

Bob Watkins' Sports In Kentucky

Perfect Pinnacle: Deja vu for (22-0) Kentucky; Louisville ready to rip?



Bob Watkins

Lone unbeaten in the Land-of-D-I, Kentucky (22-0) heads to another clamorous SEC outpost where a throng of hostiles wait in numbers that invite a simple, SRO. Destination Gainesville, Florida.

History says the last time a UK team occupied the perfect pinnacle and was awash in noisy admiration, national acclaim and yes, derision too, was March 4, 1966, a Friday.

Kentucky was 22-0, its climb up the polls had blossomed from Little Engine-that-Could story line to *America's Team*. (Duke was a hoops prep school). Closer to home the team was *Rupp's Runts*. A sure-handed, good shooting and unselfish to a fault, team. One destined for Land-of-Beloved. Coach Adolph Rupp was less grouchy, warmed by glow of praise and *grrrrreat* adjectives. A Sports Illustrated cover story was on its way: Man in the Brown Suit, College Coach of the Year. By first week of the NCAAs, Rupp had passed his old coach at Kansas, Phog Allen, become winningest coach in college hoops, 747.

On that Friday in March

1966 the news item drawing most media attention beyond the war in Vietnam and Kentucky's basketball team, was John Lennon. In a fit of giddy sacrilege that mortified his English handlers, Lennon had the cheek to declare to a reporter, "We (The Beatles) are more popular than Jesus."

While Billy Graham gasped and Oral Roberts fainted (we think), the stir and storm Lennon created, let Rupp and America's Team file quietly onto a charter bus and head down U.S. 25 to Knoxville where Howard Baine and his brutish bunch awaited.

From that Friday on, perhaps ignited by the curse of a Sports Illustrated cover, and fired certainly by a media concoction after the NCAA title game in College Park, Maryland, Rupp's Runts was transformed from America's team into five white guys and its racist coach.

Fast forward near half-a-century and another No. 1 ranked and unblemished Kentucky team files onto a charter plane this week and heads to Gainesville. For fans old enough to recall Tennessee's manhandling their Wildcats 49 years ago (69-62 and wasn't that close), a win this Saturday would be extra sweet.

Put in current perspective ...

While anything short of 40-0 season will deny this Kentucky team lofty praise as America's team in today's hoops world (Duke is no longer a prep school), the 2014-15 Wildcats are special, to a man, and becoming more so for every blue-to-white pla-

toon change out. Most remarkable, a growing maturity with it's team-ness.

Meanwhile, the Wildcats remain the lone unbeaten in the Land-of-D-I.

LOUISVILLE-CAROLINA

A stinging loss (at Carolina January 13), Rick Pitino called it, was erased when the Cardinals exhausted and beat down North Carolina Saturday.

√ Spotted the visitors an 18-point lead ... then, classic Pitino Ball. Turn up the heat, create bedlam, defend as if there are seven of us, and presto, new evidence: Team nobody wants to play in February and certainly not in March, Louisville.

Notes ...
√ Terry Rozier is an All American, period. If there were a Mr. Clutch Award, he would own it.

√ Montrezl Harrell is a special talent, but his show-boat theatrics will bring special attention at next level from the lum-mox who take offense to being shown up. Harrell's antics prove that Pitino has mellowed since his time at Kentucky. For showboating, Antoine Walker was benched.

√ Compared to Pitino's relentless whip-and-drive 'em' passion to coach, Tar Heels' Roy Williams is a veritable pygmy at firing his team to, against UofL, protect a two-digit lead. The Tar Heels looked tired, out of shape and disjointed and their coach had no answers.

Me thinks Williams is pre-occupied with NCAA investigation of his program at Chapel Hill.

If Tar Heel basketball players took phantom classes dating to Dean Smith coaching days as alleged, the question rises: Will the NCAA rule Williams "not responsible because he didn't know?" (John Calipari free pass at UMass and Memphis), or, will UNC's coach be held accountable based on what a coach should know is going on in his program?

GAME GONE UGLY?

"... (college basketball) as a whole is ugly and slow and unskilled," sayeth Yahoo Sports' Pat Forde in a column the other day.

The two teams at the top, he added, (UK and, at the time, Virginia) "aren't helping."

Specifically, he opines, "Kentucky's best attribute is sheer size and brute force and watching the Wildcats play isn't "exactly a thrill ride."

That college basketball has become brutish, at times hard to watch, and worse, NBA-ish, is true.

But to the latter, Forde betrays having not watched Kentucky play or has chosen to accentuate defenses played against the Wildcats and ignore the open floor doings of Tyler Ulis, graceful firings by Devin Booker and opportunities created by both for teammates.

