

Kentucky State Park Campgrounds Preparing to Open March 12

Fresh air fanatics, get ready! Camping season opens March 12 at 30 Kentucky State Parks featuring approximately 2,300 campsites across the commonwealth.

"One of the most popular recreational activities at Kentucky State Parks every year is camping," said Department of Parks Commissioner Russ Meyer. "Over the past year, our staff has been committed to making improvements at several campgrounds that we believe will improve our guests' overall camping experience."

Sewer and 50-amp electric upgrades have been completed

at General Burnside and Lake Cumberland campgrounds. New ADA sites have also been added to the campgrounds. The campgrounds at John James Audubon State Park and Carr Creek State Park will remain closed for the 2021 season due to ongoing upgrades and repairs.

All state park campgrounds have water and electric services with dump stations or sewer hookups and bathhouses, along with picnic tables and fire rings at each improved site. Primitive sites are also available.

State Park campgrounds will

remain open through mid-November and a few sites will remain open during winter months. The weekend of April 23-25 is the annual Camper Appreciation Weekend when campers can receive a promotional discount of two nights for the price of one.

Kentucky State Parks offer a variety of outdoor recreation activities that Kentuckians can continue to enjoy while engaging in social distancing. Kentucky is home to 45 state parks including 17 resort parks. State parks span over 48,000 acres and offer 300 miles of hiking trails. Park visitors have access

to a number of outdoor recreational activities, including hiking, biking and horseback riding.

Due to the state's ongoing battle with COVID-19, park guests are required to follow all public health safety guidelines including Red Zone Reduction Recommendations, face covering requirements and social distancing.

While visiting park grounds, guests should adhere to the following:

- Wear a mask or facial covering;
- Do not use parks or trails if you are exhibiting symptoms;

- Maintain safe social distancing at least 6 feet;
- Do not congregate in groups;
- Avoid games that require close contact; and
- Move to a different location to avoid crowds.

For more information about Kentucky State Parks or to make a reservation, visit parks.ky.gov.

For the latest updates, follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Travelers looking for the perfect Kentucky "safe-cation" can discover the Bluegrass State by downloading the Kentucky Official Visitor's Guide.

Olivier Sarr got a virtual visit from his family in France at UK's Senior Day



by Larry Vaught

Olivier Sarr admits that not a lot of people in his native France know a lot about Kentucky basketball. "But they definitely know about Kentucky. They know it's one of the biggest programs in col-

lege basketball, one of the best programs in college basketball," Sarr said.

Even though this season has not been a typical successful season for UK, Sarr says it has been "amazing" despite the 8-14 record. That's why he tells those in France it has been a "blessing" to play at UK this year after spending his first three seasons at Wake Forest.

"It's amazing to put on that jersey that, four years ago, I would have never thought I would be in this position today," Sarr said. "Not a lot of kids in France get a chance to play for Kentucky or a school like that.

"I mean, I'm blessed

honestly. All I can tell them is I'm trying to take as much as I can while I'm here and keep moving forward. It's an amazing experience."

I asked Sarr if he was considered a role model in France, a notion he downplayed.

"I know a lot of people follow what I'm doing here. I don't know if I'm a role model or not. I'm trying to behave myself as best I can," he said. "I've got a little brother (Alexandre), so I'm trying to set the example for him even though he doesn't really need me right now. He plays for Real Madrid.

"That's who I'm trying to, not impress but

lead, and hopefully and it inspires a lot of younger kids to pursue their dreams too."

Sarr was moved before UK's Senior Day game when his parents and brother back in France joined the pregame ceremony virtually on the Rupp Arena video board.

"A lot of feelings, man. It was just unbelievable to see them out there and see their faces right before my game. It's been a long time, as a lot of people know, because of the pandemic," Sarr said. "It was just an unbelievable feeling to see my brother and my parents out there watching the game. It was just fantastic."

UK quarterbacks have been great to work with

New Kentucky offensive coordinator Liam Coen says the "quarterbacks have been great" to work with since his arrival at UK. He's been watching film/video of UK's returning offensive players and trying to get a feel for how those players might work with certain things the Los Angeles Rams did while he was on staff.

The Rams often had the quarterback under center, something that might not happen at UK based on what Coen told Tom Leach on the Leach Report last week.

