

Sports

Lady Bulldogs fall in Atlantic Sun semifinals

By Lanny Newton
Pilot sports writer

Gardner-Webb women's basketball team defeated No. 6 Campbell in the quarterfinals for the third straight year, this time in a 57-56 nail-biter.

With the victory they advanced to face No. 2 Jacksonville, but were unable to carry on their success, losing 68-57.

"We finished with 12 [turnovers] and that's pretty good. Our team goal is no more than 15," said Head Coach Rick Reeves after the Campbell game.

After averaging around 21 turnovers a game on the season, the Lady Bulldogs performed with stellar efficiency to achieve the win against Campbell. This was especially important as Gardner-Webb went cold in the second half, but was able to limit itself to three turnovers in the last 20 minutes of play.

Leading the way of offensively for the Bulldogs was Laura Povilonyte with 13 points, while Monique Hudson and Margaret Roundtree both contributed 11.

Roundtree had a game-high nine rebounds, while lone senior Latoya Carter and Povilonyte both chipped in five boards for the Lady Dawgs.

Dominique Hudson, Monique Hudson and Meranda Burnett dished out three assists apiece while only turning it over one time each.

"We got stagnant on offense [in the second half,] and our offense has a lot

of movement to it," said Reeves. "We made a lot of young mistakes ... the best thing about freshmen is they turn into sophomores."

Gardner-Webb put up an excellent fight against Jacksonville, shooting 40.4 percent from the field for the game, and was perfect from the foul line in the second half.

The Bulldogs did commit 21 turnovers, however, and allowed 17 points off of those. Once again Povilonyte led the team in scoring, with 17 points, as Roundtree added 10. Roundtree and Burnett each finished with 6 boards to lead the team and Burnett served up a game-high six assists as well.

The Lady Bulldogs got off to a quick start as they hit three of their first six shots to take an early 8-6 lead off of a converted old-fashioned 3-point play by Povilonyte.

The teams then proceeded to trade baskets until two free throws by Burnett tied the game, for the final time, at 12 apiece with 14:06 left in the first half.

Jacksonville stretched the lead out as wide as 29-20 with 2:55 left to play in the first half, but GWU went on a 12-2 run over the next 4:34 to take a 1-point lead at the 18:21 mark in the second half.

With the next possession the Dolphins took the lead for the final time, responding to every attempt Gardner-Webb made to retake the lead.

The team returns 12 players next year as it moves into its new home in the Big South Conference.

Lady Dawgs getting on track

By Blake DuDonis
Pilot sports writer

Gardner-Webb's women's tennis team won Friday 7-0 against North Greenville, after losing to Kennesaw State 3-4 on March 8.

In the 7-0 sweep of North Greenville, the Lady Bulldogs outclassed their opponents, with the most games given up by one Bulldog being 3.

Number one seed Laura Kriett won 6-1, 6-2, with two and three seeds Jenny Gomez and Rita Gouveia winning 6-0, 6-1 and 6-0, 6-0, respectively.

Monica Walsler, Amy Beaver and Allie Mills rounded

out the top six with decisive wins from all three.

The ladies also won all of their double matches, finishing out a great win for the team.

Beavers is now on an eight-match win streak, the longest on the team. She kept that alive with the win Friday, but she also won against Kennesaw State. Unfortunately, the team could not get the overall win that day.

Gouveia and Kriett were the only other two Bulldogs who joined Beavers in the win column in the competition against Kennesaw State.

The team also defeated Mercer March 6 by a score of 5-2.

Men's basketball team bounced in A-Sun semis

By Jacob Conley
Pilot sports editor

There is an old saying about the month of March: It comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb. On March's opening weekend Gardner-Webb's Atlantic-Sun tournament experience mirrored the old adage.

The Bulldogs came roaring back from a halftime deficit to defeat Stetson 82-63 before losing a contested game to the Dolphins of Jacksonville 89-80.

"You have to bring your 'A' game every night in the tournament," said GWU Head Coach Rick Scruggs. "Jacksonville had a great game plan and we got what we deserved."

The Dolphin's game plan proved effective as the Bulldogs fell behind from the opening tip and never could recover.

"We dug our own hole," said senior Thomas Sanders. "We did not come out strong or fast enough and they took advantage of it."

