

# SPORTS



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## Brea wears his Kentucky love on his sleeve at Combine

BY BEN ROBERTS  
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CHICAGO  
Koby Brea loved his time spent as a Kentucky basketball player, and he was never shy about it.  
Perhaps the most memorable example of Brea expressing his appreciation for the opportunity to play for the storied program came a few minutes after his time as a Wildcat officially ended.

Brea was on the podium for his final press conference appearance as a college player following UK's loss to Tennessee in the Sweet 16 of the NCAA Tournament in March, when he tried to sum up what the experience meant to him.  
"Yeah, I don't know who is in charge of the jerseys and all that, but they're going to go through some trouble to get mine," he said. "It's still surreal every time I walk in the locker room, and I'm able to put this

jersey on. Just from everything I have dealt with, everything I have been through, where I come from, just to be able to put it on, it's super special."  
Brea went on to describe the immediate bond he formed with his new teammates — "we were all strangers when we first got here" — and how he was embraced by the UK fan base.  
"We're all a big family now, and BBN has been amazing," he concluded. "They made this dream like a reality, for real, for me. Ever since I stepped onto



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Koby Brea helped lead Kentucky to the Sweet 16 in his only season with the Wildcats.  
campus, everybody's greeted me with open arms, and they've been amazing to me and my family. It's been everything I wanted it to be and more."  
Brea played his first four seasons of college basketball with the Dayton Flyers, but he finished his career with the Wildcats, and — if he hears his name called at the NBA draft next month — it will be "Kentucky"

SEE BREA, 2B



DAVID REARIC

Nebraska transfer Dante Dowdell is expected to provide the type of physical rushing style that Kentucky's running back rotation lacked in 2024.

## A position-by-position look at UK football's roster

BY JON HALE  
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Mark Stoops' offseason overhaul of the Kentucky football roster appears finished.  
Most of the turnover came in December with the addition of 20 transfers, but Stoops and his staff did some tweaking around the edges of the roster in the spring transfer portal window.  
After spring practice concluded there were seven departures and seven additions, bringing Kentucky to 85 projected scholarship players for the fall, right

at the SEC's scholarship limit.  
Where do the newest Wildcats fit and who made moves in spring practice that could position them for larger roles in the fall? Here is a position-by-position look at the roster after the spring portal window.  
**QUARTERBACK**  
**Projected starter:** Zach Calzada (6-4, 230, Sr.).  
**Backups of note:** Cutter Boley (6-5, 214, RFr.), Beau Allen (6-2, 223, Sr.).  
**Other scholarship players:** Brennen Ward (6-4, 213, Fr.), Stone Saunders (6-1, 210, Fr.).

Calzada, the transfer from Incarnate Word who previously played at Texas A&M and Auburn, was uncomfortable answering questions about his expectations for playing time during spring practice, but it is clear UK recruited him to be the starter in his seventh season of college football. Reports about his arm strength were positive in spring practice, but usually came with a caution that accuracy and timing with his new teammates needed to improve.  
While it would be a surprise to see anyone other than Cal-

zada starting the opener, the pressure on Kentucky to return to a bowl this season means the staff will have to be open to playing Boley if he makes a big jump over the offseason. He remains the future at the position and probably has a higher ceiling even in 2025 than Calzada. Allen deciding to remain on the roster as a walk-on is important for depth, allowing the two freshmen to redshirt.

**RUNNING BACK**  
**Projected starter:** Dante Dowdell (6-2, 227, Jr.).  
**Backups of note:** Seth McGowan (6-1, 220, Sr.), Jason Patterson (5-10, 206, RFr.), Jamarion Wilcox (5-10, 197, So.).  
**Other scholarship players:** Tovani Mizell (6-0, 223, RFr.).

SEE FOOTBALL, 4B

### COMMENTARY

## EKU AD Kyle Moats has one primary hope for Eastern

BY MARK STORY  
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RICHMOND  
If you have wondered what it is like to work in college athletics during the current moment, Eastern Kentucky University athletics director Kyle Moats puts it like this: "Anytime you don't know what the finish line is, it's hard to figure out how to run the race."  
This, obviously, is an uncertain time in NCAA Division I college sports. The very structure of the enterprise is in limbo, waiting on United States district court senior judge Claudia Wilken to rule yea or nay on a proposed settlement to the anti-trust lawsuit, House v. NCAA. Should the settlement be approved, universities, if they so choose, will be allowed for the first time to directly share revenues with their athletes.  
That could make the House settlement only the latest factor that is escalating the separation along financial lines between the universities in the conferences that have enough revenue to share — the ACC, Big Ten, Big 12 and the SEC — and the rest of the NCAA Division I schools.  
As the first interview in what I



Kyle Moats

SEE STORY, 8B

## Aggressive play key to Lafayette softball's hopes

BY JARED PECK  
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Lafayette has taken down some of the top softball teams in the state on its way to a 21-7 record and the top seed in next week's 43rd District Tournament.  
Wednesday's come-from-behind 8-4 win over 41st District front-runner Franklin County at home showed why.  
"We've got all the basic ele-

ments. We've got speed. We've got power. We've got pitching. We've got defense and a knowledge of the game," said first-year head coach Chris Hould, who'd been an assistant coach for a number of years. "It's really just if the girls put it together and get up there and be aggressive at the plate and string hits together, timely hits. That's huge for us."  
One of four ranked teams in the 11th Region, the No. 10 Generals have impressive wins

against No. 3 Greenwood, No. 8 Male, No. 16 North Laurel, No. 18 Ballard, No. 22 Frederick Douglass, No. 23 Montgomery County and defending 42nd District champion Bryan Station, who has popped in and out of the coaches' poll all season.  
They've also split their regular-season series with 43rd District nemesis Lexington Catholic, who has Kentucky commit and two-time Gatorade player of the year Abby Hammond in the circle.

"I feel really confident. I'm excited to see where we go," said senior second baseman Kierstyn Kelley, who had a pair of doubles and two RBIs Wednesday. "I feel like we have a strong defense behind our pitchers and the energy is always good. And we hit one through nine pretty consistently."  
Lafayette manufactured several runs against the Flyers.  
Sophomore right fielder Addi Combs would have probably preferred knocking in teammates Rylan Music and Brynna Harris at first and second base via singles, respectively, when she came up in the third inning. But her groundout to the right side of the infield served a purpose by putting them into scor-

ing position. Franklin County let them both across the plate on a passed ball three pitches later.  
Courtesy runner Aarilyn Waletich-Silverio turned Ellie Thompson's sacrifice bunt into the go-ahead run an inning later. On base thanks to Abigail Winkler's walk, Waletich-Silverio didn't settle for second base as Franklin County got Thompson out at first, rounding the bag at full speed and drawing an errant throw by the Flyers in an attempt to cut her down at third. She scored as the ball caromed into left field.  
In the middle of Lafayette's three-run sixth inning that put the game away, McKenzie Harney walked, advanced to third

SEE SOFTBALL, 7B