

## SPORTS

## Sports: alumni spend time after graduation on sports field

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education. Back on campus now that the season is over, he is currently pursuing his master's in business administration. While at GWU, he also is taking time to give back to his alma mater.

"I donated a 60-inch TV to the football locker room several months ago," said Maxwell. "That could draw several recruits that would have signed at Appalachian State and other schools."

GWU is not a well-known university to most people in the United States. When Maxwell was in the New York area, he wasn't a very recognizable player, but he didn't let that stop him from spreading the news about his college.

"It's kind of fun, feeling like I'm an ambassador to Gardner-Webb and all," said Maxwell. "I always said when I played football for Gardner-Webb, and when I was being scouted, that I would give back to the University."

Maxwell wasn't the first gridiron Dog to reach the NFL after a successful career at GWU. Gabe Wilkins, a GWU graduate of 1994, was drafted in the fourth round of the '94 NFL Draft by the Green Bay Packers. Wilkins' career lasted seven years with the Packers and the San Francisco 49ers.

"Gabe is, in football, the guy who's done the best," said Rabb. "He won a Super Bowl with Green Bay in 1996."

Football isn't the only

sport that introduced Gardner-Webb to the national landscape. Many recent baseball players are taking swings at Major League Baseball. Gardner-Webb graduates Jeff Long, Sam Bradford and Joey Siak are currently competing in the minor leagues.

Long, a 2004 GWU graduate, was drafted by the Atlanta Braves in the 12th round of last year's MLB Draft. Now he pitches for the Rome Braves, the class-A Braves' affiliate team. According to Rusty Stroupe, head baseball coach, he still finds time to work out in the Suttle Wellness Center.

"Jeff Long stayed here for a couple of months and actually worked out on campus," said Stroupe.

Siak and Bradford also

enjoy successful post-collegiate careers at the minor league level. Siak currently pitches for the Johnson City Cardinals, the rookie organization for the St. Louis Cardinals.

As in football, baseball players take the university's name with them when they leave Boiling Springs. This gives credence to strong recruiting.

"It always helps in recruiting when you have guys that go out and play well in professional ball," said Stroupe. "People are always interested to see what players do when they leave here."

Rabb believes that the progression of these athletes to the professional level really helps the school.

"It's exposure, if they

make it to the major leagues, in the case of baseball players," said Rabb. "Any time they are mentioned or shown on television, their school is listed as Gardner-Webb."

Stroupe agrees that the success of the student-athletes gives the university a real boost.

"As a University as a whole, there is a lot of exposure," said Stroupe. "People begin to realize all across the nation, where Gardner-Webb University is."

Maxwell truly believes that no matter where a person gets an education they can succeed at the professional level.

"You can do anything you set your mind to if you're willing to work hard for it," said Maxwell.

"Don't let people tell you that you can't get anywhere, just because you go to a small school."

Rabb agrees with Maxwell.

"When they get established, they begin to give back to the university," said Rabb. "They become ambassadors for the university, and Maxwell has said so many positive things."

The players give back to GWU, but they stay in close contact with university officials as well. Stroupe said that he talks to his former players on a regular basis.

"We stay in touch all of the time," said Stroupe. "Cell phones are wonderful, and they allow us to call anytime that we can, so they stay very connected with our program."

## Teams sign new players

Matt Tessnear  
Pilot Staff

It may be April, a time when some athletic competition is taking a hiatus from seasonal work. However, the Gardner-Webb University athletic programs have been hard at work, signing players for next season.

## Men's Basketball

Rick Scruggs, GWU men's head basketball coach, has seen his staff pull in three players for next season.

The 2005-06 class began with the addition of 6-foot-1-inch guard Ed Moore during the fall signing period. He played at T.K. Gorman High School in Tyler, Texas - once scoring 53 points in a single high school game. Most recently, he started for Tyler Junior College.

