

Big sports day awaits Cleveland County on Saturday

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By Alan Ford

Saturday offers perhaps the most variety of sports-related events in Cleveland County on a single day in long, long time.

Whether swimming, running, or tackling, you can get your fill of the action without traveling far. Consider all that's taking place:

Open Water Swim Challenge on Moss Lake: The Sharks Aquatics Club and the City of Kings Mountain are hosting a unique outdoor event with around 200 swimmers from the region hitting the water at the Moss Lake Landing Swim Area. Using part of the Over the Mountain Triathlon course, the Open Water Challenge is actually four races: 5km (3.1 mile); 3km (1.8 mile); 2 km (1.2 mile); and a 500m (546 yards) sprint.

The first event begins at 8 AM.

Twin Pinks Enduro race: The event benefiting the Breast Cancer Research Foundation includes a one-lap sprint, followed by a four-lap enduro and a one-lap fun run and walk

The off-road endurance race takes place on a closed course, climbing the two peaks on the Kings Mountain Gateway Trails, part of the statewide Carolina Thread Trail, a mix of smooth gravel and asphalt. Each lap of this criterium type race will be about 2 miles. The action gets under way at 8 a.m.

Youth football: It's 'Kickoff Jamboree' time for Shelby City Park youth football. Two pee wee and two midget football games are slated at Shelby High's Blanton Memorial Stadium/Pearley Allen Field. The blocking and tackling starts at 10 a.m.

GWU baseball dedication: The new John Henry Moss Stadium/Bill Masters Field will be dedicated Saturday on the Gardner-Webb campus. The ribbon cutting at the new Hamrick Family Gate starts at 12:45 p.m. with the home plate ceremony slated for 1 p.m. At 1:30, Runnin' Bulldog alumni and current GWU players will christen the playing surface with a short exhibition.

GWU vs. Western Carolina: The marquee game on the Runnin' Bulldogs football schedule kicks off at 6 p.m. at Spangler Stadium/Norman Harris Field as the Catamounts invade. The last time Western came to Boiling Springs was in 2004 when GWU got its first win in its new facility with a dramatic overtime triumph. That game meant a lot to current coach Steve Patton.

"After that game, there were so many (local) people who came down on the field," said Patton. "That was the first time I really felt with we were part of the Cleveland County community and that everyone took pride in what we accomplished. That's what we want."

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