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Amidst hardship, volleyball to play two pivotal matches this weekend



The volleyball team united against UNC Asheville on Friday, Oct. 16. Photo by Tim Cowie-GWUPhotos.com

By: Sthefany Flores

Without the assistance of one of their players, who had to leave due to a family emergency, Gardner-Webb's Volleyball team will face against two opponents this weekend—Campbell and High Point—on Friday evening and Saturday afternoon respectively.

"In sports, we usually come across situations like this because it is a part of life. This was the third such situation within our team this year, and the team has responded much the same in each situation," said head coach Leo Sayles.

"The girls have shown interpersonal support within the group. As much as it's hard to say, these situations have further unified our team. It is the tough times outside of the sport that draws them together," Sayles continued.

Despite the pressure of the two games coming up this weekend, the other players have kept their fellow teammate on their minds. "She's like our little sister, so if she ever needs anything we are all going to be here for her," said Sydney Marshall, sophomore middle blocker. "This week we are just keeping her and her family in our prayers and respecting her wishes as she gets through a rough time."



**Sydney Marshall,
sophomore middle
blocker on the
volleyball team.**

The team prayed together in a circle at the end of practice on Oct. 28. "We pray together once in a while and as a player need arises. We recognize that we're a family, and we open ourselves up and let our walls down when we pray," said Sayles. "A family that prays together stays together."

Sayles emphasized the importance of Friday's game against Campbell, saying it will have a "play-off feel because it is a once and done game."

"Our plan for Campbell this weekend will be to execute our level of play," added Marshall. "We plan to stay aggressive in our swings and not let one error turn into two. The games this weekend can either make us or break us, and as a team we refuse to break."

Gardner-Webb will host Campbell on Friday, Oct 30 at 7 p.m. and High Point on Saturday, Oct. 31 at 2 p.m.