Two stats were prominent in the sluggish start: turnovers and frigid shooting. GWU had 10 turnovers in the first half while hitting only two 3-point field goals.

"We dug our own hole. We did not come out strong or fast enough and they took advantage of it."

Thomas Sanders

However, Sanders' 17 first-half points kept GWU in the game before a bizarre sequence of plays.

Trailing by 14 in the closing minutes of the first half, Brandon Jackson drove the lane and was hammered by a JU player. An intentional foul was whistled but then Jackson was called for a technical foul.

Jackson missed the ensuing foul shots while JU made both of its attempts. The Dolphins then hit a half-court shot to push the lead to 19 at halftime.

In the second half, Jacksonville continued to build the lead, which grew to as much as 21 before the Bulldogs cut it down.

"Obviously you're hoping for a miracle at that point," said Scruggs. "We did everything we could at the end. We just ran out of time."

Bulldogs send two wrestlers to the NAAs

By Lanny Newton
Pilot sports writer

Gardner-Webb battled hard at the East regional championships and was able to place two wrestlers in the NCAA championships, which will be held this weekend in St. Louis. Dustin Porter won the 197-lb. weight class and Edward McCray was selected as the region's wildcard berth to the tournament.

Overall the team placed second with 67.5 team points, despite not competing at the 133-lb. class.

"We had hoped to qualify a few more guys than what we did," said Head Coach Scott Shipman. "Dustin's done a real good job ... [Eddie McCray] has had 12 matches, and he has been able to put his opponent on their back in every one of those matches."

Tommy Bennett started things off with a 8-0 major decision in the semifinals of the 125-lb. weight class. He was unable to continue the success, though, as he was pinned at the 2:09 mark by Duquesne's Jonathan Wenger in the championship.

At the 141 weight class Chas Franz had a roller-coaster ride, being pinned in the opening round before bouncing back to pin his opponent in the consolation bracket, after which he was pinned in the third-place match.

The 149 event saw McCray represent Gardner-Webb as an unseeded entrant. He started things off right as he

pinned Liberty's Colon Lewis in a minute before facing off against No. 1 Matt Cathell in the semifinals. Cathell won 16-6, sending McCray into the consolation bracket.

McCray finished out the tournament with a 9-1 victory over Patrick Larkin of Wagner and pinning Lewis at the 5:45 mark for third place. He was given the wild card berth from the region by the coaches of the various teams.

After an 8-3 opening-round loss, Austin Reece won the decision over Sean Quinn of Wagner to move on to the third-place game at 157. In a hard-fought battle, Reece lost 2-0.

At 165, Brendan Couture dominated his first round match, pinning his opponent in 3:51 to move on to face Liberty's Chad Porter, who sent him to the consolation bracket via a 13-5 major decision.

Couture tore through the consolation bracket, pinning Wagner's Laurence Peotter at the 2:33 mark before taking a 5-1 decision over Dave Morey of Millersville for third place.

Chad Davis took out Kyle Skinner of Delaware State in the opening round at 174 via a pin at the 4:52 mark. Millersville's Jeremy Brooks scraped out a 4-3 victory over Davis, though, sending the GWU senior to the consolation bracket.

Davis took up his displeasure over this by pinning Peter Morano of Wagner in 3:34, before winning the third-place match 2-0 over Skinner.

Matthias Piasecki opened up against the No. 1 seed Christopher Daggett of Liberty at 184, who sent him to the consolation bracket via a fall. Piasecki was forced to forfeit the third-place match for medical reasons.

Dustin Porter earned the other NCAA bid for Gardner-Webb by dominating at the 197 weight class for the second consecutive year.

His first victim was Shawn Nowrey of Delaware State, whom he defeated 4-0. Next up was Liberty's Nick Knowles who Porter gained a major decision over 8-0.

In the final Raymond Bennet of Millersville was unable to stop Porter as he took a 10-7 victory for the Bulldogs.

Evan Rhodes lost to Joseph D'orsie 7-4 in the first round of the heavy-weight division. Rhodes then defeated John Graeffe of Wagner with a pin in the consolation bracket before facing D'orsie again for the third-place match, which he lost 10-4.

"[Chad Davis and Brendan Couture] are going to be missed. They both have made tremendous commitments to this program over the years," said Shipman.

