

## Men's tennis fall by narrowest of margins



Photo by Tyler Kucifer

Evgeny Slesarev goes for a shot during a match.

by Blake DuDonis  
Pilot Editor-In-Chief

Following a 5-2 loss to USC-Upstate, the men's tennis team of Gardner-Webb looked to get back on track at home against Appalachian State last Wednesday. Unfortunately for the Dawgs, a win was not to be found on this day as the team fell 4-3.

In doubles, Evgeny Slesarev and Rafael Atmayer teamed up at the number one spot to defeat the Mountaineer duo of Trent Constance and Peter

Jacobs 8-6. Meanwhile, Andrew Veeder and Roman Piftor fell 8-4 in a tough match at the number two spot.

ASU's Ezekiel Sansing and Andrew McKinnon secured the final doubles match to give the Mountaineers the doubles point.

During the singles match ups, Slesarev again found himself victorious over Constance, winning 7-6, 6-2. Veeder then fell at the two spot to Jacobs 7-5, 7-5 in a match not absent of some controversy over calls. The two also held back no emotions as

yells of "Come on!" could be heard throughout the match.

Atmayer found himself in a close match as well, but ultimately fell 5-7, 6-3, 6-1. GWU newcomer Adam Knuttson-Sunblad then fell at the four spot, 6-2, 6-1. The loss secured a win for ASU but Roman Piftor and Jeremie Tardiff finished strong for the Dawgs, each winning their respective matches.

The loss brings the Dawgs to 4-8 on the year, as the team will travel to Georgia State on Saturday and then Campbell on Monday.

## Gardner-Webb wrestler makes history

by Blake DuDonis  
Pilot Editor-In-Chief

Gardner-Webb redshirt-senior Dustin Porter made Bulldog history on Saturday night, as the Bulldogs finished second overall as a team at the 2010 NCAA

East Regionals with a score of 74.50.

Gardner-Webb, which had one champion, two runner ups and five third-place finishes, placed behind Liberty in the team scores, as the Flames scored a total of 110.50 points over the regional meet.

GWU heavyweight Dustin Porter advanced to the

championship bout of the heavyweight division, as he picked up a pin fall at 2:07 over Charles Godfrey of Millersville in his first match of the day. Porter made history in the next match, defeating Joshua Pelletier of Liberty 5-2 in the championship match to claim his fourth straight East Regional Championship.

### Opinion

## A welcome change to the athletic landscape

by Blake DuDonis  
Pilot Editor-in-Chief

After 14 years and over 200 losses, Gardner-Webb made a much-needed move: firing men's basketball coach Rick Scruggs.

Let me first say that I respect Coach Scruggs and everything that he has done for the program, but plain and simple, his time was over. Scruggs was a man who was a great coach; at any school that was not Division I.

After defeating college basketball powerhouse Kentucky in 2007, Scruggs and the whole Gardner-Webb community celebrated the win; and rightfully so.

The issue, however, is what happened after that. The win was a chance to build the program on and rise to the level of other mid-major schools like Dayton, Rhode Island and Richmond to name a few.

Instead, we just celebrated. We did not take the opportunity to use it as a foundation of a new program. Instead, we just noted it as a great win and that was all.

This season, Scruggs clearly had no chemistry with his players and, quite frankly, seemed clueless. Players like Grayson Flittner, who two years ago had considerable playing time would go games without seeing significant minutes while other young players, who clearly showed time and time again that they were not ready to perform on the Division I level, cost us game after game.

Of the eight wins this season, three were against Division III or NAIA schools, and the other five were against the worst teams in the conference.

But after the heartache of watching a team that was struggling to be competitive, we are finally going to get a new coach. But who?

Although the school will not comment on who they are looking at, which is standard for most schools, a few names have leaked through and I assure you they are good ones.

Assistants from several SEC schools (Vandy and Mississippi State) as well as a team in the sweet sixteen (Michigan State), have been mentioned.

Also, an assistant from UNCC that was recently fired as the school parted ways with Bobby Lutz is in the mix.

It should be comforting that these coaches are not simply putting in applications; Jay Bilas (ESPN Analyst and former Duke player), John Calipari (Kentucky head coach), Tom Izzo (Michigan State head coach) and Gary Williams (Maryland head coach) have all called to recommend these guys.

After many ups and downs, Gardner-Webb is finally making a commitment to excellence and refusing to settle for complacency. It's about time.

THURSDAY, MARCH 25, 2010

BLANTON AUDITORIUM 8:00PM

JUSTIN HUMPHRIES, Tenor  
Junior Recital  
Studio of Professor Patricia Harrison

CHELSEA COLEMAN, Clarinet  
Sophomore Qualifying Recital

Free and Open to the Public!

Gardner-Webb University