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Communications

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Olympian Among Athletes Jeremy Martin '03 has Coached for Competition, Life

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.— The Olympic Games in Brazil have produced a series of proud and historic moments for 2003 Gardner-Webb University alumnus Jeremy Martin.

Jeremy Martin and
Kathleen Baker

Martin owns Charlotte, N.C.-based sports-training facility Ultimate Athlete (UA), which officially opened in 2015. He has watched Team USA's swimming events with great interest as teenager Kathleen Baker, one of the many athletes for which his organization provides performance training, claimed a gold medal with the women's 4×100-meter medley relay team and an individual silver medal in the women's 100-meter backstroke event.

Following Baker's medal-winning swim, Martin posted a screenshot of the televised Olympic race results on the Ultimate Athlete Instagram account, accompanied by the words, "Silver Medal! What an accomplishment for Kathleen! No question UA's proudest moment of its young history."

Since being invited to the Olympic training center several years ago to train some of America's elite swimmers from the Charlotte region, Martin has worked to prepare Baker for world competition. "We formed a good coach-athlete bond, and I think she has appreciated how I've tried to individualize a training program to fit her," he shared. "Through that work, I think she really discovered how much more power she has in the water. We've seen that in the Olympics and I'm so proud of her hard work."

Martin trains Baker in Charlotte. (Photos courtesy of Ultimate Athlete)

Martin has long been an exceptional athlete himself. At Gardner-Webb he started at quarterback, set football program statistical records and was inducted into the University's athletics Hall of Fame in 2014. But it was his academic and spiritual formation at Gardner-Webb that he credits most with his success as a person and a professional.

Coursework in a sport management major and business administration minor helped Martin learn how to effectively communicate and build relationships, skills that have been instrumental in the creation and development of his business. After completing his

undergraduate degree, he discovered a passion for training athletes, and his sports education background at GWU offered preparation for the completion of his master's degree in kinesiology and exercise science at California University of Pennsylvania.

“There’s no question Gardner-Webb gave me such a well-rounded education to apply to a variety of things in life,” he assessed.

“Gardner-Webb has been a cornerstone for putting Jesus in the driver seat and at the center of all I do. The University really built a platform for life for me.”

Jeremy Martin helped lead GWU to a 9-1 record in 2002 and was named Big South Conference Offensive Player of the Year. (Photo via GWUsports.com)

With his facility’s location about an hour from campus, Martin maintains a close connection to Gardner-Webb, keeping in touch with coaches and even providing additional training to some of the University’s swimming student-athletes. “I act almost as a performance consultant, helping them through their collegiate careers,” he explains.

As Martin has provided performance training for athletes who compete in the National Football League, top-level intercollegiate swimming, high school basketball and the Olympics, faith continues to guide his approach to coaching and life.

“(Baker) is a Christian and we can use faith in our workouts,” he relates. “There are a lot of similarities in the consistency required for both faith and sports training. You have to do the little things every day, prayer and practice, that will eventually make a big difference for you. (Baker) has experienced the benefits of that hard work down in Rio.”

Located in Boiling Springs, N.C., Gardner-Webb University’s purpose is to advance the Kingdom of God through Christian higher education by preparing graduates for professional and personal success, instilling in them a deep commitment to service and leadership, and equipping them for well-rounded lives of lasting impact, Pro Deo et Humanitate (For God and Humanity).