

Athletics Report for Board of Trustees Meeting, April 24

When we last met in February, we were on the verge of a championship season for our winter sports, and we have some good results to report.

Winter Sports Report

- The University of Kentucky played host to the NCAA Rifle Championship and Coach Harry Mullins' rifle team came in second the nation. It is our seventh national runner-up finish to go along with our four national championships. Five Wildcats earned All-America honors.
- Led by All-American Isabella Magnelli, the gymnastics team again advanced to the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Regionals. Coach Tim Garrison's Wildcats ended the season ranked ninth in the nation.
- At the NCAA Indoor Track and Field Championship, Carlie Makarawu won the gold medal in the men's 200-meter dash, sparking the team to a 16th place finish nationally. Six Wildcats earned All-America honors for Coach Lonnie Greene.
- The men's swimming and diving team posted its highest finish in 15 years by placing 20th at the NCAA Championship. Three Wildcats earned All-America status for Coach Bret Lundgaard.
- Given the timing of their arrivals a year ago, basketball coaches Kenny Brooks and Mark Pope did an excellent job of building rosters from scratch. Coach Brooks' team earned a top-16 national seed and hosted the first two rounds of the women's NCAA Tournament, finishing with 23 victories. Georgia Amore was named All-America and was the No. 6 overall pick in the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) Draft.
- On the men's side, Coach Pope's squad defeated Troy and Illinois, advancing to the Sweet 16 of the NCAA Tournament for the first time since 2019. The Wildcats finished with 24 wins.
- Both of our basketball staffs are doing very well in high school recruiting and the transfer portal as we look ahead to next season.
- One of our winter teams is still in action as Coach Blair Bergmann's STUNT program is competing at the Division I National Championships today and tomorrow in Nashville.
- As we wrap up our winter sports season, UK ranks 20th in the nation, among the 364 Division I schools, in the national all-sports standings.

Spring Sports Report

- Our men's and women's tennis teams have completed conference play and are awaiting NCAA Tournament announcements on Monday.
- Our men's golf team is competing at the Southeastern Conference (SEC) Tournament this week. UK will play host to the NCAA Women's Golf Regional in May.
- The softball and baseball teams are moving toward the end of the regular season. Coach Lawson's softball team has a 27-20 record. Coach Mingione's baseball team sits at 23-15 after taking two out of three at No. 2-ranked Tennessee last weekend and defeating Louisville on Tuesday.
- Both the men's and women's outdoor track teams are ranked in the top 40 in the nation and the Wildcats will play host to the SEC Championship meet in May.

Academics and Community Service

- While these accomplishments are going on, our student-athletes continue to excel in the classroom.
 - Next month at Commencement, we are anticipating 116 student-athlete graduates, including 13 with master's degrees. Along with the 33 grads from December, we totaled 149 for this academic year.
 - Included in our graduates are seven from our Cawood Ledford Scholarship Program, which helps former student-athletes return to UK to finish their degrees.
 - 50 of our athletes were on the SEC Winter Sports Academic Honor Roll.
 - In two weeks, the NCAA will announce the annual Academic Progress Rate report. Once again, we are expecting strong scores when that report is released.
 - We want to congratulate Dr. Rick Honaker, UK Professor of Mining Engineering, as the recipient of an SEC Faculty Achievement Award.
 - Several student-athletes have been named to the SEC Community Service Teams for their sports, including Andrew Carr and Dazia Lawrence from basketball; Lizzy Stevens and Eli Stephenson from tennis; Drew Johnson and Torie Buerger from swimming and diving; and Annie Riegert from gymnastics.

Memorial Coliseum Renovation

- The Memorial Coliseum renovation is having the final touches completed. As we expected, it has been a great competition site this year for our volleyball, women's basketball, gymnastics and STUNT teams. The renovation also has greatly enhanced the comfort and convenience of our fans.
- On Saturday, we will have a Grand Re-Opening Celebration of the Coliseum.
 - We will have an outdoor community event in front of the Coliseum from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., featuring food trucks, local vendors, activities and a display of military vehicles.
 - In the plaza area, the public can view the stone monuments inscribed with the names of the thousands of Kentuckians who gave their lives during World War II and inspired the name of the building.
 - The Grand Re-Opening event inside the Coliseum will run from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. Tickets are free must be claimed online at ukathletics.com while supplies last.
 - The re-opening ceremony will feature distinguished speakers from the University, student-athletes; and government and military leaders, along with performances from the 202nd Army Band of the Kentucky National Guard.

Off the Field

- In March, we inducted 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.
- On Monday, we will host the 23rd annual CATSPY Awards, which recognizes the best of UK Athletics over the past year.

Bringing Championships to our Campus

- 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 championship athletic events to our campus. This is important for our department and the University as a whole as we recruit students to UK and strengthen ties to the flagship educational institution of the Commonwealth. It is also important to the city of Lexington and merchants of Central Kentucky for us to bring people to our hotels, restaurants, shops and other businesses.

- By the end of the school year, UK Athletics will have hosted a total of 13 championships from the NCAA, Southeastern Conference and Kentucky High School Athletic Association.
 - To this point, we have hosted NCAA championships in women's soccer, volleyball, rifle, men's basketball and women's basketball, along with the Kentucky High School Athletic Association (KHSAA) championships for football, swimming and diving.
 - In May, we will host the NCAA Women's Golf Regional, and the SEC Track and Field Championship meet, followed by the high school championships for tennis, track and field, softball and baseball.
- In addition, on Saturday night, we had the Tyler Childers and Wynonna Judd concert, which had a sellout crowd of more than 40,000 fans for our concert configuration in Kroger Field.
- All totaled, these events will have brought hundreds of thousands of visitors to campus, generating millions of dollars for the economy and tax revenues of Lexington and Central Kentucky.
 - We also want to note that these events would not be possible without the dedication of our athletics staff. Each of these events takes months of planning and requires around-the-clock work while they are being held. This work comes on top of the demands already on the staff for conducting our own UK Athletics events and we want to publicly recognize the staff for their dedication in making this possible.