

Athletics Report for Board of Trustees Meeting, February 20, 2025

Highlights from Fall Sports

- The **volleyball** team kept rolling on, posting its eighth straight SEC championship with a 14-2 league record.
 - Kentucky's eight straight SEC championships are the longest active streak, in any sport, among Power Four conference teams.
 - Kentucky played in the NCAA Tournament for the 20th year in a row, one of only eight schools who currently have that distinction.
 - The Wildcats advanced to the Elite 8 of the NCAA Tournament and finished with an overall record of 23-8.
 - Brooklyn DeLeye and Emma Grome were named All-America. DeLeye also was chosen the AVCA Region Player of the Year and the SEC Player of the Year.
 - Craig Skinner was voted the Volleyball Coaches Association Region Coach of the Year, and for the sixth time in the last decade, the SEC Coach of the Year.
- Under third-year coach Troy Fabiano, **women's soccer** returned to the NCAA Tournament for the first time in a decade.
 - In the NCAAs, the Wildcats earned a first-round home game and defeated West Virginia, eventually finishing the season with an 11-5 record with five ties.
 - Makala Woods was named SEC Newcomer of the Year. Woods and Grace Phillpotts were named first-team All-SEC and Maddie Kemp was on the third team.

Winter Sports Roundup

- Coach Harry Mullins has the **Rifle** team ranked No. 3 in the country with an 11-2 record. UK will host the NCAA Championship in March.
- **Gymnastics** is in the midst of another strong season as Coach Tim Garrison's Wildcats rank ninth in the nation.
- It's championship time for **swimming and diving** and **indoor track and field**. The swim-dive teams are in Athens this week for the SEC Championships. Next week, the track and field squads will be at Texas A&M for the league event. The NCAA championships for those sports will be in March.
- Our new basketball coaches are off to a good start.
 - Coach Mark Pope has the **men's basketball** team with a 18-8 record. The team has set school records for most regular-season wins against top-10 and top-15 ranked opponents.
 - Coach Kenny Brooks has **women's basketball** 20-4 going into tonight's game at Missouri. Coach Brooks tied the school record for the quickest to 20 wins for a UK first-year head coach.

- The men's and women's NCAA Tournament committees had their first top-16 bracket reveals last weekend and both of the UK teams were in the top 16.

Spring Sports Roundup

- Our spring sports have begun their regular-season action. Some of the highlights
 - **Men's tennis** is ranked No. 8 in the nation and Coach Johan Cedergren got the season off to a good start by advancing to the ITA Nationals last week.
 - Coach Shelley Jaudon and the **women's tennis** team finished the non-conference schedule with a 6-2 record.
 - **Softball** is ranked No. 23 in the nation. Rachel Lawson's team has a 6-4 record against a schedule that has featured nine opponents who played in the NCAA Tournament last season. We also want to congratulate Coach Lawson for her 600th win at UK.
 - Coach Nick Mingione's 23rd-ranked **baseball** team split a doubleheader on its opening weekend.
 - The **men's** and **women's golf** teams began their spring tournaments this week, highlighted by Cathryn Brown's third-place individual finish at the Suncoast Classic.
 - The **STUNT** team continues its upward climb under coach Blair Bergmann and has a 6-0 record thus far.
- All totaled, eight of our winter and spring sports are currently ranked in the top 25 in the nation.
- And, speaking of the spring, football spring practice begins in March. Coach Stoops and the staff have had an extremely busy offseason, putting together a transfer class that is ranked in the top 10 nationally and a recruiting class ranked in the nation's top 30.

Academics and Community Service

- In November, it was announced that UK student-athletes 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. This year's score of 92 percent is two points above the national average.
- Including the 2024 December commencement and last spring's graduation, a school-record 155 Wildcat student-athletes earned degrees and certifications during the 2024 calendar year. The total of 155 includes 20 master's degrees.
- UK Athletics combined for a composite GPA of 3.391 in the fall semester. That continued our streak of 25 consecutive semesters with a department-wide GPA of

3.0 or higher. 495 Wildcats achieved a GPA of 3.0 or higher for the fall semester, including 158 Cats who reached 4.0 for the semester.

