

Sports

Ruth Hammond lives her dreams

Jacob Conley
Pilot Staff

When playing a sport at any level, an athlete must have a passion for that sport.

Gardner-Webb Senior Ruth Hammond has that passion and it carries over to every aspect of her life—not just basketball.

"I've been playing basketball since I was in fifth grade and it has always been my dream to play Division I basketball," said Hammond.

The Clearwater, Fla. native attributes her passion for and the dream of playing basketball as coming from that dad.

"I come from a big basketball family, but my dad was my inspiration since he played college ball," she said.

When choosing a college, Hammond said that GWU's newly acquired Division I status was a major factor, but it was definitely

not the only reason why she chose to be a Running Bulldog.

"I like the small campus, and I like that it [GWU] has a Christian environment," said Hammond.

Hammond's passion for basketball is evident in every aspect of her life, from her favorite books, activities, and chosen major, she said. One of Hammond's favorite free-time activities for example is weightlifting, which has the added benefit of improving strength and stamina on the basketball court. Hammond's major, which is English, is also related to her basketball passion.

"I really enjoy high school kids," said Hammond. "And the big thing about it is that I want to coach basketball." Even her favorite book, *Success is a Choice*, was written by Rick Piteno, a famous college basketball coach.

Hammond believes that her experiences on the basketball court will help her relate to her future

students.

"I've competed in all phases of the game," said Hammond. "I know what it is to sit on the bench, to win and to lose, and I hope to relate these experiences to my players."

But for now, Hammond hopes she can add qualifying for the A-Sun tournament to her list of experiences after this season. To reach this goal she said she will have to be more aggressive and be ready "pull the three"—three point shot, that is.

Head coach Serena King has every confidence that Hammond can help lead the Bulldogs to a successful season.

"Ruth is a very fundamentally sound player," said King. "That's why she is one of our co-captains."

No matter what the outcome of the season is however, she said she will still have a passion for basketball and the experience of living a dream at GWU.

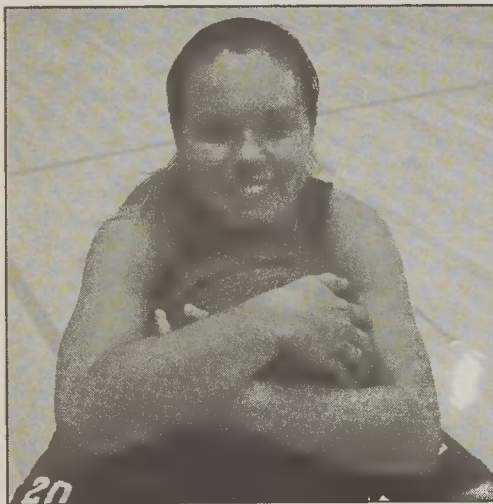


Photo by Scott Holstein

MEN'S BASKETBALL

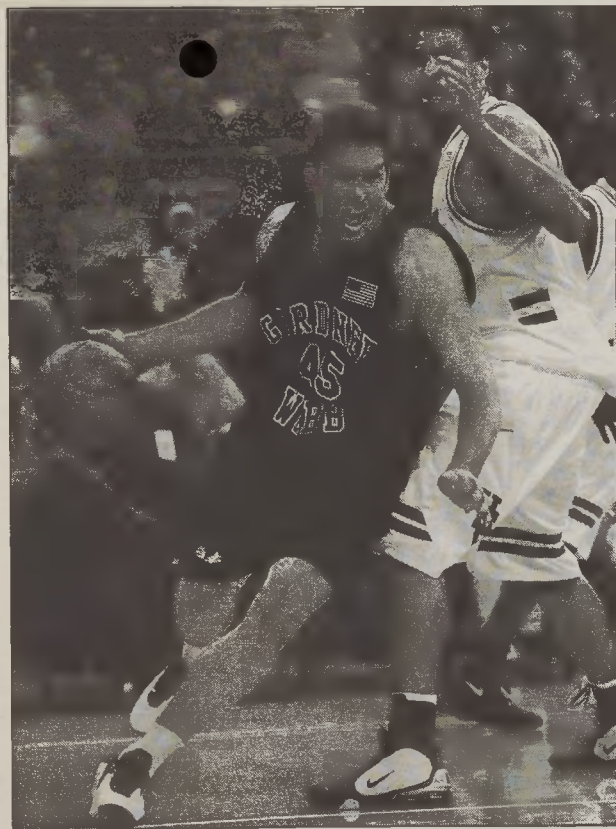


Photo by Scott Holstein

Brendan Clowry drives past his opponent during Monday night's game against the University of South Carolina.

Swimmers place third

John Olson
Pilot Sports Editor

Gardner-Webb's swim team finished third at the GWU Fall Classic this past weekend at the Huntersville Fitness and Aquatic Center. Davidson captured the meet title on both the women's and men's sides, following the conclusion of the three-day event. Georgia Southern tallied 560 points to finish second in the three-day competition.

Freshman Terra Wilson set a new school record time of 23.92 seconds in the 50 free while taking the win for GWU during day one. The Potter Valley, Calif. native swam a leg of the Bulldogs first place 800 free relay. Fellow Bulldog swimmers Jennifer Chester, Stephanie Crawford, and Taylor Simpson joined Wilson in the relay to finish in a school record time of 7:50.40.

Along with holding records in the 50 free and 800 relay, Wilson holds GWU records in the 100 free (51.64), 200 free (1:52.89), 50 back (28.80, relay), 200 IM (2:10.15, preliminaries) and 100 back (1:01.14) since the start of the season on Oct. 25.

Newcomer Kathryn Williams came in fifth in the 50 free for GWU, setting a season-best time of 25.13. Samantha Lehman placed second in the 1650 free for GWU after touching in 17:45.49. Jennifer Bishop finished ninth in the 1650 for GWU.

Following the conclusion of day one the Lady Bulldogs tallied 176 points to take the lead. Davidson was in second with 145.50 points while Georgia Southern rounded out the top three.

Simpson continued to help the Bulldogs after placing first in the 400 IM while setting a season best of 4:33.08. Chester finished fourth in the 400 for GWU. Lisa Fry led the way for the Bulldogs in the 100 Fly with a third place performance of 59.45. Fry finished third in the 100 breast with teammate Kourtney Hamilton touching the wall in fourth.

Day two concluded with GWU's 200 free relay team of Williams, Wilson, Jessica Mischel and Chester taking No. 2 with a combined time of 1:39.35. Georgia Southern took the title in the 200 relay in 1:39.02, .33 seconds ahead of GWU.

Davidson took the lead in the second day of action with GWU moving to second and Georgia Southern holding onto the third slot.

At the start of day three, GWU finished fourth in the 200-medley relay and Davidson captured the 200-relay win over Georgia Southern. Lehman acquired 17 points for GWU after placing second in the 500 free. Lehman set a new season-best of 5:12.28 in the 500. Wilson finished fourth overall in the 500 and picked up the lone victory for GWU in the 100 free.

The meet concluded on Sunday with the 400 free relay. GWU's relay team of Wilson, Chester, Fry, and Bishop finished third in 3:38.48.

College of Charleston, North Florida, Wingate, Catawba, Radford, North Carolina A&T and Agnes Scott also competed in the three-day GWU Fall Classic.

GWU continues the season on Jan. 9 when it will host Richmond at home.