

Athletics Report for Board of Trustees Meeting, February 17, 2022

- It has been five months since our last meeting and there has been a lot to celebrate and much to anticipate while we are in our busiest time of year.
- Our fall sports produced three championships. Many of our winter sports teams are doing well and our spring sports teams have begun competing or will begin soon.
- Obviously, dealing with the impacts of Covid-19 continues to have a vital role in what we're doing. With the help of the SEC Medical Task Force, UK HealthCare and our athletics medical staff, we are implementing and updating our health protocols as needed. Fortunately, there have been far fewer postponements and cancellations than there were a year ago.

Fall Sports Roundup

- The **football** team posted 10 wins, the fourth time in school history that we have won at least 10 games, and the second time that has happened in the last four seasons.
 - Coach Stoops has taken us to a school-record six straight bowl games. We capped the season by defeating Iowa to win the championship of the Vrbo Citrus Bowl, our fourth-straight bowl win, which is another school record.
 - Offensive tackle Darian Kinnard, wide receiver Wan'Dale Robinson and defensive end Josh Paschal earned All-America honors and several other players received All-SEC recognition.
 - Linebacker J.J. Weaver was named the Mayo Clinic "Comeback Player of the Year" while recovering from a knee injury and overcoming multiple personal issues during the past year.
 - There is the possibility of another honor tonight as Josh Paschal is in Texas as a finalist for the Jason Witten Collegiate Man of the Year Award.
 - There has been a lot of good news regarding our roster. We had players who could have declared for the NFL Draft who have decided to come back for another year. We also have

seniors have decided to take advantage of the NCAA rule allowing an extra year of eligibility because of Covid and will be with us for another season. We had the highest-rated signing class in the history of recruiting rankings and have accepted some transfer players who should help us immediately.

- Despite losing half of the starting lineup from the national championship team, the **volleyball** team still posted its fifth straight SEC championship with a 17-1 league record.
 - The Wildcats advanced to the second round of the NCAA Tournament and had an overall record of 25-5.
 - Alli Stumler and Emma Grome were named All-America and Stumler also was named SEC Player of the Year.
- Johan Cedergren's **men's soccer** team won the Conference USA tournament championship. The Wildcats advanced to the Sweet 16 of the NCAA Tournament, where they lost in overtime at Clemson, the eventual national champion.
 - The team finished with a 15-2-4 record.
 - Jan Hoffelner was named first-team All-America, and nine Wildcats earned all-conference distinction.
- **Women's soccer** is under new leadership with the hiring of head coach Troy Fabiano. In his seven seasons at the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee, Coach Fabiano won six Horizon League championships. He had a winning percentage over 82 percent and was named six-time Horizon League Coach of the Year. His teams went on to win matches in the NCAA Tournament each of the last two seasons.
- The **cross country** season was highlighted by the women's team finishing third in the NCAA Regional. Tori Herman finished 17th at the national meet and earned All-America distinction.
- As an athletics department, we finished the fall seasons ranked No. 21 in the Directors' Cup national all-sports standings, fourth in the SEC.

Winter Sports Roundup

- Our winter sports are in the thick of their schedules.
 - **Men's basketball** is ranked in the top five in the nation with a 21- 5 record. The Wildcats have been led by Oscar Tshiebwe, who is a candidate for National Player of the Year.
 - **Women's basketball** has had an incredible run of injuries, playing shorthanded since the beginning of the season. However, the team has won its last two games and hopes to make a run at the end of the season. All-American Rhyne Howard continues to lead the team.
 - Even as we speak, the **men's and women's swimming and diving teams** are at the SEC Championships in Knoxville, where the No. 13-ranked women are vying to win a second-consecutive SEC championship. The men's and women's teams have a total of 10 individuals and relays ranked in the nation's top 20.
 - Led by Olympic medalists Will Shaner and Mary Tucker, the No. 2-ranked **rifle** team is 9-1 and tied for the Great American Rifle Conference regular-season championship. In January, the team posted the highest score in NCAA history with a mark of 4752. The team is getting ready for the conference and NCAA championship meets.
 - Led by Raena Worley, who is posting some of the top all-around scores in the nation, the **gymnastics** team is 6-1 overall, 3-1 in the SEC and ranked No. 10 nationally.
 - The **women's indoor track** team is ranked No. 5 nationally and the **men's indoor track** team is No. 8 in the country. Four school records have been set this season, highlighted by NCAA records by Abby Steiner in the 200- and 300-meter dashes. Those teams are preparing for the SEC and NCAA championships.

