

Bob Watkins' Sports In Kentucky

Best of Talking Season? Pecking order in Kentucky, and Jon Toth gem at UK



Bob Watkins

Talking Season. Fan and expert buzz four Saturdays out from season chasing Ohio State and Alabama.

Referencing records past, projections forward and expectations (real and imagined) for 2015, the new Bluegrass pecking order for D-I is: 1. Louisville, 2. Western Kentucky, 3. Kentucky.

With this caveat to stir the stew - by 11 O'clock News September 5 fans and experts in the Bluegrass State won't be shocked if the aggregate record is 3-0 OR 0-3.

Talking Season. When UK football fans are asked: Which game on the schedule are you looking forward to most? Two precursors ought be made clear. First, around the Southeastern Conference correct pronunciation for football schedule is, sked-jewel. South of line at Jellico, word football isn't required. Everyone knows. Say it aloud. Sked-jewel.

Second, the dumb question 'which game you are most looking forward to?' requires you demonstrate to friends that you've been paying attention the last 20 years, Louisville, Tennessee or Auburn is not the right answer. Correct answer is the next one! In this case Louisiana Lafayette.

Talking season. Simple,

direct and perfect for August.

Day before the violence starts, coaches and players basked in warmth of attention and questions from media herd to which coaches and players tried to stay on script (platitudes) a lot, and say noting remotely bravado.

After the battalion-sized horde of reporters left from Talking Season duty and a hot air plume rose above Commonwealth Stadium heights, a lone scenario of journalistic eloquence qualified for Worth Repeating Department.

Involved Jon Toth (pronounced Toe-th), an academic All-SEC center.

Quarterback-turned-rookie-reporter Freddie Maggard (1989-91), working for Kentucky Sports Radio, did not make hot pursuit after glamour boy Patrick Towles or Drew Barker, but sought out an offensive lineman, a snapper.

Toth, projected as the SEC's premier center during Talking Season, is a 6-foot-5, 310-pound fellow who says he wants to be famous.

"Jon is a serious soul," Maggard wrote. "That makes him a perfect leader of a young offensive line group. I've talked extremely high when referencing (Toth). Today confirmed my hunch. His health and durability will play a large role in UK's journey to bowl eligibility."

Eureka. The Toth Gem. Best of the Talking Season by a mile. Size, experience, talent, leadership ability and serious. A standard in words for a team aiming for a bowl bid season.

For fans, here are qualities to stir optimism; for Toth, a little media love; and overall, simple, direct and perfect for what comes after Talking Season.

CIRCLE TALK DEPT.

At media day UK director of athletics Mitch Barnhart's state of the Commonwealth (stadium) address was first class circle talk.

On new seating at Commonwealth Stadium, "... we have grown our season and student tickets. We aren't done on those numbers yet. I haven't seen them lately, but we have surpassed clearly where we were last year and move into some of the numbers we are used to seeing when we are in that 40,000 range. The capacity of the stadium is going to be in that 61,000 range as we get the final seat count."

Translations: √AD shows up at media day and "has not seen the (numbers) lately." Hmmm?

√AD says Commonwealth Stadium will be "in that 61,000 range as we get a final seat count."

Commonwealth's seating capacity officially is 67,606. Given some fans are not happy with seating changes, one could surmise Barnhart's numbers is circle talk aimed at lowering ticket sales expectations.

PELPHREY STAR CROSSED?

Star-crossed, a handful of sports personalities I've chanced to write about over four-plus decades. Men who seemed simply destined for success no matter what obstacles, misfortune or setback.

There are those in life who rise to pedestals by way of uncanny right-place-right-time good decision-making, because, it's simply in the cards.

On my list ... √ Bill Evans (Berea to UK, Olympic Games gold, Kentucky state tennis champion, and KFC).

√ Paul Hornung (Flaget star, Heisman Trophy winner, and Vince Lombardi's Golden Boy, Hall of

Fame).

√ Darrell Griffith at Louisville (Mr. Basketball 1976, state title, NCAA title, All-NBA, Hall of Fame).

√ Frank Ramsey (Madisonville to UK, NBA's original 6th Man, Hall of Fame and banking).

Next wave of star-crossed candidates might include: John Pelphrey.

Mr. Basketball at Paintsville in 1987; captain among UK's Unforgettables; labored for Hall of Famers Rick Pitino and Billy Donovan; head coach at two D-I universities and, some would argue, has been a coach since his junior year at Kentucky, 1991.

Let go last spring as assistant at Florida, Pelphrey is on sabbatical these days. But, come October 10, he will be in Louisville for a (whatelse?) coaching clinic.

