

Voted Kentucky's best weekly Sports Column



"Big Red Bird Flies Toward Eastern Kentucky"

By Derek Fugate
Times-Voice Sports
Photos: Derek Fugate



Ryan Conwell led the Cards with 21 points in loss

Louisville's NCAA Tournament run came to an end Saturday as the Cardinals fell to the Spartans of Michigan State, 77-69. Louisville ended up with a 24-11 record and despite the loss, did advance past the first game with South Florida. However, this was the first time Louisville had advanced in the NCAA Tournament in nine years. Louisville is (or was) a threat to any team that played it in the past, with expectations of at least a Sweet-16. I just really feel that Louisville has slipped and its expectations are acceptable at a much lower level than in previous years.

North Carolina fired its head coach **Hubert Davis** on Tuesday after five seasons at North Carolina. The reasons I've read was that **Davis** didn't hold up to the Carolina expected level of play, and the fact that Carolina blew a 19-point lead to VCU, the sixth largest deficit in the history of March Madness. I'm not implying that Louisville should fire **Pat Kelsey**, but its just that the expectations are so much lower after an embarrassing four-win season with **Kenny Payne** that there is no



danger of this happening. I'm curious to see what the future holds for both Louisville and Kentucky in the Bluegrass State, as it's such a different time now with all the NIL money and such. A lot will depend on how the rest of this year's NCAA Tournament plays out, as well. What if **Calipari** leads Arkansas to win it all? What if **Pitino** leads St. John's to a National Championship? I feel there will be a lot of pressure on both Card Nation and BBN if this were to happen.

So I leave you with a debate from the closing paragraph on the other side of the page, as it claims that "Louisville appears to have had the better season when comparing the two programs." Well...let's think about that for a minute. Kentucky gave its fan base a lot to cheer about when they defeated St. John's in Atlanta and Arkansas in Fayetteville, nonetheless. It was a 'white-out' at Arkansas, as I'm sure the Hogs were nearly 100%

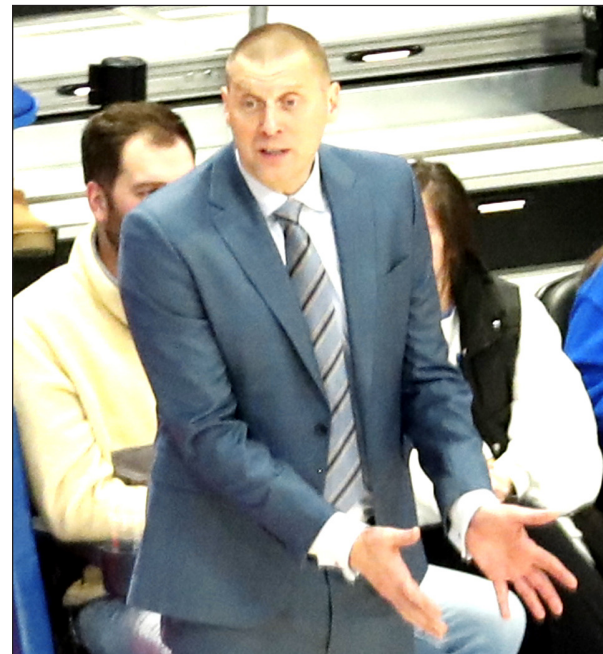
sure it would have a huge win over the Cats.

Actually, Kentucky defeated five Top-25 ranked teams this season, two of which were truly road games at No.15 Arkansas and at No.24 Tennessee. Yet fans complain about losing at home to Missouri and Georgia. Louisville on the other hand only had one road win over a Top-25 Miami team this season, which broke a 14-game losing streak over Top-25 teams. If Louisville could've had at least one win over Duke or at least a payback win over Tennessee, but the Cards couldn't get it done.

I hope everyone has a safe and wonderful summer and enjoy the rest of the NCAA Tournament and Women's Tournament, as well, as both Louisville and Kentucky are still alive. Hopefully the Cards can put together a great roster for the 2026-27 season and we'll catch up when the leaves fall to see how things go. Until then, stay safe and *Go Cards!*

"The Wheels on the Bus go Round and Round"

By James David Fugate
Times-Voice Sports
Photos: Derek Fugate



Coach Mark Pope

"Is it better to have loved and lost, or to have never loved at all?" That's the age-old question being posed by many of Big Blue Nation (BBN) after its beloved Wildcats were unmercifully ousted from the field of 32, eliminating its hopes of seeing Kentucky equal or exceed its tournament efforts of last year.

The Cats could very well have seen their tourney run cut short in their opening matchup with 10th-seeded Santa Clara, and would have for sure, if not for Oweh's improbable three-point launch at the buzzer, which further begs an answer to the above-posed question. Would a one-possession loss in the opener be better than a humiliating loss in round two? Keep in mind, the Cats' 19-point loss to Iowa State equals Kentucky's worst-ever loss in NCAA Tournament play dating back to Adolph Rupp's swan-song loss to Florida State in 1972. It was simply too much for The Baron to take, especially with the Seminoles' win being fueled by Louisville Central's Ron King, as well as other former Kentucky high school athletes in Central's Otto Petty and GRC's Larry Gay.

