

Engineers Open With Three Shutouts and Two One-Run Losses

The Estill County Engineers baseball team has opened up the 2016 season with three mercy-rule, shut-out wins along with two one-run losses.

Estill shut out Menifee County, 19-0, 14th Region foe Breathitt County, 10-0, and 56th District opponent Lee County, 18-0. All in five innings or less.

But the Engineers couldn't get past their toughest opponents of the season, losing one-runners to Bourbon County (6-5 in 8 innings)

and Madison Southern, 8-7.

After falling behind early to the Bourbon County Colonels, an always strong 10th Region team, Estill tied it up in the 5th and took a two run lead going into the top of the 7th.

Senior starting pitcher Zach Withers had to come out after the first out of the inning with a sore arm, and the Colonels ended up tying it up and going extra innings.

Bourbon scored one and Estill failed to score in the

bottom of the 8th.

"We showed we are a team that doesn't quit," said second year head coach Brian Crowe, "And after a bad first inning we hung in there and battled."

The Engineers will be playing their 11th year in the 14th Region and have made an impressive run with winning seasons in 9 of the previous 10 years under four different coaches. Estill has a 10-year record of 197-122 with two region titles, two regional runner-up titles and six district titles. They have played in regional competition for the last nine years.

Former Estill coach Danny Wood's 2006 team didn't make the regionals in Estill's first year in the 14th but the Engineers have been there since then, with Wood's teams winning the region twice straight in 2008 and 2009.

Jeremy Sparks coached the Engineers to the regionals for four straight years with a regional runner-up title in 2012.

Gene Combs took over the head coach job in 2014 and took the Engineers to the championship of the 14th Region where they finished as runner-up. He moved on the following year and has since been head coach for Madison Southern.

Crowe took over the head coaching job in 2015 and led the Engineers to a 19-14 record with a district runner-up title and a trip to regionals.

Blake Crowe, the coach's son, returns as assistant coach and pitching & infield coach and is joined by Cade Berryman as assistant coach and catching & outfield coach. Berryman was a standout

kicker for the Estill County Engineers football team and earned a scholarship to play for the Kentucky State Thoroughbreds. He will be graduating after completing his student teaching. Robbie Hunter returns as team manager.

This year's Estill County Engineers squad fields eight seniors, many with valuable playing experience.

Taylor Sewell is a middle infielder and pitcher for this year's team. "Taylor in his second year with the team will be a big asset to our lineup," says Crowe. "He has a strong arm and a good bat."

Boone Tucker is a versatile player who can play multiple positions and also will be in the rotation for pitching.

Dylan Kortbein is in his first year on the team. "He is an outfielder with speed and will also pitch some for us," says Crowe.

Blake Harrison is the center fielder and has tremendous speed. The coach says "Blake has started some the last three years; so, he brings us a lot of experience in our outfield."

"Peyton Rose will be our third baseman and will also pitch some," said Crowe. "He is a smooth fielder and has a good bat."

Zach Withers has pitched varsity since being a freshman and will be one of Estill's top pitchers. He also will play first base. "Zach has a good bat and will provide power in our lineup," states Crowe, "And he will be signing a letter of intent soon to play college ball at Berea College."

Coach Crowe calls Kordel Day "our 110% guy." "He

will catch and play some outfield for us. Kordel has a strong bat and will be counted on for some power in our lineup."

Cody Boian, also known as "Bo Bo," is an outfielder for this year's team. "Cody has a good bat and will provide

us power in the middle of our lineup" comments Crowe.

"We're still trying to clean up the little mistakes and I think we will," says Crowe, "And hopefully by the end of year we will be ready to be a contender for the 14th Region."

Lady Engineers Play Tough Schedule In Quest for #10

The Estill County Lady Engineers return five veteran seniors in their quest for a 10th trip to the state tournament.

Sarah Barnes and Haley Puckett will be playing outfield, Haley Bishop is in the infield, McKeely Muncie is pitching and Zoe Deaton will be the catcher.

Veteran Estill coach Shirley Beard's team shut out four straight teams in district and regional playoffs last year before besting Jenkins, 9-3, to win Estill's 8th 14th Region title. The Lady Engineers had won the 10th Region in their last year there, 2005.

Jenkins is normally the second best team in the region behind Estill and the Lady Cavaliers play a tough game.

Estill lost 10-4 to East Jessamine and then beat Notre Dame Academy 2-1 in the double-elimination state tourney before falling 11-0 to Anderson County.

Beard was assistant coach to James Lonnie Thomas who coached slow pitch softball for many years with great success at Estill. Beard took over the head coaching job just as softball was changing to fast pitch and has coached every since.