A few weeks ago, GWU added two more guards to the program. Ricky McPhee, a 6-foot-2-inch guard from Lilburn, Ga., played at Parkview High School, averaging 25 points per game. Also signing was Keyato Siddle. Siddle took the court for Hargrave Military Academy in Virginia last season. The 5-foot-11-inch point guard will look to back up rising senior T.J. McCullough.

## Men's Soccer

GWU's men's soccer team is looking to improve on a 4-15 mark in 2004. With

plenty of graduating players, Tony Setzer, head coach, and his staff, needed to add quality players to the roster for the 2005 season. They did just that, adding 12 players who will contribute for the Bulldogs.

"It's outstanding," said Setzer. "We have one of the most outstanding recruiting classes at our institution."

Eight of the signees were selected to Olympic Development Program All-State or All-Region teams.

Additionally, Carlton Hughes, a transfer from Clemson University, is already on campus. Competing against schools like Virginia Tech, North Carolina and Virginia, Setzer feels that his ACC experience will be a huge plus for GWU.

## Women's Soccer

The women's soccer team added six players to the roster for next season. Kevin Mounce, head coach, and his staff were fortunate enough to add quality players who will look to assist the program's rise in the Atlantic-Sun Conference.

Each of the soccer signees should contribute nicely to the program. However, Jacque Stomber and Kara Krueger really stand out. Stomber was the MVP at Indiana University's soccer camp. Krueger led her high school teams to a combined 94-16-6 record during her career.

## Golf seasons come to an end

Sean Hubbard  
Pilot sports editor

The women's golf season ended for Gardner-Webb University with an eighth place finish at the conference tournament. After getting off to a slow start, the Lady Bulldogs regained their composure and finished strong near the middle of the pack.

An opening day team score of 332 left GWU in a tie for eighth with Belmont. The second day of competition saw the Lady Bulldogs take sole possession of eighth with a strong round by Stacey Linduska, who tallied a 79. Linduska led GWU for the tournament, finishing in 21 place with a three-day total of 240.

The team continued to improve every day as the third and final round was the

best of the tournament. Tara Watts set the pace for the Bulldogs by firing a 78 to help GWU secure the eighth spot for the tournament.

The men's golf team, however, had a reverse finish, as their first round total of 297 was the best they could produce.

Bulldog Rory McCaughna led the team with a four-over-par tournament score of 217, which proved to be good for a tie for 22 place. Much like the team scores, McCaughna started strong but fell off the pace after day one. A first-round 69 put McCaughna in the top 10 but second and third round scores of 73 and 75 caused the drop in places.

The team total of 906 landed the Bulldogs finishing in 12 position, just three strokes back of Stetson University.

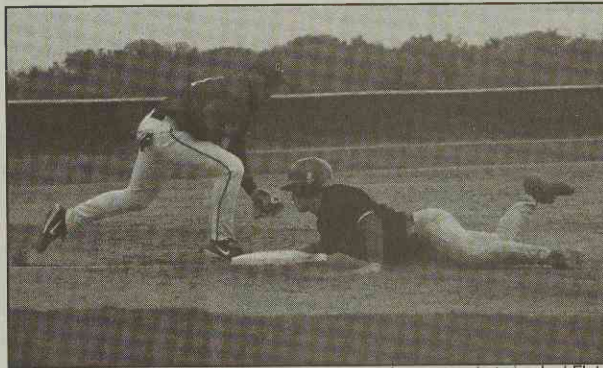


photo by Joel Fluty

GWU senior Blake Lalli goes in to tag his Asheville opponent on April 26. The Bulldogs defeated UNC-A 16-7.

## GWU wins battle of dogs

Jacob Conley  
Pilot staff

At the beginning of the 2005 season, Gardner-Webb University's baseball team was picked to finish as high as fourth place in the Atlantic Sun.

So far however, the record has been below that prediction.

The Bulldogs currently sit in ninth place in the Atlantic-Sun, with a 7-11 conference record 18-25 overall.

