

Voted Kentucky's best weekly Sports Column

LOUISVILLE No. 24

HOUSE DIVIDED

KENTUCKY No. 30

“Big Red Bird Flies toward Eastern Kentucky”

By Derek Fugate
Times-Voice Sports

Photos: Derek Fugate

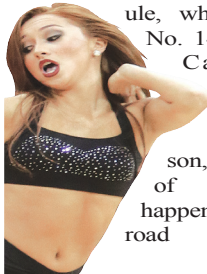


Louisville surprised me this week by staying in the AP Top-25 rankings at No. 24, despite the 31-point loss on the road to Duke last Monday. I assume this goes back to the “bucket being nearly full” theory, as its hard for teams to fall out once they’ve achieved the number of wins throughout the season.

Looking ahead, the only downfall to the remaining schedule for the Cardinals will be the lack of potential Quad-1 wins in the ACC. However, there should’ve been a big opportunity with a late February non-conference match-up with Baylor on the road, but this game has now lost its luster. The once highly anticipated marquee match-up with Coach Scott Drew’s Baylor is now just another game, as Baylor is unfortunately just 12-9 in the Big 12 Conference and 56 in the RPI.

So looking at this week, Louisville hosts Notre Dame Wednesday at the KFC Yum! Center, which will also be another Quad-3 opportunity, but Saturday the Cards will travel to Winston-Salem to face Wake Forest for a potential Quad-1 win.

The way I look at it, there are two ranked teams remaining on the Villes’ schedule, which are No. 14 North Carolina and No. 20 Clemson, both of which happen to be road games.



Khani Rooths with the fastbreak layup

Louisville will really need to win against one of these ranked teams, which will not be easy, but achieving this will prove they can beat a ranked team on the road and get a better seed in the NCAA Tournament in the process. Without one of these wins, Louisville would really need to win all of the other remaining games on its schedule.

Louisville is sitting at 15-6, just as dozens of other quality teams are in the other top conferences. This will be an interesting upcoming week as these teams will slowly separate from one another, (despite the bucket being nearly full).

One of the most interesting teams out there is Louisville’s rival Kentucky, which already has two major road wins over ranked teams; No. 25 Tennessee and No. 21 Arkansas. Louisville lost its opportunities against these same two ranked teams earlier this season, losing 62-83

to Tennessee and 80-89 to Arkansas.

So, “it is what it is,” and the season still hangs in the balance for many of the best teams around the country which are all working their way toward the NCAA Tournament, which is now just six weeks away.

On the bright side, this is good for the teams that are currently in-the-field from the mock bracketology out there. I’ve always noticed year after year that by mid-February the field of teams are pretty much set where they are and there isn’t much movement the rest of season.

That is unless there’s an extreme losing or winning streak of four or more straight either way. Some teams will surely be surprised on Selection Sunday.

So who will fall apart? Who will go on a huge winning streak? Time will tell, so enjoy the ride and we’ll catch up again next week. Go Cards!

“From Agony to Ecstasy”

By James David Fugate
Times-Voice Sports

Photos: Derek Fugate



Just when you’re ready to give up on the Cats; reducing their chances of making the field of 68 to that of any mid-mid-ranger, they bounce back renewing hopes of not only making the big dance, but potentially being the belle of the ball. Such has been the repeated case over and over again in this Jekyll and Hyde sort of basketball season.

A 46-point win over Eastern Illinois offset to a small degree the eight-point loss at Louisville, and then Kentucky’s 42-point shellacking of Loyola MD breathed new life into BBN after Sparty spanked the Cats in the Champions Classic in what was at one time Catlanta. A disappointing three-point home-loss to the Tar Heels, followed by a most embarrassing 35-point loss to Gonzaga in Nashville brought the music to a screeching halt, but then a big win over NC Central and a 12-point victory over the Hoosiers had BBN hitting the dance floor once again.

Perhaps the biggest disappointment for BBN was Coach Pope’s troops surrendering an eight-point lead late to lowly Missouri in Rupp on January 7th, proving that the New Year hadn’t turned over a new leaf. However, plans on razing Rupp for another downtown parking lot were averted with a five-game win streak, which included two improbable wins over LSU at home and Tennessee on the road. Both wins came miraculously in the game’s final seconds after Kentucky trailed with seemingly insur-



Pope instructing his team during a timeout

mountable deficits.