She is expected to be named to the Kentucky Softball Coaches "Hall of Fame" later this season. Another Estill Countian, Bart Rison, was previously named to the "Hall of Fame" while coaching Montgomery County's Lady Indians.

Former Estill baseball coach Danny Wood is one of her assistants along with an excellent former Estill and college player, Brittany Thomas. Wood was recently named to the Kentucky Baseball Coaches "Hall of Fame."

Beard once again has lined up a tough schedule with some of the best teams in central Kentucky. Last Thursday night, the Lady Engineers were shut out 7-0 by Boyle County, a team that plays much like the aggressive western Kentucky teams. On Monday night, Paul Lawrence Dunbar of Lexington slipped by Estill, 7-6.

Estill played Madison Southern on Tuesday night and the Lady Engineers continue to take on some tough opposition this week against Henry Clay, Somerset, Anderson County before returning home against Lee County on Monday.

Wanderings from the Woods & Water by Jay Bicknell
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Wounded Warrior Turkey Hunt 2016

On April 20 some of America's finest will be invading Irvine to go turkey hunting. April 20 will be the kick off for the 2016 Wounded Warrior Turkey hunt. It is by far my favorite time of turkey season.

The military says no one left behind! The government on the other hand says, sorry about your luck. As the wars end our wounded soldiers seem to be forgotten. Most of the hunters usually come from the Wounded Warrior Battalion at Ft. Campbell. That is not going to happen this year. Due to severe cuts the activities have been cut that help Wounded Warriors.

There are 22 veterans from Iraq/Afghanistan wars committing suicide daily. You would think the government would go all out to help prevent this tragedy. I guess the government needs to save money so they can give away free cell phones to all who don't work!

If taking a soldier hunting can prevent one suicide, then it's been worth it. A soldier is a person who, at one point, wrote a blank check made payable to the United States of America for an amount of up to and including their life. The FREEDOM we love is made possible by the men and women of the United States Military. We owe them more than we can ever pay.

If you are interested in help-

ing with the hunt this year just let me know. We will put you to work doing something. If you've got land with turkeys we could borrow for a few days, we will try our best to get a soldier a turkey. You can email me at corridorhr@gmail.com for details.

The Estill County Longbeards, a chapter of The National Wild Turkey Federation, is a huge help. Getting involved with the Chapter is a great way to help out. Plus the Chapter does a lot of other great things in the community.

I hope you will join us on April 20th in showing our Wounded Warriors some good old Estill County Hospitality! It will be here before you know it and I can't wait! Land of the FREE because of the BRAVE!

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

Birding BITS BY Cindy Brook
Spring Cleaning
Spring is right around the corner. So maybe now would a good time to give those birdbaths an extra scrub. And how are your tube feeders and trays? Nest boxes? Its time to get all these things in order for spring migrants and summer nesters.
E-mail: birdingbits@flrr.com
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Bob Watkins' Sports In Kentucky

Sweet 16 peopled by Hoosiers, Heels, Ducks and Devils 'and we ain't in it!



Bob Watkins

We all live in suspense from day to day;

In other words, you are the hero of your own story.

— Mary McCarthy on Life

Hour hand spun forward, Spring sprung too and college hoops in Kentucky spun to, well, zero.

A Sweet 16 "and we ain't in it!" A bracket peopled by Hoosiers, Heels, Aggies, Ducks, Blue Devils and (imposter?) Wildcats. Decked in blue and white with one letter logo, V. Villanova. Stone the crows!

And so, across our Commonwealth we turn to Season III early but find an unusually drama-rich environment to buzz about.

1. Coach carousel includes vacancy at Western Kentucky and list of familiars looking for work – Travis Ford, John Pelphey and maybe Sean Woods and Darrin Horn.

2. Kentucky's John Calipari shifted attention away from two-and-out to boast of an historic recruiting class coming. Translation? A few Wildcats will take (rightly) as invitation to leave ('cause Cal wants your scholarship.)

3. Tyler Ulis. Which would be more fun/challenge, kid: Coaching another Kentucky team? Make De'Aaron Fox wait his turn? Or, play 10 minutes a

night and carry luggage for NBA prima donnas on road trips? Yes, we know, taking a wheel barrow to the bank on payday sounds like fun too, but consider: "To have done anything just for money is to have been truly idle." (Henry David Thoreau)

4. Jamal Murray. Idea for Man-in-a-Hurry: The bow-and-arrow thing could be market-worthy (The Brow). But, see ya.

5. Will next chapter of NCAA investigations at Louisville and North Carolina mean probation for Cleveland State and Monmouth?