For coaches across the Commonwealth opportunity knocks. Pelphrey will "break down a different part of the game in five 50-minute segments."

Place: Louisville Iroquois High School, 9 o'clock to 1:30 pm, eastern time.

Interested? Contact Iroquois head coach Jeff Morrow.

LOUISVILLE & POLL

A too-early (and too stupid) college basketball poll was all the rage in Kentuckiana last week.

Reasons? Kentucky was ranked number three, Louisville was listed nowhere.

Kentuckians who believe a Rick Pitino team, with nine games in Puerto Rico to prepare for Talking Season then regular season, will not have a Top 25 team, write and explain it to me, please.

And so it goes.

You can reach me at <bob.Watkins24@aol.com

Wanderings from the Woods & Water

by Jay Bicknell
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One Month Away

Before I get started on this week's column I've got to mention #5. #5 is my baby girl Beth. She is going to be 2 years old in a few days. She is quite the Daddy's girl. Happy Birthday to baby girl Bethany Maye Bicknell A.K.A. #5!

In a month, it all gets going again! September brings dove season, bow season, early wood duck season, and early goose season. Tis the season to hit the woods again. It's almost time to be sitting in a stand; hearing the whistling wings of wood ducks.

So fellow hunters, it's time to knock the dust off your weapon of choice. Sight in the bow and shoot the old shotgun. Get out and shoot a few clay pigeons to get prepared for those dove rockets. Get the bow tuned up to for the next monster buck that comes by your stand.

I look forward to this season because the kids are getting excited about hunting. My boys are ready for youth season. I've got a feeling they will be tagging along a lot more this season. Brinley says she wants to give hunting a try. This season is going to be fun even if I don't get to do a lot of shooting.

Hunting season is almost here. Get out and start getting prepared. Please send me pictures of the harvest. This hunting season I want your wildlife recipes as

well to share with the readers and try myself. It's almost that time of year again and I can't wait!

In just a month all the seasons will be upon us. As much as I look forward to the upcoming seasons, there is something coming I look more forward too. In less than two months I've got someone coming I am so excited to meet. Joel Preston #6 Bicknell and #3 boy will be blessing us with his presence soon!!

I imagine I will see some early mornings with Joel Preston. Probably won't get to go hunting quite as much. Getting to hold little JP will make the lack of sleep and not as much hunting worth it.

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



Birding BITS

Birding BITS BY Cindy Brook
Baby Food
I still have parents bringing fledglings to my feeders. So I make sure to put out plenty of sunflower chips and unsalted peanuts. I also like to toss white proso millet and safflower seed on the ground (near brush cover) for them to pick up easily. Baby birds are fun to watch.

E-mail: birdingbits@cflrr.com
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Picnic in The Park

Join the River City Players for a Picnic in The Park

Friday, Sept. 4 Begins at 5 p.m.

Bring Your Dinner and Decorations
Table - \$60.00 (Seats 6)
Blanket Seating \$5.00 Each (Children 6 & Under Free)
Prizes Available for Best Table and Blanket Decorations

Live Entertainment 7 PM
Proceeds to "Save the Mack Fund"

For more information, contact Bobby Carol Noland 723-2254 or Susan Hawkins 723-5755

Cruzers Newz

TWIN CITY CRUZERS - schedule of events

- Sept 7 - noon - Cookout Cruise - leave from Pizza Hut, return to Darrell & Dorothy Hall's for cookout and pot luck dinner at 4pm
- Sept 8 - 7pm - meeting
- Sept 12 - 5-9pm - Cruise In (downtown Irvine)
- Sept 19 - 5-8pm - Railroad Festival Car Show in Ravenna
- Oct 5 - 7pm - meeting
- Oct 10 - 5-9pm - Toys for Tots Cruise In (downtown Irvine)
- Oct 12 - 9am - leaving from Main

Little Mountains

10TH ANNUAL

COIN & KNIFE SHOW

Buy, Sell or Trade

SATURDAY, SEPT 12TH

8:00^{AM} to 5:00^{PM}

Estill Co. Fairgrounds Event Building
38 S. Irvine Road, Irvine, KY

Free Admission and Free Parking

Vendors please call (606) 723-6682 to reserve a slot
40-table show -- \$15.00 per booth
(There will be concessions sold)

top ten

FAVORITE MAJOR LEAGUE TEAMS

1. Yankees
2. Red Sox
3. Cubs
4. Dodgers
5. Tigers
6. Braves
7. Phillies
8. Cardinals
9. Twins
10. Indians

Source: The Harris Poll

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