

Report for University Athletics Committee Meeting, September 12

It's good to be back with you as we begin a new school year. With the students returning and the ongoing academic, medical, research and athletics construction projects, we feel the energy on campus.

When we were last with you in June, our athletic year was not complete as our baseball team was in Omaha for the College World Series. We'll have more about that later, but for now, let's begin with our academic report.

Academic Accomplishments for 2023-24

- 24 consecutive semesters of a 3.0 department-wide grade-point average
- 163 graduates during the academic year, including 18 who completed master's degrees
- 23 athletes on the official Academic All-District teams, leading to five who earned Academic All-America honors
- 369 SEC Academic Honor Roll honors
- Six of our graduates earned postgraduate scholarships, including four who were recipients of the highly competitive NCAA Post-Graduate Scholarships
- An academic note from the College World Series, UK pitcher Evan Byers earned the prestigious NCAA "Elite 90" Award, which goes to the student-athlete with the highest grade-point average at the finals of every NCAA championship event.

Fall Sports Roundup

- **Football** is 1-1 on the season and we host No. 1-ranked Georgia on Saturday.
 - We will have a special event at the game with our recognition of Tim Couch for his upcoming induction into the College Football Hall of Fame. An interesting tie-in to the presentation will be the presence of representatives from Fidelity Investments. Fidelity sponsors the Hall of Fame and also administers the "UK Invests" program, Dr. Capilouto's groundbreaking, innovative program

that provides an investment account for every student on campus.

- We also want to compliment the Big Blue Nation, as our fan base bought all available season-ticket packages. Our fans also did an incredible job in our season opener, as so many of them remained in the stands through a two-hour-plus weather delay and provided great support for our team.
- This is also an opportunity to thank our gameday operations staff for handling the challenges and uncertainties that went along with the weather issues.
- From a facility standpoint, our fans also have enjoyed our stadium upgrades with the addition of new LED lighting and ribbon boards.
- **Volleyball** is ranked No. 10 in the nation. The Wildcats have a 5-2 record, losses coming to the No. 2 and No. 3-ranked teams in the nation.
 - While we're discussing volleyball, we were proud to host our first matches in the renovated Memorial Coliseum. As noted when we first announced the project, our goal was to have the competition and fan support spaces ready for the beginning of the 2024 season. Thanks to the hard work of a lot of people, we were able to reach that goal. We've received very good reaction on the look and feel of the interior – the functionality, the intimate connection of the fans to the competitive space, and the historic touches that tie the past to the present.
 - Given the history of the coliseum and its significance to the people of our state, we purposefully had the first official competition as a tournament that featured four in-state institutions – Morehead State, Northern Kentucky and Western Kentucky, in addition to the Wildcats.
 - Also, as first announced, we will complete the exterior and backstage spaces as the year goes on. We plan on having an official grand opening and dedication event in the spring.

- In addition to volleyball, Memorial Coliseum is host for our women's basketball, gymnastics and STUNT teams, but it is so much more than a sports venue. This modernized facility will serve the entire community through events such as Dance Blue and we are pleased with how we will memorialize fallen Kentuckians as part of this project.
- In the grand entry to the facility, the gold stars of the 340 Kentucky students and staff who gave their lives to this country during World War II are featured with the label "Lest We Forget."
- As the construction continues, the names of 12,127 war-fallen Kentuckians will be displayed on tablets in front of the coliseum to honor their sacrifice.
- **Women's Soccer** is off to its best start in 13 years with a 7-0 record. The Wildcats have climbed into the national rankings this week.
- **Men's Soccer** has been ranked in the top 25 and will begin Sun Belt Conference action next week. A note from men's soccer, UK athletics administrator Tim Bernal has been named chair of the NCAA Selection Committee for that sport.
- The **men's and women's cross country** teams began their seasons last week at Eastern Kentucky and will race tomorrow at a meet in Alabama.
- Our winter and spring sports are beginning practice and fall competitions.
 - During the summer, Jansen Preston of men's golf played in the U.S. Amateur Championships.
 - Our women's golf team hosted the Bettie Lou Evans Invitational this week, finishing second among 11 teams in the event.
 - Coming up next week, Jack Loutit of men's tennis will represent his home country of New Zealand in the Davis Cup.

Additional Notes

- The 2024 class of the UK Athletics Hall of Fame has been announced:
 - Jasmine Camacho-Quinn from women's track and field, NCAA champion and Olympic medalist
 - John Cropp, longtime administrator and coach
 - Henrik Larsen, who led UK to the rifle national championship in 2018 and was NCAA Shooter of the Year
 - Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone from women's track and field, NCAA champion, Olympic medalist, and world record-holder
 - Jodie Meeks, men's basketball All-American and longtime NBA player
 - Corey Peters of football, who helped lead UK to four consecutive bowl appearances and was a 13-year NFL veteran
 - This class will be inducted during Hall of Fame Weekend, September 20 and 21 and introduced during the football game vs. Ohio
- The Lexington African-American Sports Hall of Fame will have its class inducted on Sept. 21, seven of whom have connections to UK – Sherry Ballew Agee, C.B. Akins, Tracye Davis, Winston Guy, Michelle Williams Johnson, Ericka Muncy McGinnis and Littleton Ward.
- Two persons affiliated with UK Athletics will be enshrined into the State of Kentucky Sports Hall of Fame on September 23 – men's basketball All-American Tony Delk and the founder of the The Cats Pause, Oscar Combs.
- During the summer, seven baseball players and three men's basketball players were drafted and signed in their respective professional leagues.
- In August, the NCAA and UK announced a negotiated resolution regarding our football and swimming programs and we are in process of fulfilling those requirements.

- In August, an announcement was made regarding a potential settlement of the House vs. NCAA litigation that will address past and future revenue sharing with student-athletes. That settlement is in the process of judicial review with the goal of implementation for the 2025-26 academic year.

SEC Championships and the Olympics

- We want to close by highlighting two of the landmark events in the history of University of Kentucky Athletics.
- When we met in June, the Wildcat baseball team had won the regular-season SEC championship for only the second time in school history; won the NCAA Regionals and Super Regionals in front of overflow crowds in Kentucky Proud Park; and was on its way to the College World Series in Omaha.
- The baseball championship was one of three teams that won SEC titles during the past year. In addition, our volleyball team won its seventh consecutive SEC championship and our men's tennis team went undefeated in the SEC regular season and tournament.
- The summer was capped with a blaze of accomplishment by Wildcats in the Paris Olympic Games.
 - The University had a school-record 24 representatives in the Olympics as athletes and coaches.
 - The University set more school records as 11 athletes won 13 medals – nine gold, two silver and two bronze.
 - Using the formula on the medal table where team medals count as one medal, no matter how many athletes are on a single team, UK would have had 10 medals – six gold, two silver and two bronze.
 - If the University of Kentucky medals in Paris were on the nations medal table, the 10 total medals would have ranked 21st in the world and the six golds would have ranked 14th.