Saturday's loss to Iowa State, a team specializing in stiff defense, appropriately showcased the biggest deficiency Coach Pope's team has faced since having lost its true point guard earlier in the season. The contrast between Iowa State's point guard play as compared to Kentucky's couldn't have been more evident. Lipsy scored 26 points while dish-

ing out 10 assists with drives into the lane, drawing the defense and finding the open man or finishing at the rim. As a team, Kentucky only managed 11 assists. When coupled with the Wildcats inability to handle the ball, which amounted to 20 turnovers and Iowa State's 25 points off those turnovers, it proved to be a recipe for disaster. It seemed as if each pass made by Kentucky was thrown in efforts to simply get rid of the ball, hardly ever leading to a basket; most often, putting the Wildcats in a worse position. It was painful to watch.

As this writer has stressed through most of this season, it's really difficult to consistently perform at a high level without a true point guard, one who can set the table and dish it out; otherwise, a contest is prone to look more like a food fight, and one that's just as messy. Regardless of how talented a team may be and how many of the seats on its team bus are adequately filled, if it doesn't have someone to drive the bus, it's not going to go far.

Coach Pope found himself having to ask the question, "Is there someone among us who can drive this bus?" To no one's blame; there wasn't, leastwise, not one

good enough, not in heavy traffic anyway. Aberdeen didn't come to Kentucky to drive the bus; but to his credit, he took on the challenge. And for someone who hadn't played the point, he did a pretty good job. I imagine BBN felt more comfortable with the ball in his hands, than in the hands of any of the other Wildcats. Oweh's a great player and will go down in Wildcat history as one of the better ones, but he was as prone to dribble the ball off his foot as he was to finish at the rim. Again, he often found himself attempting to fill a position, one in which he wouldn't ordinarily have been. Going forward, Coach Pope has his work cut out, especially without yet having filled a single vacancy for next year. BBN will be watching intently.

As for "House Divided," Louisville appears to have had the better season when comparing the two programs, despite both teams going down in the second round of the tournament. The Cards' win over the Cats early in the season cements their case for supremacy this year. But take heart BBN, there's always next year... if Pope can only find someone to drive the bus.

LEGALS

LEGAL NOTICE

Any person knowing the identity and whereabouts of the unknown spouse of Anna Louise Miracle is requested to provide such information by calling or writing to Hon. Tammy E. Howard, (606) 666-4474 or 4476,, Howard & Howard, Attorneys at Law, P.O. Box 992, Jackson, Kentucky 41339.

BID NOTICE

The Owsley County Fiscal Court is accepting bids on a railing and cribbing job located on Upper Lower Wolf Creek Road. Bids will be taken until 4:00 p.m. on April 13, 2026 and will be opened at the Fiscal Court Meeting being held that evening. We reserve the right to reject any or all bids. Please contact Road Foreman Willard Thomas at 606-567-0067 for location and details pertaining to the job.

Undersigned Tanya Tirey and Tammy King appointed administrators March 5, 2026 of the estate of the deceased Mary Elizabeth Botner Herald, late in Owsley County Booneville, KY on November 6th 2025. Any person having claims against said estate are hereby notified to present same, verified according to law, to said Tanya Tirey or Tammy King Booneville, KY. Window to present closes September 5th, 2026.



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ADVERTISEMENT FOR REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The Kentucky River Area Development District (KRADD), located in Hazard, Kentucky, on behalf of the City of Beattyville, is seeking qualified contractors to provide window assessment, repair, and replacement services for the Beattyville WPA Building Window Project, located at 337 Main Street, Beattyville, Kentucky.

The purpose of this solicitation is to obtain proposals that include multiple pricing scenarios for the evaluation, repair, rehabilitation, and/or replacement of existing windows at a historic municipal building constructed in 1939 by the Works Progress Administration (WPA). The city intends to evaluate different treatment approaches consistent with historic preservation best practices.

This project is anticipated to be funded in whole or in part through an EPA Brownfields Cleanup Cooperative Agreement. Contract award and project implementation are contingent upon funding availability and compliance with applicable federal, state, and local requirements. All work performed under any resulting contract must comply with applicable federal regulations, including but not limited to 2 CFR Part 200, DavisBacon Act requirements, and Build America, Buy America provisions, as applicable.

An RFP packet containing project information, scope of work, and selection criteria may be obtained by contacting Jennifer McIntosh, Associate Director of Community and Economic Development, Kentucky River Area Development District, by phone at 606-436-3158 or by email at jennifer@kradd.org.

Proposals from interested firms will be accepted until 4:00pm on Friday, April 24, 2026. Proposals must be submitted as five (6) hard copies and delivered in a SEALED envelope or

SEALED box clearly marked: "SEALED PROPOSAL- Beattyville WPA Building Window Project"

Proposals must be submitted to:
Kentucky River Area Development District
Attn: Jennifer McIntosh
941 N Main Street
Hazard, KY 41701

Questions regarding this solicitation must be submitted in writing by email no later than Monday, April 13, 2026; 4:00pm. Responses, if issued, will be provided by addendum to the City of Beattyville's website, by April 17, 2026; 4:00pm.

This solicitation is being conducted to fulfill the procurement requirements of federal funding agencies, including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The City of Beattyville and the Kentucky River Area Development District are Equal Opportunity Employers and encourage participation by all qualified firms. Minority-owned, women-owned, small, and disadvantaged businesses are encouraged to submit proposals.