- From a team standpoint, the women's golf team led the way with a 3.92 GPA, a record for the highest team GPA in school history.
- The SEC Fall Sports Academic Honor Roll has been announced. We had 89 student-athletes represented.
- 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, and interview preparation and practice.
 - Earlier this month, we had the annual “Career Combine,” as 217 student-athletes met with 54 employers and campus academic graduate programs to explore post-undergraduate opportunities.
 - We also have continued the “Pro Career Institute,” a sponsored program matching student-athletes with internship opportunities both externally in the public and internally with UK Athletics. Six student-athletes are participating this semester.
- Next month, we will induct 21 student-athletes into the Frank G. Ham Society of Character. To be inducted, a student-athlete must be a junior or higher in academic standing and show an extraordinary commitment to academic excellence, athletic participation, personal development, career preparation and serving as a role model.
- Our student-athletes continue to be active in the community. Tallulah Miller of women's soccer, Brooke Bultema of volleyball, Torie Buerger of women's swimming, Drew Johnson of men's swimming and Josh Kattus of football were named to the SEC Community Service Teams for their sports.
 - Kattus has been active in additional leadership roles as he has been named to the NCAA Division I Football Student-Athlete Connection Group and the SEC Football Leadership Council.
- J.J. Weaver of football earned three national honors for his community service and leadership on and off the field:
 - Allstate AFCA Good Works Team
 - Freddie Solomon Spirit Award
 - Jason Witten Collegiate Man of the Year, becoming the second Wildcat in the last four years to win this honor (Josh Paschal was our previous winner in 2021).

More Off-the-Field News

- During the fall, we celebrated Hall of Fame Weekend, recognizing the 2024 class of the UK Athletics Hall of Fame, featuring Jasmine Camacho-Quinn and Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone from track and field; Henrik Larsen of rifle; Jodie Meeks from men's basketball; Corey Peters of football; and administrator John Cropp.
- The state of Kentucky Sports Hall of Fame held its annual induction ceremony, featuring men's basketball star Tony Delk, along with Oscar Combs, who revolutionized college sports media when he founded The Cats' Pause magazine in the 1970s.
- The Lexington African-American Sports Hall of Fame held its annual induction ceremony, featuring six Wildcats – Sherry Ballew Agee, C.B. Akins, Tracye Davis, Winston Guy, Michelle Williams Johnson and Littleton Ward.
- In December, Tim Couch had his official induction into the College Football Hall of Fame at the annual National Football Foundation dinner in Las Vegas.
- While we were in Las Vegas, the University of Kentucky received the Team USA Collegiate Impact Award, recognizing UK as one of the top three schools in America for having athletes win medals for Team USA at the 2024 Summer Olympics.
- In January, we had a reunion for the 50th anniversary of the 1975 men's basketball Final Four team. It was a joy to bring them back to relive their successes.

Memorial Coliseum Renovation

- The Memorial Coliseum renovation continues on schedule. We have had the competition spaces operational for volleyball, women's basketball, gymnastics and STUNT. We are nearing completion of the additional interior and exterior spaces.
- We plan to have a Grand Opening celebration in April which will recognize the new construction and honor the history of Kentuckians in military service. We will announce more plans on that soon.

Upcoming Events

- In alignment with Dr. Capilouto's vision of UK being known as the University *for* Kentucky, one of the goals set for the Athletics Department is to bring citizens of the Commonwealth and prospective students to the city of Lexington and to our campus.

- This coming weekend, we will host the KHSAA swimming and diving state meet. As the spring continues, we will host state high school events in tennis, track and field, softball and baseball.
- In March, we will play host for the NCAA Rifle National Championship, and one week later, the First and Second Rounds of the NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament.
- In May, we will host the NCAA Women's Golf Regional and the SEC Outdoor Track Meet.
- On April 19, we will have another concert in Kroger Field as we play host to Tyler Childers.

Looking Ahead

Director Barnhart will provide an update on the status of the national litigation regarding college athletics. His notes were still being prepared as this report was written.

Partnering with Campus for Flood Relief

- Our hearts go out to those impacted by the last week's flooding, which impacted much of Eastern Kentucky and many members of our campus community. Units from across the University have come together to begin delivering water and supplies to the areas most in need. Last night, we accepted donations of supplies at our men's basketball game and we will continue to work the campus authorities to assist in the recovery process.