

Report for Board of Trustees / Athletics Committee Meeting, September 15

It's good to be back with you as we begin a new school year. In welcoming the largest freshman class in school history, we feel the energy on campus and are striving to contribute to that enthusiasm.

Before we turn our attention to the new year, it's appropriate for us to wrap up the 2021-22 school year.

- When we last met in June, we had projected a finish of No. 9 in the country, among 358 schools, in the Directors' Cup national all-sports standings. That was indeed the case and marked our highest standing in school history, breaking the school-record 10th place finish in 2016-17.
- We had a national championship in rifle and conference championships in volleyball, men's soccer, women's basketball and rifle.
- 54 athletes earned All-America honors and 81 were named all-conference
- We had two national athletes of the year in their sports – Abby Steiner in women's track and Oscar Tshiebwe in men's basketball
- Academic accomplishments included --
 - 20 consecutive semesters of 3.0 department-wide grade-point average
 - 390 SEC Academic Honor Roll honors
 - Seven Academic All-Americans
 - Four Conference Scholar-Athletes of the Year
 - Four NCAA Post-Graduate Scholarships
- 15 athletes earned community service honors
- 15 athletes selected in the professional sports drafts

News from the Summer

- The 2022 class of the UK Athletics Hall of Fame was announced in July, featuring Jim Andrews from men's basketball, Derek Bryant of baseball, Dezerea Bryant from women's track, Keenan Burton of football, diving coach Mike Lyden and Kelsey Nunley-Moore of softball. We will honor the new class in November.
- 11 Wildcats competed in the World Track and Field Championships, with Sydney McLaughlin and Abby Steiner each bringing home two gold medals and Jasmine Camacho-Quinn earning bronze.
- Baseball had six players selected in the major league draft. Three current Cats – Mag Cotto, Nolan McCarthy and Emilien Pitre were named all-stars in their summer leagues.
- Two women's golfers, Laney Frye and Jensen Castle, competed in the US Amateur, with Laney winning medalist honors during stroke play.

- Two men's golfers, Campbell Kremer and Garrett Wood, qualified and competed in the US Amateur.
- In softball, Kayla Kowalik played for Team USA and Alexia Lacatena led Italy to the bronze medal of the European Championship.
- Kyndal Knight earned a silver medal and assistant coach Julia Vincent received a bronze medal at the US Diving Championship.
- Rhyne Howard earned WNBA Rookie of the Year honors and participated in the Team USA Training Camp.
- And, our men's basketball team capped the summer with four wins during the trip to The Bahamas, showing outstanding potential for the coming season!

Fall Sports Roundup

- **Football** got off to a good start with a home win over Miami of Ohio, followed by a come-from-behind victory last week at Florida.
 - The Wildcats are ranked in the top 10 in the nation for the first time since 2007 and return home this week to host Youngstown State.
 - Obviously, we want to recognize and congratulate Coach Mark Stoops, as the win at Florida was his 61st victory, breaking the school record of 60 wins by Paul "Bear" Bryant. We will honor him before Saturday's game.
- As of this writing, **Volleyball** is ranked No. 13 in the nation and had a 5-2 record entering Wednesday's match. UK has two wins over ranked opponents and both of UK's losses have come against opponents currently ranked in the top 25. The Wildcats face yet another ranked foe on Sunday as No. 2-ranked Nebraska comes to Memorial Coliseum.
- **Men's Soccer**, ranked No. 5 in the nation, is 4-0 on the season with one tie. The Wildcats moved to the Sun Belt Conference this year and have our inaugural league contest Friday night at home against Marshall.
- Under the leadership of new coach Troy Fabiano, **Women's Soccer** is off to its best start since 2015 with a 7-1 record. The Wildcats open SEC action Friday night at home against Ole Miss.
- The **men's and women's cross country** teams began their season at the Eastern Kentucky Opener, with the Wildcat women winning the meet and the men placing second. They return to action Friday at North Alabama.
- Our winter and spring sports are beginning practice and fall competitions as applicable.

Off the Field

- First and foremost on our minds have been the floods that ravaged the eastern part of the state. As we did in December following the tornados in Western Kentucky, I'm proud of how UK Athletics responded as the Wildcats again supported our brothers and sisters of the Commonwealth –
 - the men's basketball open practice and telethon raised more than three million dollars;
 - the football and volleyball teams, along with several athletes from additional teams, helped with service projects;
 - our staff members went to work in Perry County, as the Wildcats again supported our brothers and sisters of the Commonwealth.
- As we said in December, we would not forget the people of Western Kentucky, and we haven't. Just before the floods hit, Coach Calipari, the men's basketball players and staff, and our friends at Kroger met the fans during a five-city tour that raised more money and supplies for the ongoing rebuilding effort in the western part of our state.
- It's appropriate to mention here that Coach Cal has been chosen for the Jefferson Award for Outstanding Public Service in Sports. The honor is bestowed by the "Multiplying Good" organization which has been presenting the award for more than 50 years. He will receive the award in November.
- We have finished our first year of student-athletes being able to capitalize on their name, image and likeness. We're pleased to report that 176 student-athletes reported a total of 1,329 transactions.
 - Our student-athletes have taken NIL and run with it in innovative and exciting ways. We're proud of our young people who have done the hard work to benefit in this new era. We're also gratified that so many local and national businesses see our student-athletes as attractive ambassadors for their brands.
 - We are strong advocates for our student-athletes embracing NIL opportunities and have been assisting in every way we can.
 - Toward that goal, we have established the "BBNIL Exchange," a portal that simplifies the process in which businesses can connect with student-athletes to explore, negotiate and make NIL deals.
 - As part of our annual orientation session for all student-athletes, we brought in Maria Taylor from ESPN to discuss her journey as a student-athlete and tips on how our Wildcats can succeed as a student, succeed

as an athlete, and can develop their personal brands during their collegiate years.

- On Monday, Dr. Capilouto announced the “UK Invests” program that will benefit every UK student. UK Invests begins within UK Athletics as part of our academic achievement awards distribution that many refer to as “Alston” awards. For the first time this semester, UK athletes will be able to earn academic awards because of an NCAA rule change that permits us to provide academic achievement awards in addition to tuition, room and board, cost of attendance, supplemental meals and snacks, and athletic awards such as rings, trophies, and letter winner gifts.
- We want to recognize two figures in our UK Athletics history who passed away recently.
 - Guy Morriss was part of UK football for six years, including two seasons as head coach. He was both liked and respected by the players, who responded to his fair, straightforward approach with their best efforts. His time here featured some of the best players and most exciting moments in our history.
 - Press Whelan was a student-athlete and head coach for our cross country and track and field teams. As an athlete, he was a three-time SEC champion and also part of SEC championship teams as an athlete and head coach. He also played a key role in the integration of the Southeastern Conference and remained beloved by his athletes.
 - We are thankful for their contributions to our history and our condolences are with their families and friends.