Gardner-Webb loses only two starters to graduation as Couture and Davis finished out their careers.

Davis finished 31-14 in his senior campaign and 74-68 for his career. Couture finished his injury-ridden senior season with 13 wins and had 28 in his career.

Mac to battle for national mascot title

By Rebecca Clark
Pilot editor

Mac the Bulldog, Gardner-Webb University's mascot, will travel to Daytona, Fla., this spring to compete in the Mascot Nationals, a part of National Cheerleader Association events.

Fred Adkins, the guy who brings the mascot to life, has already qualified for the April 10 competition with a winning video entry.

The video, "Mac Travels Through Time," is based on the premise that Mac discovers the ability to time travel by touching a magic bone, Adkins said.

Mac travels back in time to 1882 and beats the Kentucky Wildcats 68-84. He then goes to 1977 and beats Buzz from Georgia Tech at disco dancing. His final trip takes him into 2008, where the story continues at Nationals when he'll perform a skit live on stage.

Adkins said the entire video production cost about \$300. He built his own props at his home in Virginia, and had help filming it.

This will be GWU's first national championship bid. Not only will Adkins represent the university, but he will also fulfill a personal goal.

"This event coming up on April 10 has been 12 years in the making for me," he said.

Softball Bulldogs disappointed in Adidas tournament

By Lanny Newton
Pilot sports writer

Gardner-Webb's softball team had a tough weekend at the Winthrop University Adidas Invitational Tournament.

The Bulldogs dropped all four of their games against Memphis University, Providence College, Furman University and UNC Charlotte.

"We were very disappointed with the entire tournament, from the standpoint that we felt going in that it was a tournament we could very easily win," said Head Coach Tom Cole.

In its second Big East game of the season the softball team didn't fare as well, falling 4-1 against Providence on Saturday. It started off the tournament against Memphis losing 2-1 in a heart-breaker, before taking on Furman in afternoon.

The game against Charlotte dropped



Photo by Kate Gazaway

Mac covorts with the cheerleaders in Paul Porter Arena.

the team's record to 9-15 on the year.

Although they took a 2-0 lead in the bottom of the first, UNC Charlotte rallied to a 3-2 decision.

Kelly Linsley led off the bottom of the first with a single, but UNC Charlotte was able to get the next two batters out.

Into this situation Mandy Ward launched a two-run jack over the fence to give Gardner-Webb an early lead. UNC Charlotte was able to come back, off a solo home run of their own, in the fourth and took the lead in the sixth.

"Mandy Ward's been playing great the whole year. She's been doing an exceptional job behind the plate and with her stick she's a big hitter, a clutch hitter, hitting for percentage," said Cole.

"Lindsay Cox finally got on base a couple times. She's been struggling the whole season and I give her credit because she has a positive outlook, she

keeps fighting, she keeps persevering and she got a couple hits against UNC Charlotte."

Cox went two-for-three with two singles. Ward went two-for-two with a single and a home run. She also drew a walk and had two RBIs.

Cindy Boomhower took the loss despite giving up only three runs and only one of them being earned. She also pitched a complete game with a strike-out as her ERA improved to 2.27.

"Cindy Boomhower's big for us from the standpoint that she's been sick virtually the entire year. She came out yesterday and it was the first game she started and she did an exceptional job," said Cole.

The Lady Bulldogs start conference play at ETSU Friday before coming home to play a doubleheader against Lipscomb on Saturday. That starts at 1 p.m. and continues at 3 p.m.

Men's tennis has busy week facing 3 opponents on road

By Blake DuDonis
Pilot sports writer

Gardner-Webb's men tennis team pulled out a close one March 6 against Mercer, winning 4-3.

The Bulldogs fell behind early, losing all three doubles matches, but when it came to singles the team turned it on.

Evgeny Slesarev won at

the Number One spot, a thing almost expected for the Russian-born player.

The same rang true for Andrew Veeder, who defeated his opponent 6-4, 6-3.

Rafael Altmayer had to battle back after falling in the first set, and battle he did, win-

ning two straight sets for the victory from the Number Four spot.

Carlos Quijano and Grant Van Rensburg both fell in hard-fought battles, so senior Taylor Ferrier finished off the Bears in a thrilling victory by a score of 6-2, 2-6, 7-5.