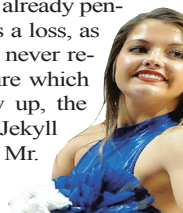
Nonetheless, Final Four hotel reservations were quickly cancelled a week later after Kentucky’s 25-point blowout loss to Vanderbilt in Nashville. The debacle was possibly the poorest performance this writer had ever seen by a Kentucky team. I told my counterpart on the other side of the page later that evening that Kentucky would be lucky to win another game, as any hopes of a postseason run had vanished, slowly sinking beneath the cold waters of the Cumberland River with the Commodores’ giving the Wildcats’ hopes a ceremonial burial at sea. It was over. We all knew it.

The only thing worse than the meltdown in Memorial Gymnasium would be the whipping Cal and his team would inflict on the Cats in Fayetteville with 19,200 fans itching to slop their Hogs with buckets full of rowdy revelry. After all, Arkansas was on a 17-game win streak in Bud Walton, including big wins over Louisville and Tennessee, as well as a 25-point win over Vanderbilt. Few, if any at all, gave Kentucky any chance to pull the upset, especially with another five-star point guard running the show for Coach Cal, as opposed to Kentucky, which didn’t have an avail-

able true point guard on its roster. Cal’s Karter Knox and Dajuan Wagner Jr. would have season-highs in points and rebounds, while Trent Noah would be schooled, proving that Cal had made the right call in not going after the Harlan County High School star while still the coach at Kentucky.

As it turned out Noah had more points (9) and rebounds (7) than Knox and Wagner combined (4-1), with Knox not scoring a single point while getting one rebound, while Wagner scored four points with no rebounds. Noah’s crowd-silencing three-pointer was emblematic of Kentucky’s 85-77 gritty-performance win, which once again renewed hopes in BBN higher than ever in this topsy-turvy season.

Will the pendulum swing the other way? Count on it. It’ll most likely swing back and forth from agony to ecstasy a few more times in Kentucky’s remaining nine-game campaign. The Wildcats will lose at least one they were surely expected to win, and they’ll win at least one BBN had already penciled in as a loss, as BBN can never really be sure which will show up, the good Dr. Jekyll or the evil Mr. Hyde.



LEGALS

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING
KY 11 RECONSTRUCTION
LEE COUNTY
ITEM NO. 10-292.40

THURSDAY, FEB. 5, 2026
5-7 P.M.

LEE COUNTY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
1665 HIGHWAY 11 SOUTH
BEATTYVILLE, KY 41311

The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) has scheduled a Public Information Meeting to present plans for the proposed KY 11 reconstruction project in Lee County. The project corridor extends from approximately 0.5 mile north of the KY 587 intersection to approximately 0.65 mile north of KY 52 in Beattyville and is part of a larger corridor improvement extending from Interstate 75 to the Mountain Parkway.

The purpose of this meeting is to share project information with the public and gather written input during the design and environmental phase of development. The project is intended to improve safety, upgrade roadway geometrics, and enhance regional connectivity along the KY 11 corridor.

This meeting will be informal and held in an open-house format. No formal presentation will be given, and participants may attend at any time between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. Attendees will be able to review maps and displays, obtain project information, and discuss the proposed improvements with members of the project team. Handouts and written comment forms will be available at the meeting.

Written comments may be submitted at the meeting or by mail or email through Feb. 19, 2026. All comments received will be reviewed and considered as the project continues through the design and environmental process. Right-of-way acquisition and construction schedules have not yet been established.

Questions or written statements may be addressed to:

Darren Back, P.E.
Project Manager
Kentucky Transportation Cabinet
District 10 Office
P.O. Box 621
Jackson, KY 41339
Phone: (606) 666-8841
Email: darren.back@ky.gov

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you have a disability for which the Transportation Cabinet needs to provide accommodations, please notify Darren Back, P.E. by calling (606) 666-8841. This request does not need to be in writing.

