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### Gardner-Webb Fall Sports Preview

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# Gardner-Webb Fall Sports Preview

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Office of University Communications

August 12, 2011

Though you wouldn't know it from this blistering Boiling Springs heat, autumn is just around the corner. That means, while the rest of us pray for cooler temperatures, the Gardner-Webb Runnin' Bulldogs fall sports are just heating up. Enjoy this preview of the upcoming fall action, and visit [www.gwusports.com](http://www.gwusports.com) for complete coverage of Gardner-Webb athletics.

## Football

Camp has officially started for the Runnin' Bulldogs football team, and new head coach Ron Dickerson says it's time to make good on a promise he made during his first press conference at GWU: that his team would be a family. "The thing I look for this season—our number one goal—is how we're going to come together as a family," Dickerson said the day before camp began. "Whether we're talking about the coaching staff, or our players, or even the relationship between this football program, this University and this community—special things are going to happen around here if we pick each other up, if we respect and support each other, and if we truly become a family."

The 'Dogs will tackle Brevard College in their opener on Saturday, Sept. 3rd, at 6 p.m. at Spangler Stadium. The 2011 schedule also features the school's first-ever Thursday night bout against Virginia State on Nov. 3rd, along with home battles against conference foes Liberty, Charleston Southern, and Stony Brook. For ticket information, click [here](#) or call (704) 406-4340.

## Volleyball

The Gardner-Webb volleyball team, says new head coach Leo Sayles, will be true "road warriors" in 2011, as they will play only eight matches at home in Paul Porter Arena, with all eight coming in Big South Conference play. The Runnin' Dogs will kick off their 2011 schedule on Aug. 16th against East Carolina, the first of a 14-match road trip to start the year.

"We have a challenging schedule with competitive, but winnable matches. We have our work cut out for us...but we won't give ourselves excuses," commented Coach Sayles. The 'Dogs' schedule features road matches at Wake Forest, South Carolina and Western Carolina, neutral site battles against Elon, Davidson, Wofford and Florida Atlantic, all on top of a very challenging Big South Conference slate.

"We'll build some mental toughness on the road, and we'll be hard to beat at home. If we stay positive, work hard, and are focused on our goals, we'll see forward progression and will find ourselves peaking as we reach the postseason," said Sayles. The 'Dogs first home match is an

exhibition bout against Montreat on Aug. 31st at 6 p.m., and they open conference play on Sept. 23rd at UNC-Asheville. Admission is free, and the community is encouraged to come out and support the Runnin' Bulldogs!

### **Men's Soccer**

Head Coach Tony Setzer says the Runnin' Bulldogs men's soccer team will be "tested early and often this season, especially on the road, as 13 of our 18 matches will be on the road." The 'Dogs will kick off that blistering schedule with back-to-back exhibition matches on the road at Georgia State (Aug. 20th) and USC Upstate (Aug. 23rd), before returning home for its regular season opener against Brevard College on Sunday, Aug. 28th, at 7p.m.

During a six-match stretch from Saturday, Oct. 8th through Wednesday, Nov. 2nd, the 'Dogs will play four of their five home matches against Big South rivals Liberty, UNC-Asheville, High Point, and Winthrop. Admission is free, and the community is encouraged to come out and support the Runnin' Bulldogs!

### **Women's Soccer**

Gardner-Webb women's soccer head coach Kevin Mounce is excited to announce the Runnin' Bulldogs 2011 women's soccer schedule, which includes nine home matches as well as the Gardner-Webb Under Armour Border Classic on September 9-11th.

After back-to-back scrimmages at Western Carolina on Aug. 14th and a home scrimmage versus Pfeiffer on Aug. 18th, the Runnin' Bulldogs will kick-off the 2011 regular season slate with a home bout versus USC Upstate at 7 p.m. on Aug. 21st. Then, after three road matches, the 'Dogs return home to host the Under Armour Border Classic on Sept. 9th-11th, where they will take on Jacksonville State and Stetson. They will open conference play at home against Winthrop on Tuesday, Sept. 27th at 7 p.m.

"We are looking forward to the challenges this schedule will present to us. We are going to have to learn to play on the road early on which should help prepare us for the conference schedule," said Coach Mounce. "We are excited to have the opportunity to improve on last year's finish and possibly move forward to the NCAA tournament. We have the talent to go along with this schedule and are anticipating some positive things in the fall." Admission is free, and the community is encouraged to come out and support the Runnin' Bulldogs!

### **Cross Country**

The Runnin' Bulldogs Cross Country squads open their season on Friday, Sept. 2 in Chapel Hill, N.C. at the UNC Season Preview, the first of five meets in North Carolina this season. They square off against their Big South rivals twice: first, at the Big South Conference Preview in Conway, S.C., on Saturday, Sept. 17, and finally, at the 2011 Big South Conference Championships in Conway on Saturday, Oct. 29.

## **Women's Swimming**

The Gardner-Webb women's swimming program's 2011-12 season is highlighted by four home meets, as well as away meets stretching across four states, in preparation for the 2011-12 Coastal Collegiate Swimming Association (CCSA) Championships at season's end. The Runnin' Bulldogs will open the season Sept. 17th with an open water meet in Moss Lake, N.C. GWU will follow with a road contest in an early season bout against the University of North Carolina – Wilmington on Oct. 15th, the team's second consecutive trip to Wilmington, N.C.

Gardner-Webb will open its home season Oct. 29th at 10 a.m against new swimming program Queens University. GWU then continues its home slate Nov. 5th in a meet against conference opponents Campbell University, Virginia Military Institute, and North Carolina A&T. The meet, GWU's conference opener, will begin at 1 pm. Admission is free, and the community is encouraged to come out and support the Runnin' Bulldogs!

## **Men's Swimming**

The Gardner-Webb men's swimming program has announced its schedule for the upcoming 2011-12 competition season, featuring three home meets including two against in-conference foes College of Charleston and Virginia Military Institute, all in preparation for the CCSA Championships Feb. 16th-18th, 2012.

The Runnin' Bulldogs dive into the season on Sept. 17th with an open water meet at nearby Moss Lake, in preparation for a grueling fall schedule lasting through October and November. Gardner-Webb will travel to face the Seahawks of UNC-Wilmington on Oct. 15th, before turning around two weeks later to compete before a home crowd in Boiling Springs, N.C. against new opponent Queens University on Oct. 29th at 10 a.m.

November marks the opening of conference competition for the Runnin' Bulldogs when GWU hosts VMI on Nov. 4th at 6 p.m. Admission is free, and the community is encouraged to come out and support the Runnin' Bulldogs!

## **The Bulldog Club**

The Gardner-Webb University Bulldog Club serves as the fundraising arm for the Department of Athletics and plays an important role in funding scholarships for the University's 21 NCAA Division I intercollegiate sports. Through their generosity, Bulldog Club members provide Gardner-Webb student athletes with the opportunity to achieve their academic and athletic goals. For more information about how to get involved with the Bulldog Club, visit the Bulldog Club website or call Sarah A. Currie at (704) 406-4630.