Spring Sports Roundup

- Our **men's and women's golf, men's and women's tennis, softball** and **baseball teams** have returned to action or will do so soon.

- Women's golf posted the best tournament score in school history at their most recent match. They are ranked No. 27 in the nation and are led by Jensen Castle, the reigning U.S. Amateur champion.
 - Both tennis teams are off to great starts. The women's team is 9-0.
 - The men's team is 8-1, with its only loss of the season at No. 1 Ohio State. Led by the reigning National Player of the Year Liam Draxl, the Wildcats are ranked No. 10 in the nation and headed to the ITA National Tournament this weekend.
 - The No. 16-ranked softball team went 4-1 on the opening weekend.
- All totaled, eight of our winter and spring sports are currently ranked in the top 25 in the nation.
 - It's worth noting that a number of our athletes currently competing are on the watch lists for national awards or have been chosen preseason All-America or all-conference in their sports.
 - We are in the process of launching our newest sport – STUNT – which we discussed at the board meeting in September.
 - We have 47 women on the team, which has its first official games at a tournament this weekend at Dallas Baptist. We will host our first official home games on March 12.

50th Anniversary of Title IX

- June 23 marks the 50th anniversary of the Title IX legislation that had a profound effect on the growth of women's sports.
 - UK Athletics is having a year-long celebration of Title IX, which began February 2, which is "National Women and Girls in Sports Day." All our female athletes were introduced at halftime of the basketball game that night at Rupp Arena and our special 50th Anniversary video was presented.
 - UK Athletics also will select a Title IX 50th Anniversary Team, featuring the 50 greatest female Wildcats of the Title IX era. Only athletes who have exhausted their eligibility will be included in the top 50.

Academics

- In November, it was announced that UK student-athletes broke both school record for Federal Graduation Rate and tied the school record in the NCAA Graduation Success Rate. UK has broken or tied the GSR school record every year since the NCAA began measuring that statistic in 2005.
- Including the 2021 winter commencement and last spring's graduation, 115 Wildcat student-athletes earned degrees during the 2021 calendar year.
- In December, 395 Wildcats achieved a GPA of 3.0 or higher for the fall semester, including 107 Cats who reached 4.0 for the semester. That continued UK Athletics' streak of 19 consecutive semesters with a department-wide GPA of 3.0 or higher.
- Last week, the SEC Fall Sports Academic Honor Roll was announced. We had 101 student-athletes represented third-most in the league.

More Off-the-Field News

- In addition to our performance in academics, a large part of our Student-Athlete Experience Division – which we call “The Kentucky Road” – involves career preparation. During the last month, we have had educational events for financial literacy, resume preparation, interview preparation and practice, plus a “career combine” with prospective employers.
- Our student-athletes continue to be active in the community. From the football team, offensive lineman Kenneth Horsey was named to the National Good Works Team and he received an award from the American Heart Association for his service to that organization. In addition to Kenneth, Alli Stumler from volleyball and Peyton Rimko from women's soccer were named to the SEC Community Service Teams for their sports.

- Because of Covid, we were unable to have an induction ceremony for the 2020 class of the UK Athletics Hall of Fame, so in November we had a dinner to recognize the 2020 and 2021 classes and introduced the 12 honorees at basketball and football games that weekend.
- One of our team physicians, Dr. Rob Hosey, has been named SEC Team Physician of the Year. He will be honored for that award in May.
- We'll wrap up by discussing an event that touched the lives of all Kentuckians, directly or indirectly, the tornadoes that hit the western part of the Commonwealth in December. We were heartbroken by the devastation, and with the help of our partners at WLEX TV and JMI Sports, four days later we held a "Kentucky United" telethon. Thanks to the generosity of the Big Blue Nation, in one hour more than \$3 million was raised for tornado relief. Contributions for "Kentucky United" continued to come in afterward and eventually reached more than \$5 million.
- A week later, when the University of Louisville had to postpone our men's basketball game, we were able to host Western Kentucky University and continue to bring attention and support for the recovery effort. Many of us have had the opportunity to visit the people and places affected in that area and continue to be involved.