

WCU Football Player Dies During Off-Season Workouts

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The Western Carolina Athletic Department is reporting that junior-college transfer Ja'Quayvin Smalls died unexpectedly Wednesday evening at Harris Regional Hospital in Sylva after collapsing during conditioning drills as a part of voluntary off-season workouts.

Smalls, a native of Mount Pleasant, SC, collapsed while running during the evening workout session. Smalls, who just enrolled in the second session of summer school at WCU, began summer workouts yesterday. Observers on the scene say that Smalls, a defensive back, was complaining about cramps during the beginning of sprint exercises and was removed from the lineup to be stretched.

While being treated, Smalls quit breathing at which point athletic training personnel administered CPR until emergency medical personnel arrived at the stadium. He was transported to the hospital where he died at approximately 7:30 pm.

Smalls, who transferred to WCU after two seasons at Georgia Military College, was a part of the Catamounts' 2009 signing class.