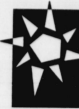


KENTUCKY Kernel



WEATHER Sunny this afternoon, high near 70. Cloudy tonight, low of 55. Clear and warm tomorrow, high of 70.

LOST IN STUPIDITY The latest movie-used-to-be-TV show, 'Lost in Space' fails to upstage the show. See *Diversions*, page 4.



MoN

April 6, 1998

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UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY, LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY

INDEPENDENT SINCE 1971

Turning the Page



Library opens new UK chapter

By Stacy Dixon
Contributing Writer

It's been a long time coming, but the William T. Young Library finally opened for business Friday.

The library opened its doors to a host of hoopla. The University Choral sang, and the UK Trumpet Ensemble played. A host of dignitaries celebrated the opening of the \$58 million library.

More than 1,500 people

attended the ceremony and saw what students, faculty and staff at UK have been waiting for.

Melanie Cruz, Student Government Association president, said it was worth the wait.

"It's fabulous" Cruz said. "There's such a commitment to higher education and academic excellence. It's very apparent with how many people are here and all of the associates that have been involved with it."

"The Gaines', Father Heshburgh and the Young family are

all exceptional individuals willing to give their money and their hard work and efforts to make this University a Top 20 research institution and provide not only a gift to the University of Kentucky, but to the Commonwealth of Kentucky."

The theme of the dedication was not only to praise the opening of the new library, but to celebrate a gift to the commonwealth.

See LIBRARY on 3



PHOTOS BY MATT BARTON Kernel staff

Students awestruck by structure

By Kelly O'Bryan
Contributing Writer

Awesome is the word UK students used for the new William T. Young Library. As students walked through the new library, they were amazed at the size and design of UK's newest landmark building.

The library is 365,000 square feet and has 37 miles of shelf space.

"It reminds me of one of those puzzle models," said Zachary Clark, an architecture senior.

Students flocked to the new library Friday to get a glimpse at the building they've been waiting so long for.

Clint Copenhaver, a secondary English education junior, said, "This is a really amazing facility. I just wonder if it would be equally amazing if it had been completed before I was getting ready to graduate."

The library has a 150-seat lecture room, a café overlooking the lawn, 4,000 seats wired for Internet connection and electrical outlets, 21 study group rooms, 23 reading rooms and 467 carrels

for faculty and students. The computer lab is located in the basement.

All five floors open up to the center where you can overlook the main floor of the library. The glass top and all the windows help the library to be illuminated by natural light.

Students at the dedication ceremony were able to hear the dedicatory address from Rev. Theodore Heshburgh, President Emeritus of the University of Notre Dame. In his address,

See REACTION on 3



LIBRARY OF DREAMS

Judy Wiza, a reference librarian, (top) held up a sign to lead a guided tour Friday for the thousands that were present to open the William T. Young Library. This afternoon will be the official UK faculty, student and staff open house from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Board to decide fate of elections today

By Aaron Sanderford
Campus Editor

The fate of a president and an election now rests in the hands of three students.

Matt Warnock, Jon Dvorak and Kelly Wesley will decide the merit of three claims filed against last month's Student Government Association elections and 13 claims filed against individual candidates.

Warnock, Dvorak and Wesley are members of the five-person Student Government Association Elections Board of Claims, the

executive branch body responsible for resolving election disputes. The fourth member, Melissa Henke, was out of town visiting law schools, and the fifth member, Katie Conrad, resigned Thursday.

Despite personnel problems, written decisions on each claim will be released today.

The board could rule to overturn the entire election or individual races.

President-elect Nate Brown faces the stiffest test. Half of the 16 claims filed allege campaign violations against his camp.

Two claims state that Brown

campaigned in a campaign-free zone at the Student Center. Others allege that he, or an agent of his campaign, used chalk to advertise on campus streets.

Two say he, or an agent, used shoe polish to advertise his campaign on the car of a stranger. The final one alleges Brown's brother, Roger, campaigned for Nate near the voting booth at the M.L. King Library.

Brown attacked the Board of Claims' interpretation of the SGA Constitution at the start of his testimony last night.

He called the three-member quorum "arbitrarily defined" and

said the group needed SGA Senate approval to make a decision with so few members in attendance. But Brown was corrected by Wesley, the chairwoman of the board, who used Roberts' Rules of Order to define quorum as a majority. Three members was, therefore, a quorum, she said.