I would add, officiating of college games, ones on television at least, are weak, uneven and officials look the other way while coaches behave like children at the playground.

And so it goes.
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Wanderings from the Woods & Water

by Jay Bicknell
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Wounded Warrior Turkey Hunt 2015

It's been cold and seems like the sun doesn't show itself too often. The cold weather and most hunting seasons over, my mind wonders to warmer days. I look forward to warm days and gobbling turkeys.

The gobbling turkeys means some of America's finest will be coming to Estill County to chase long beards. The Wounded Warrior hunt will take place April 22-25.

If all goes as planned, 10 to 15 Wounded Warriors will show in Estill. The majority of the soldiers will be coming from Ft. Campbell from the Warrior Transition Battalion. These soldiers have been wounded and either will be going back to active duty or become medically retired. Also, there will be some retired Wounded Warriors that will be making their way back to Estill to turkey hunt with us again.

Every year Estill County rolls out the red carpet for these heroes. I imagine 2015 will be bigger and better than any of the other past hunts. I appreciate everyone's hard work and dedication in the past years to make the hunts a great success.

We need help with everything from guides to land. One way everyone can help is start praying now that this event will be a success. The goal of the hunt is to show these men and women how much their sacrifice is appreciated and we truly care for them.

These men and women have been through a lot so we can live free. Your help making 2015 Wounded Warrior Hunt

bigger and better will be greatly appreciated. Anybody interested in helping out or wanting more details can email me at corridorhr@gmail.com or call me at 859-619-3420.

I am often asked, are you doing a Wounded Warrior Hunt again. My answer is, if you don't see my name in the obituaries, then there will be a hunt. I am afraid we will be seeing Wounded Warriors for years to come due to Islamic Muslim terrorists. Something to keep in mind, the war might be over for some, but a war rages inside their head from the things they have seen. I know a World War II vet who just turned 91 the other day. He said just a few years ago he stopped having nightmares from what he seen in WW II.

Thank God we live in the land of the Free because of the Brave! Thank God for the American Soldier!

Until next week, get out and enjoy God's creation!



Five Things for Migrating Birds:

1. Unsalted peanuts for cat-birds, redwings, cardinals.
2. White proso millet for sparrows, finches, buntings.
3. Black oil sunflower seed. Most any bird can crack it open.
4. Suet cakes or nuggets, for its high fat content.
5. Fresh water. All birds need fresh water.

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Sports News

Teams Needed

Estill County Church Basketball League

Any church interested in sponsoring a team in the Estill County Church Basketball League, call Danny Click at 606-643-5145.

Friday, February 6th

1983 Lady Engineers To Be Honored

Estill County High School will continue to honor athletes from past years with recognition of the 1983 Estill County Lady Engineers district winners at the Lee-Estill doubleheader on Friday, February 6, 2015.

Members of the team are requested to be there and fans are encouraged to come out and support these athletes and to cheer on the Estill County Engineers and Lady Engineers.

Fri. & Sat., Feb. 6 & 7 and 13 & 14

Youth Soccer Signups

The Estill County Youth Soccer League will be holding sign ups on Friday & Saturday, February 6th & 7th and again on Friday & Saturday, February 13th & 14th at Hardees Restaurant on Richmond Road in Irvine.

Signees must have been born on or between August 1, 2002 and July 31, 2010.



A Veterans Benefits Field Representative will be at the National Guard Armory, 335 Cow Creek Road, Ravenna, on Thursday, February 5th and normally the first Thursday of each month. The hours are 1:30 p.m. until 3:30 p.m.

Veterans and their dependants will receive assistance filing for Federal and state veterans benefits. This service is provided free of charge by the Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs. To apply, veterans need to furnish copies of pertinent documentation to verify eligibility. For further information, please call toll free within Kentucky, 1-866-376-0308, to speak with a Veterans Benefits Field Representative.

Kruzers Newz

Twin City Kruzers' next monthly meeting is likely on **Monday, March 2nd** at 7:00 p.m. in Irvine City Hall. Anyone interested in joining Twin City Cruizers needs to come to the meetings.

We were busy at our January and February meetings, planning car shows, car cruises and cruise-ins. We are looking forward to 2015. All events are free and open to anyone. There will be music, raffles, corn hole and door prizes. Bring your family and enjoy the beautiful vehicles in downtown Irvine. Dates will be announced in March.

Anyone interested in joining, needs to come to our meeting or call president Kenneth Tipton at 723-7554 or vice-president Darrell Hall at 723-3612.

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