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GWU Hoops Legend John Drew Dies at Age 67

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IN MEMORIAM

GWU Hoops Legend John Drew Dies at Age 67

BY OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS ON APRIL 12, 2022



Drew's No. 22 Jersey One of Four Men's Basketball Jerseys to be Retired

By Gardner-Webb Athletic Media Relations

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—Gardner-Webb mourns the loss of men's [basketball](https://gwusports.com/news/2022/4/11/mens-basketball-gardner-webb-mourns-the-loss-of-hoops-legend-john-drew.aspx) (<https://gwusports.com/news/2022/4/11/mens-basketball-gardner-webb-mourns-the-loss-of-hoops-legend-john-drew.aspx>) legend John Drew, who passed away in Houston, Texas, on April 10, 2022, at the age of 67.

Drew's No. 22 jersey hangs in the rafters inside Gardner-Webb's Paul Porter Arena. It is one of only four men's basketball jerseys to be retired, joined by Artis Gilmore, George Adams and Eddie Lee Wilkins.

A native of Vredenburgh, Ala., Drew played for the Runnin' Bulldogs from 1972-1974 and was immediately a star under Coach Eddie Holbrook. The 6-foot-6 forward burst on the scene by averaging 24.4 points per game during the 1972-73 season and earned NAIA All-America honors in 1973-74 after pumping in 25.9 points and 13.0 rebounds per game as a sophomore.

He was part of Gardner-Webb teams that won 43 games during his career, including a stellar 25-3 mark in his final campaign. The high-powered Runnin' Bulldogs earned the No. 3 seed that season in the NAIA National Tournament in Kansas City, Mo.

Drew remains Gardner-Webb's highest draft pick by any of the major professional sports leagues in the United States – drafted with the 25th overall pick by the NBA's Atlanta Hawks. He averaged 18.7 points

and 10.7 rebounds per games in 1974-75 with the Hawks, earning a spot on the NBA All-Rookie Team in the process.

Drew finished second in NBA Rookie of the Year voting that season.

He was a two-time NBA All-Star selection, with his best season coming in 1976-77 when he scored 24.2 points per game. He topped 20 points per game again over the next two seasons and again in 1980-81 and – after being traded to the Utah Jazz – in 1982-83.

He finished his career with 15,291 points, which is the top mark for all rookies in the 1974 NBA Draft class. Drew made 4,319 career free throws and shot 74.8 percent from the line during his 739-game career in the NBA.

Before heading off to college at Gardner-Webb, Drew earned elite status in the Alabama high school ranks playing for J.F. Shields High. He remains one of the most heralded basketball players the state has ever produced.

Drew scored 41.0 points per game for his career and averaged 44.0 points per game as a senior – earning third-team Parade All-America honors. His career and single-season scoring marks remain atop the state's record books.

Gardner-Webb University is North Carolina's recognized leader in private, Christian higher education. A Carnegie-Classified Doctoral/Professional University, GWU is home to six professional schools, 14 academic departments, more than 80 undergraduate and graduate majors, and a world-class faculty. Located on a beautiful 225-acre campus in Boiling Springs, N.C., Gardner-Webb prepares graduates to impact their chosen professions, equips them with the skills to advance the frontiers of knowledge, and inspires them to make a positive and lasting difference in the lives of others. Ignite your future at Gardner-Webb.edu.