth are not out of the question.

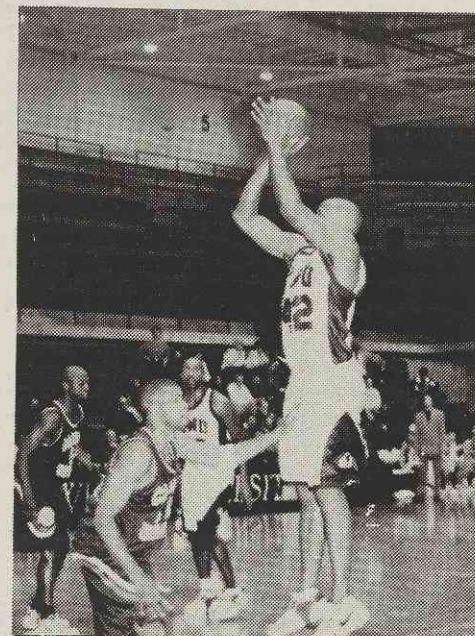
Gardner-Webb has been getting solid play out of three seniors in particular

throughout the season. Willis Johnson currently leads the team in scoring at 17.3 ppg, which is third best in the conference. He also pulls down eight rebounds a game, second in the league, and has swatted away 51 shots on the year, which leads the league.

Point Guard "Bo" Graves leads the conference in assists at 6.3 a game, but more importantly has been the "iron man" in the backcourt as he leads the team in minutes played. Matthew Cates is first in the league in free throw percentage at 87%, and is second on the team in scoring at 14 ppg.

An 8-1 start to the season has turned sour, as inconsistency has plagued G-W during the conference schedule. The Bulldogs have also lost an uncharacteristic four games in Paul Porter Arena.

However, the talent is there, and if Gardner-Webb finds that chemistry again and pulls together as a team, they could be saving their best for last. Which would be winning the conference tournament on their home court, in front of their fans.

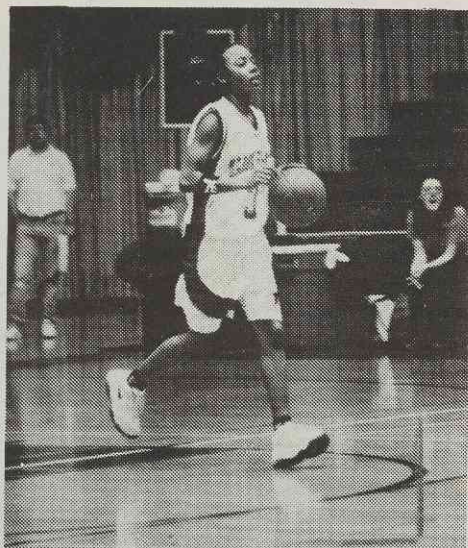


Gardner-Webb's Jermel Perry shoots over a Carson-Newman defender in a recent game.

(Photo by Karen Brower)

Women's basketball team challenging for SAC crown

by B.J. Johnson
staff writer



Guard Susie Gaines has played an important role in the success of this year's team. She will be a key factor for the Lady Bulldogs as they head into tournament play.

(Photo by Garry Eller)

The Gardner-Webb University women's basketball team is hitting on all cylinders heading into the final week of the regular season. Currently, the Lady Bulldogs are tied for second place with Presbyterian and just one game back of SAC front-runner Wingate.

The Lady Bulldogs have won six of their last seven games to run their record to 16-7, 8-4 in SAC play. During this stretch G-W has gotten a lot of help from many different players. Tayuance Dewberry's buzzer beater against Catawba with 3.1 seconds lifted the Lady Bulldogs to a one point victory, 57-56. In a 97-26 embarrassment of Limestone College, seven players scored in double figures. Katie Jordan notched her first career double-double as she scored 14 points and grabbed 10 rebounds versus Presbyterian.

On Wednesday, Feb. 12, Lenoir-Rhyne left Boiling Springs with a SAC high tenth conference loss as Damenda Dellinger hit for 17 points and GWU shot 70.8 percent from the field in the first half to eclipse the Lady

Bears, 90-68. Last weekend against Mars Hill, Holly Flourmoy hit the game winning basket with .7 seconds on the clock to give Gardner-Webb a 68-66 victory. Susie Gaines had 19 points and seven rebounds in the win.

With two games remaining on the schedule, GWU has a chance to finish in first place. This Saturday's showdown with rival Wingate could determine who wins the regular season title.

The team will look for leadership from Dewberry and Gaines heading into the SAC Tournament.

Dewberry is fifth in the conference in scoring at 14.2 ppg and is third in rebounding at 9.6 a game. Gaines leads the SAC in assists with 5.8 a contest and she is second on the team in scoring at 12.2 ppg.

However, in order for the Lady Bulldogs to grab the tournament championship, they must get a total team effort.

The kind of effort that has produced 20 consecutive wins in Paul Porter Arena.

And the kind of effort that could send them to the National Tournament for the second straight year.