"I would like to be (un-

der center) here but a lot of the quarterbacks have never taken a snap under center in a game," Coen said. "Joey Gatewood and Beau Allen have been doing it in practice and have reps at it. But do we have enough time to practice and is it worth enough time that we have in practice to get what we want out of it?"

"There is a lot of time invested in taking a snap under center and handing the ball off. It sounds elementary but it is so much more natural to these kids to take a shotgun snap. There are other things

we need to focus on and plenty of things we need to get better at, so it is all a matter of how do we allocate our time most efficiently."

Since Coen has not been on the practice field with players yet, he cannot "truly judge" how difficult it might be for Gatewood, Allen or other UK quarterbacks to go under center. However, he told Leach he believes it something doable on at least a limited basis.

The new coordinator did emphasize verbiage the offense will use will not be nearly as compli-

cated or lengthy as it is in the NFL.

"The whole point in the NFL is you need to tell people what to do. You might sign a wide receiver on Tuesday and need him to play on Sunday, so you have to be able to tell him what to do and tag things so he knows," Coen said. "You have to do that to function with roster restraints.

"Our verbiage here will not be that lengthy. That's the beauty of doing things from scratch. We are able to put our wrinkle on things and our best for the players here at Kentucky."

Senior walk-on hopes to become a college coach

Kentucky senior walk-on Riley Welch hopes to eventually be a college coach. That's the main reason he wanted to play at UK so he could learn from coach John Calipari.

Welch, a point guard, has watched freshman point guard Devin Askew all season and often goes against him in practice, especially the last two months after Terrence Clarke went out with an injury.

He likes what he believes lies ahead for Askew.

"Good or bad, Devin's in the gym working every off day. Sometimes when maybe he should give his body a rest, he's still trying to improve, still trying to get better. That's something I really respect about Devin," Welch said.

"He's a kid who should be a senior in high school, came to the most pressure-filled college basketball program in the

country and under tough circumstances. No summer. No fall. Not being able to get into the locker room. That's a lot."

Welch said it has been a hard season for Askew not to have any veteran players to explain to him what Calipari is like.

"That's something you only really get when, through experience. Dev has really improved through this season. I think he can still get a lot better, and he's going to get a lot better because there's things I see him do in practice day-to-day that I do think he will be able to translate to games sooner rather than later," Welch said.

"I'm just happy for him. He's a really mentally tough kid which is something that I really respect."

Welch's comments were the day before UK hosted Florida and Askew went 0-for-6 from the field with three turnovers, two

rebounds and two assists in the loss.

First-year Kentucky coach Kyra Elzy wasn't about to look ahead to the NCAA Tournament knowing that the Cats are playing in the SEC Tournament this week.

But UK is going to be in the NCAA Tournament and Elzy hopes her team has the right makeup to perform well in postseason play.

"As far as when you get to the NCAA Tournament, if you have the opportunity to play, at that time, anything can happen. It is all about matchups," she said. "There's not going to be a home court advantage, but in March, it's survive and advance.

"You play the best basketball and you just hope that your team is peaking at the right time, and you get the right matchups. So March is a mix of luck with the draw, of peeking, play-

ing well, so there's a lot of variables that will go into it."

Quote of the Week: "I think it is the most deadly floater in the NBA next to Mike Conley. It's unguardable even in the NBA. The transformation he has made from two years ago is just unreal. I am so happy for him because he is a great kid," Rivals.com recruiting analyst/writer Krysten Peek on New York Knicks rookie Immanuel Quickley.

Quote of the Week 2: I understand it's a business, but it's very tough for me. Him being through injuries, me being through injuries, we've been going through the same thing. It was fun playing with him again, it was our first time playing together since college. He can still play in the NBA. He's not written off," John Wall on former UK teammate DeMarcus Cousins being released by the Houston Rockets.



This is Regena Jones, field representative for United States Senator Rand Paul (R-KY). She is very interested in helping with improving the City of Ravenna. She and Ravenna mayor Valorie Flinchum discussed needy areas and had a very pleasant conversation last Tuesday afternoon, February 23, 2021. Senator Paul's contact information is his office in Bowling Green, 1-270-782-8303. (Photo courtesy Valorie Flinchum)

GRIN THE BEAR IT



"The time has come to put aside party differences and do what's right for the country. ... What am I saying?"

LAFF - A - DAY



"And, I promise you — if I'm elected — things won't get any worse!"