6. A mystery waiting for epilogue: Why Ray Harper quit his veritable dream job at age 54?

7. Buzz about analyst Ken Pomeroy's projected top 10 for 2016-17 – 1. Louisville, 2. Kentucky, 3. Duke, 4. Villanova, 5. Kansas, 6. North Carolina 7. Oregon, 8. Wisconsin, 9. Indiana, 10. Virginia.

• Max Heath, Shelbyville.

Elsewhere...
8. String Music. Ageless and wonderful attachment to high school and college basketball in the south. Thank to the late Joe Dean and Junior.

9. Tom Crean. Indiana's preparation and execution against Kentucky was clinical and national coach of the year-worthy.

10. Prediction: Kentucky and Indiana will play basketball next season.

11. Alex Poythress tweet: "... been a great four years here at Kentucky and it will always be a special place to me where I made a lot of memories and met some of my best friends in my life." The college experience, huh?

• Joey Randolph, Evansville.

12. Deer Eyes in the

Headlights Dept. Stonybrook.

13. Rex Chapman gets probation. You or I would be in prison and pay restitution.

14. Worth Repeating Dept. "Jay Wright has done this without pros. We haven't done enough as a basketball community to recognize what Jay has done." – St Joe coach Phil Martelli. "Jay has done it for years without pros. That's phenomenal. It just absolutely blows my mind how good he is at what he's doing."

15. Statute of Limitations and John Calipari. Seven years, 20-plus win seasons, Final Fours and a title at Kentucky is long enough for most of us to let it go. We can file into the history books the appendages Calipari earned on his climb to the penthouse of college hoops.

• "College basketball's all-time bag man who treats academics as afterthoughts," (Dan Shaughnessy, Boston Globe).

• "Sleaziest coach in a sleazy game," (Charles Pierce, Esquire Magazine).

• "Most polarizing coach in game today, deserves criticism for repeated rules violations," (Elliott Pohnl, Bleacher Report).

16. Skal Labissiere. See ya.

17. A month ago University of Kentucky's president issued a whine letter urging alumni to pressure elected officials to oppose budget cuts put forth by the new governor. Contrast? In fiscal year 2015 the Southeastern Conference issued checks to member schools for \$31.2 million each.

• Ed McClanahan, Lexington, and Terry Spears, eastern Kentucky.

18. NCAA Seeding. John Calipari's complaint about his team's four-seed in the

NCAA tournament was valid, a protest letter from Mitch Barnhart was not. Says here, director of athletics for college hoops winningest program should have stay above the whine, instead of playing to the choir (Big Blue Nation). Play the hand dealt (and read No. 19).

19. Kentucky fan: "a lot of die-hard UK fans want to blame the referee for the call in the first Texas A&M game. Truth is, if we had beaten the worst two teams in the league, Tennessee and Auburn, we wouldn't be having this argument."

No bleating about NCAA seeding either.

• Rick Bentley, Pikeville.

20. Appropriate today: "The job of the press is to encourage debate, not to supply the public with information." – Christopher Lasch

21. Villains for the 2015-16 season? Nominees: Andre McGee (cab driver), Ben Simmons (passing through), and ESPN schedule-maker who spoiled the SEC Tournament for many of us by sending Dick Vitale to Nashville.

22. Just Wondering Dept. Whatever happened to Billy Donovan?

• Gerald Bone, Elizabethtown.

23. Worth Repeating Dept. "There's nothing to writing. All you do is sit down at a typewriter and bleed." – Ernest Hemingway

24. NEXT WEEK. Time to say good-bye.

And so it goes.

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

BOB'S RETIRING

Bob Watkins has announced that he is retiring at the end of March. If you've enjoyed his column, send him a message at the email address above.

UK COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

University of Kentucky – College of Agriculture



Estill County 4-H Youth Development
Isaac L. Hollon
Estill County Extension Office

Thursday, Friday & Saturday, March 24-26

Hunters Education Safety Course

There will be a Hunter's Education Safety Course (orange card) at the Estill County Extension Office. The 3-day class will be Thursday and Friday, March 24th & 25th from 6-9 p.m., and Saturday, March 26th starting at 9 a.m. at the Estill Co. Sportsmen's Club. You must attend all 3 classes to obtain your orange card. Ages 9 and older (as of March 26). Effective March 1, 2014, KY Dept. of Fish & Wildlife requires online pre-registration for all hunter education courses statewide. Following is the registration link for the Estill Co. class: <http://www.register-ed.com/events/view/74137>.

For more information, call the Estill County Extension Office at 606-723-4557.

Educational programs of the Cooperative Extension Service serve all people regardless of race, color, sex, religion, disability or national origin.

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