

Voted Kentucky's best weekly Sports Column



"Big Red Bird Flies toward Eastern Kentucky"

By Derek Fugate
Times-Voice Sports
Photos: Derek Fugate



Isaac McKneely with the three-pointer

Hey Cards fans, I assume you're still celebrating the big 41-point road win at Pittsburgh, and rightfully so. Yet, don't look at the rankings this week as Louisville fell for the third week in a row and now sits barely in the Top-25 at No. 23. Why is this you ask? It was all based on the home loss to Virginia, a game Louisville was favored in. The rest of the ACC is so down that an incredible 100-59 road win at Pittsburgh doesn't help the Cards from sliding, and I assumed this would happen if you recall me writing about this earlier in the season.

Louisville doesn't have any games this week, just Virginia Tech this Saturday at the KFC Yum! Center. The Hokies are surprisingly higher in the RPI than Louisville at 30, while Louisville sits at 39. I assume the Hokies are just not getting respect from the voters as it's quite odd they're not receiving any votes this week, despite the high RPI.

A lot of the problem right now is that there are just so many teams bottlenecked with



12-6 records, that it's hard to decipher the good from the mediocre. This is the part of the season where a lot of the field of teams get separated by just a few wins or losses. Take Vanderbilt for example, the Commodores were undefeated at 15-0 and ranked No. 10 just a couple weeks ago, but now are suffering a three-game losing streak, while most recently getting blown out by Arkansas 93-68. This is a team facing yet another road game this Saturday, and with another loss could actually drop out of the rankings that quickly.

I know I've talked about the "bucket being full" theory last week, but whenever you lose so many consecutive games it really catches the eyes of the voters, especially if you're a highly ranked team in the limelight. This is why it's so hard every year for lower tier basketball teams such as

Cincinnati, Colorado, Missouri, Virginia Tech, Creighton etc... to get into the NCAA Tournament, but when they do, they can all make a deep run, even as an 8-11 seed.

Louisville's next two games are highly important, as after Virginia Tech the Cardinals fly to Cameron Indoor Stadium with another match-up with the Duke Blue Devils. If the Cardinals suffer the same fate as the Commodores did last night to the Razorbacks, and Kentucky can win its next two home games this week, its strange to think that Kentucky will be ranked and Louisville not.

If Mikel Brown Jr. doesn't return for the Cardinals, I really feel this team will continue sliding down the rankings. You live and die by the three-pointer, its a gamble but you just have to hope you keep making them. Go Cards!

"All's well that ends well"

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



Denzel Aberdeen blocking the shot

Just when you're ready to give up on the Wildcats, and justifiably so after witnessing some of the worst basketball ever played in a Kentucky uniform, Kentucky has reeled off three remarkable wins reviving hope in Big Blue Nation (BBN). Each of those three most recent wins coming over Mississippi State, LSU and Tennessee was sort of a microcosm of the season itself, exemplified by a slow start only to see Coach Pope's Wildcats grasp victory from the jaws of defeat with a late exhilarating surge, opposed to snatching defeat from the jaws of victory, as was the case with Kentucky's disappointing home-loss to Missouri.

As of this writing, Monday morning after Kentucky's improbable win over Tennessee, BBN is feeling pretty good about the Wildcats' chances going forward, as opposed to the Monday morning after losing by 35 to Gonzaga in Nashville. Kentucky fans feel much better today than they did after losing to Michigan State by 17 in primetime, much as they felt after practically giving the game to North Carolina, losing by three at home. They still haven't forgotten about their chance to better Louisville in the closing seconds in the Yum! Center after trailing by 20 earlier.

In the same manner in which BBN is feeling elation today with brighter hopes for its team, as opposed to how it felt not long ago, figuring its Wildcats

had surrendered all hope of making the field of 68 and possibly not even being selected for the NIT, Kentucky fans have experienced the same range of emotion in each of the Wildcats' past three wins. Falling behind early to Mississippi State by 12, appearing as a team lost in the woods, Kentucky roared back to win by 24. Going to the break in Baton Rouge, trailing the Tigers by 18 and on the verge of being blown out by a non-ranked team after playing embarrassingly bad, Malachi Moreno's buzzer-beater, coming off a most improbable pass from Chandler, stunned not only those dressed in purple and gold, but the college basketball world as well, capping off a comeback reminiscent of Kentucky's 31-point comeback in February of 1994, another Mardi Gras Miracle.

And then again in Knoxville Saturday, BBN witnessed a discombobulated Wildcat team struggle throughout the first half,

trailing by as much as 17, only to regroup at the half-time break to battle back against a ranked Volunteer team on its home court to take its first lead with only 34 seconds remaining in the game on a steal by Chandler and ensuing layup from Otega Oweh. Kentucky prevailed 80-78.

With 18 games having been played, Kentucky (12-6 overall, 3-2 SEC) has 13 remaining on its schedule prior to the SEC Tournament and postseason play. The past three exhilarating Kentucky wins have come in the first three games of the second half of the season. Keep in mind second halves have been favorable for the Wildcats of late, and with Kentucky's 3-0 start, BBN has renewed hope that all's well that ends well.



LEGALS

Lee County Board of Education
Regular Meeting Dates for 2026

Month	Meeting Date
January	January 13
February	February 10
March	March 10
April	April 14
May	May 12
June	June 9
July	July 14
August	August 11
September	September 8
October	

October 13
November
November 10
December
December 8

Regular monthly meetings are scheduled for the second Tuesday of each month at 6:00pm in the Central Office facility located at 242 Lee Avenue, Beattyville. It is sometimes necessary to change the scheduled meeting dates due to unavoidable circumstances. When this happens, rescheduling information will be communicated on the district's webpage at lee.kyschools.us. Meeting agendas will be posted to the website 24 hours in advance of the meeting. Individuals may ask for items to be added to the agenda by contacting Board Chair Donald R. Napier, Jr. at donald.napier@lee.kyschools.us or Lee County Schools Superintendent Earl Ray Shuler at earl.shuler@lee.kyschools.us.

The next Extension District Board Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 21st, 2026 at 5:00 pm. at the Owsley County Extension Office.

**INVITATIONS TO BID/REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS
LEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT**

The Lee County Board of Education is currently accepting sealed bids and/or requests for proposals for the following services and products:

Product/Service
Student Accident Insurance

Method
Request for Proposal

Duration
July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027
With Up To Two (2) Renewals

Closing Date
Friday, January 30, 2026 at 3:00pm EST

Information packets containing terms and conditions and instructions can be requested in person, by telephone, by mail or by email at the following:

Lee County Board of Education
242 Lee Avenue
PO Box 668
Beattyville, KY 41311
606-464-5072 (telephone)
shana.hudson@lee.kyschools.us (email)

Bids and proposals must be received at the location above by the closing date and time noted for each product/service in order to be considered.

The Lee County Board of Education reserves the right to reject any/all bids and submissions.

Legal Notice

Please take notice that the undersigned, Delmas Rolland Jr was on the 15th day of January 2026, duly qualified to serve as administrator of the estate of the deceased, Linda A. Marcum, late in Owsley County, Kentucky. Any person having claims against said estate are hereby notified to present same, verified according to law, to said Delmas Rolland Jr or Henley McIntosh, attorney for the estate on or before the 19th day of March 2026 and any person indebted to said estate are hereby requested to make payment to either of the above listed person.

Henley McIntosh
P.O. Box 848
Booneville, Kentucky 41314

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