LEGAL NOTICE

Any person knowing the identity and whereabouts of the unknown spouse of David Myron Lutes, 4245 Highway 2017, Beattyville KY is requested to provide such information by calling or writing to Hon. Melissa C. Howard, (606) 666-4474 or 4476,, Howard & Howard, Attorneys at Law, P.O. Box 992, Jackson, Kentucky 41339.

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
LEE CIRCUIT COURT
CIVIL ACTION NO. 25-CI-00041
ELECTRONICALLY FILED

KENTUCKY HOUSING CORPORATION PLAINTIFF VS.
JASON K. GROSS et al. DEFENDANTS NOTICE OF SALE

Pursuant to and in compliance with the Judgment and Order of Sale of the Lee Circuit Court, the Master Commissioner will offer for Sale at public outcry the following described property located in Lee County, Kentucky:

Property Address: 2097 Pine Grove Road, Beattyville, KY 41311
PVA Parcel No: 041-00-00-026.03

Said sale shall take place on the following date and at the following location:
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, at 12:30 p.m.
AT THE FRONT DOOR OF THE LEE COUNTY COURTHOUSE
256 MAIN STREET, BEATTYVILLE, KENTUCKY

Said property shall be sold to raise the amounts hereinafter set forth, together with interest and the costs of the action, and the following terms and conditions:

1. At the time of the sale, the successful bidder shall either pay cash or make a deposit of at least ten (10%) percent of the purchase price with the balance on credit for thirty (30) days. In the event of default by the purchaser the ten percent (10%) deposit made by the purchaser shall be applied to any costs and/or expenses of this action. In the event the successful bidder elects to credit the balance, he or she will be required to post bond and furnish an acceptable surety or sureties thereon. Said bond shall be for the unpaid purchase price and bear the interest rate of five percent (5%) per annum from the date of sale until paid. Any purchaser or purchasers shall have the privilege of paying said bond before maturity by paying the principal together with all accrued interest. The bond shall have the force and effect of a judgment in order to secure the payment of the balance of the purchase price and said bond shall constitute a prior and superior lien on the property until paid. No bond or earnest money shall be required if the Plaintiffs are the purchasers and the bid is less than their adjudged lien.
2. All delinquent property taxes shall be paid from the proceeds of the sale. The purchaser shall be required to assume and pay all ad valorem taxes assessed by the County of Lee and State of Kentucky for the current year and all subsequent years. The property shall further be sold subject to any delinquent State, County and/or city real estate taxes sold pursuant to the provisions of KRS Chapter 134 to any private purchaser during the pendency of this action.
3. The property shall otherwise be sold free and clear of any right, title, and interest of all parties to the action and of their liens and encumbrances thereon, and all existing liens recorded after the recording of the Plaintiff’s Lis Pendens Notice, excepting and subject to, however, easements, restrictions, stipulations and covenants of record in the Lee County Clerk’s office, any facts which an inspection and accurate survey of the property may disclose and any assessments for public improvements levied against the properties.
4. The risk of loss and the right of possession of the real estate and any improvements thereon shall pass to the purchaser upon confirmation of sale by the Lee Circuit Court.

FURTHER INFORMATION REGARDING THE PROPERTIES AND/OR SALES THEREOF CAN BE FOUND IN THE LEE CIRCUIT COURT CLERK’S OFFICE BY THE FILE NAME AND NUMBER FOR EACH SALE, THE LEE COUNTY PROPERTY VALUATION ADMINISTRATOR’S OFFICE, AND THE LEE COUNTY CLERK’S OFFICE. PROSPECTIVE BIDDERS ARE ADVISED AND ENCOURAGED TO REVIEW ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE AT THESE LOCATIONS FOR MORE DETAILS OF THE PROPERTIES OR SALE, AS THE MASTER COMMISSIONER HAS NO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND DOES NOT WARRANT TITLE TO THE PROPERTY TO BE SOLD. THE PROPERTY SALES, IF MORE THAN ONE IS SCHEDULED FOR A PARTICULAR DAY, WILL OCCUR SEQUENTIALLY AT THE APPOINTED HOUR.

This the 3rd day of February, 2026.
/s/ Patrick E. O’Neill
PATRICK E. O’NEILL
MASTER COMMISSIONER
LEE CIRCUIT COURT