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6-27-2014

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Office of University Communications

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# GWU Announces Installation of Artificial Field Surface in Spangler Stadium

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Office of University Communications

June 27, 2014

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C. – Gardner-Webb University has announced that a new artificial turf surface will be installed on Coach Norman Harris Field at Ernest W. Spangler Stadium.

The announcement signals the first major renovation to the stadium since 2004, with the project set for completion in early August 2014. Officials say the turf will offer the University significant long-term field maintenance cost savings.

The initial phase of soil removal and laser grading started on Wednesday, June 25. More than 200 truckloads of material have already been removed. Advanced Polymer Technology (APT) will install RS+52T Gridiron turf on Norman Harris Field.

APT, the global leader in high-performance engineered sports surfaces, recently installed its state-of-the-art Gridiron-brand turf at the Philadelphia Eagles' practice facility. The company has installed turf for the Chicago Bears' Walter Payton indoor facility, as well as the Hank Crisp Indoor Football Center at the University of Alabama.

“With the addition of women’s lacrosse matches to the regular ledger of events at Spangler Stadium next spring, we were tasked with developing a solution that best fits the needs of our student-athletes in terms of safety and performance,” said GWU Vice President for Athletics Chuck Burch. “The benefits of an artificial surface, both in durability and consistency throughout a variety of seasons and conditions, were much greater for us. APT proved to be the best fit for our needs and allows us to deal with a single source manufacturer for this new surface. Their installations around the world have drawn high praise and we are excited to partner with an industry leader for this project.”

The new artificial surface will be the first on Gardner-Webb’s campus.

“We are thrilled to be associated with Gardner-Webb University’s plan to renovate Coach Norman Harris Field and Spangler Stadium,” said APT Director of Sales Gary Wilson. “Gridiron RS+ is the perfect surface for the type of high-level athlete that Gardner-Webb recruits. With the growing concern in sports with head trauma injury, Gridiron RS+ supports the industry’s best performance characteristic balance for speed and safety.”

Spangler Stadium was built in 1966 with a natural grass surface, which has undergone several reconditioning projects throughout the past 40 years. The stadium benefitted from a major renovation in 2004, which resulted in the GWU Football Center and an overhaul of the

Hamrick Field House—which now houses offices for men’s and women’s soccer, track and field, and women’s lacrosse.

Coach Norman Harris Field was dedicated in 2007, honoring one of the founding fathers of Gardner-Webb athletics. Harris coached football, baseball and basketball at Gardner-Webb—winning more than 300 games during his time in Boiling Springs.

The 2014 home football schedule begins Saturday, Sept. 13 against Virginia-Lynchburg at 6 p.m.

The Gardner-Webb women’s lacrosse program, under head coach Jacquelyn Duggins, will begin play with its inaugural home game on Saturday, Feb. 7, 2015, against Limestone College.