

September 23, 2019

## Gardner-Webb games are back on the airways

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When the final whistle blew and the Gardner-Webb football team left the field following the 2003 season, they also left the commercial radio airways. When toe hit leather versus UNC-Charlotte on Aug. 28, 2019, the Runnin' Bulldogs were back on the air with veteran play-by-play announcer Dave Friedman calling the action on WGNC 1450 AM and 101.1 FM out of Gastonia.

"It has been something we have been wanting to do ever since WGWG (campus radio station) went off the air," GWU Assistant Athletic Director for Media Relations Marc Rabb said. "Scott Neisler, who owns WGNC, approached us. It was a deal too good to pass up. It has been great for the program. I have heard nothing but positive feedback."

"I've always been interested in Gardner-Webb and Gardner-Webb athletics," Neisler said. "They are a great school but were being underserved. Our broadcast reaches all the way to the Charlotte market which has a big Gardner-Webb alumni base. It's great for them and all the Bulldog fans to hear a local broadcast."

Once the Runnin' Bulldogs had a new radio home, they needed a voice behind the mic. Enter Friedman. The California native has called many big games including the NCAA men's basketball final between Syracuse and Kansas, along with several NCAA tournament games for the Winthrop Eagles.

"I model my broadcasting style after Bill King," Friedman said. "He is the only person that I know of that did all the major sports simultaneously. He had a larger than life personality and voice and that's what you need for radio."

Friedman adds that the key to any successful radio broadcast is letting the listener know the time and score.

"Those are the essentials," he said. "You can have as many anecdotes and descriptions as you want, but the first thing people want to know when they tune in is who's winning the game and how much time is left."

Once the time and score are taken care of, Friedman begins to layer his broadcast with details.

"Unlike TV where you are just commenting on the action, in radio you actually have to describe what's going on," Friedman said. "So the more description the better. Saying there are three wide receivers is good, but saying there are twins to the left and a single to the right is better because that paints a more accurate picture of the action. That's all I'm really trying to do. Paint a picture for the listener."

As Friedman paints that picture, he wants to do so accurately.

"We are a hometown broadcast," Friedman said. "We have intimate knowledge of the program, players and coaches. We build relationships with them that you can't get on any other broadcast. We want that hometown flavor to come through. At the same time, we want to be honest with the

listener. If Gardner-Webb is not playing well, that's what we have to communicate. You can always look for and bring out the positives, but you can't sugarcoat it to the point where you aren't being honest with the listener."

Friedman hopes his style and hometown broadcast will continue to draw listeners for the rest of the season.

"College football is a great game, and I think it is wonderful that fans now have more options than ever to access a game, whether it be on TV or streaming services," Friedman said." But football was a game that was made for radio, and there is something about a radio broadcast that you can't get anywhere else."