Despite this record, the Bulldogs are on a seven game home winning streak by virtue of a 16-7 win over the visiting Bulldogs from UNC Asheville.

GWU wasted little time drawing first blood in the contest as lead-off hitter, Matt Bridges, tripled and came around to score on a sharp single by the next man in the order, Ryan Sickles. Joey Testa and Mike Maloney were also credited with RBI's with GWU's three-run first inning.

UNCA broke through against starting pitcher, Wes Cogdill. The freshman gave up four hits with two outs in the third.

The UNCA cause was aided by two GWU defensive errors so by the end of the third inning, the home standing Bul-

dogs faced a one run deficit, at 4-3.

GWU responded with four runs in the third inning and six runs in the fourth. The offensive outburst included defending A-Sun player of the week, Matt Maloney's 11 homerun of the season, as well as Matt Bridges second triple of the day.

GWU added two runs apiece in the sixth and seventh innings while UNCA managed to cross home-plate four more times during the game for the final margin of victory 16-7.

The game against UNCA was just a precursor to this weekend's action, as the Bulldogs take on the Bears of Mercer in a battle for the sixth and final Atlantic-Sun tournament spot.

Mercer owns a 10-11 A-Sun record, while the Bulldogs sit three games out at 7-11.

If GWU can sweep the series with Mercer this weekend, they would move into a tie with the Bears, and earn the tie-breaker by virtue of winning the season series.

First pitch for Friday's single game is set for 3 p.m. while a double-header is slated for Saturday at noon. Saturday's game will also include senior day festivities honoring GWU's seven seniors.

## Athlete all-around guy

Sarah James  
Pilot web Editor

At Gardner-Webb University, people will only hear positive things about Jake Didion, a freshman who plans to major in sociology from the little town of Garrett, Ind.

Friendly, humble and outgoing are all things said about Didion.

"He is probably one of the friendliest people here," said Sarajane Burroughs, a freshman from Asheville.

Didion also is a two-sport athlete at GWU. He is basketball first and track second, but Didion hopes to go to nationals for track. Didion moves on to regionals in hopes of qualifying there for nationals.

"God has blessed that young man with an ex-



photo by Amy Hipskind

Jake Didion, GWU track member and basketball player, practices his high jump. Didion hopes to go national some day.

traordinary talent," said Josh Langley, assistant track coach. "At times he doesn't understand how good he could be."

Didion won A-Sun most athletic freshman this year.

"It's a great accom-

plishment representing the school and the team by winning the award," said Didion.

Both track and basketball coaches would agree that Didion brings energy to both teams and works hard at what he does.

## Track teams compete in meet

Sean Hubbard  
Pilot sports editor

While the Gardner-Webb University women's track and field team finished sixth at the Atlantic Sun Conference meet, the men, led by the A-Sun's Most Outstanding Freshman Performer Jake Didion, brought home third place.

During the meet, Didion accounted for 22 team points during the two-day event.

A third place finish in the high jump earned some points while the majority of the points came from being part of the second place finishing 4x100 relay team and an All-Conference long jump effort of 24'3".

The jump shattered the 16-year-old previous school record and is the 32 best mark in NCAA Division I Track & Field this season.

Teammate to Didion on the relay was Kevin Prime, who tallied some important and helpful points of his own. With a 10.69 time in the 100m finals, Prime earned a second place finish to go along with his fourth place finish in the 200m dash with a time of 21.47 seconds.

On the field side of the meet, Bulldog Matt Knippen set a new conference record in the shot put with a toss of 50'2", which is good for an automatic bid to the NCAA East Regional meet. The freshman also added some more team points with his third place finish in the discus.

For the women, the Stephenson twins put together some valuable points for the team. Tamara won the 400m hurdles with a time of 1:00.08 and finished fourth in the 100m hurdles. Tara racked up some of her points by placing fourth in the shot put.

Senior Kidada Dawkins also bagged some points by a second place finish in the high jump.

Have a great, safe summer from The Pilot.