Brown continued arguing constitutional issues until he was cut off by Warnock and reminded of the appeals procedure. Any board decision can be appealed to the SGA Supreme Court for constitutional interpretation.

See ELECTIONS on 2

Diagnosis: UK's team best in medical bowl

By Jennifer Metcalf
Staff Writer

For some students, "getting buzzed" takes on a whole new meaning.

Three students from UK's Physicians Assistants Program recently beat out teams from top schools to compete at the national level in a game show-style academic competition. The event challenged PA students with questions that resembled those

they will face on their qualifying exams, then required them to hit a buzzer to signal their response.

At the Southeast Regional Medical Challenge Bowl on March 28, UK's team competed against schools from Virginia, Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, West Virginia and Maryland. Prestigious universities such as Emory and Tulane vied for the honor. UK sent two

See TEAM on 2

"Nonetheless, this library is the most exciting of buildings in all of the world of libraries and universities."

Rev. Theodore Hesburgh
featured speaker

KEY TO THE FUTURE
UK President Charles Wethington received a key to the new William T. Young Library, which was officially opened Friday afternoon. More than a thousand dignitaries, students and community members attended the dedication. Guided tours will be available today for members of the University community.



Library

Ceremony highlighted by talks from Young, Rev. Hesburgh

From PAGE 1

William T. Young, who donated \$5 million to get the fundraising campaign started, wants the new library to be used by everyone in Kentucky.

"Today, we are here for the dedication of this magnificent library which will serve not just the University of Kentucky, but all the colleges and universities and other major libraries in the commonwealth," Young said. "It will become a major state asset."

Young went on to praise UK President Charles Wethington, saying, "It was his vision, integrity and determination that made this library a reality. It will be his legacy to the University and to the state."

Wethington shared Young's view that the library will reach out to not only the students and faculty, but to the whole state.

"This new library facility will really open up opportunities to people throughout the state in ways they may not have even known about before," Wethington said.

The keynote speaker was Rev. Theodore Hesburgh, president Emeritus of the University of Notre Dame. Hesburgh, member of more than 90 boards, councils and organizations, knows what it is like to get a library started and can appreciate the end result.

"The size of this library is impressive," Hesburgh said. "Nonetheless, this library is the most exciting of buildings in all of the world of libraries and universities."

Wethington, Young and Paul Willis, director of UK Libraries, cut the blue ribbon officially opening the library shortly after noon.

Following the dedication, everyone in attendance was invited to a reception that served everything from sandwiches to cookies.

There were guided tours. On the fifth floor, 64 donated quilts make up the Wade Hall Quilt Collection.

Visitors, faculty and students were all invited to look around the library and take a look at their new home for information.

"I'm anxious to see how the faculty and students will react to it as they use it," Willis said. "It's been designed to be a user friendly building. My satisfaction will come from seeing it used."

The library is ready to use, but only the computer labs, audio visual labs and study rooms are open.

The library was built with students and faculty in mind. Willis said the new library will better serve students by putting all of the books in the Library of Congress classification.

"In the old building, books and journals are in 17 different levels," he said. "Here we have books and journals on three floors."

Aside from shelf space, the W.T. Young Library has more than 200 computers for students to use, and portable PC's can be checked out as well.

Students will still need to go to Margaret I. King for books. They won't be moved out until after classes are finished for the semester.

M.I. King will become a Fine Arts Library and a science library once remodeled.

"What a wonderful dream," Hesburgh said on Friday. "What a project, what a great idea that has now been fulfilled on this day. How can we be grateful enough to be part of this University?"

Reaction

Students use the 'awesome' to express amazement over library

From PAGE 1

Hesburgh congratulated the students and the people of Kentucky for their new wonderful library. Hesburgh said the first word that came to mind was "wow," and the second, "awesome."

Economics sophomore Luke Riddle was overwhelmed with the new library. He said it was "awesome, and it was neat to see Rev. Hesburgh of Notre Dame speak at the dedication of our library."

Many students were very excited to study in the new library.

"It's beautiful and there is so much room," said Heather Korten, a kinesiology sophomore. "The tables all over the library with the outlets for computers is great, now we will be able to research on the Internet from wherever we are studying."

"It seems like an awesome facility," said Jennifer Turner, an accounting sophomore. "I'm just worried about learning to use it."

Many other students echoed her sentiments, saying they just learned Margaret I. King and now have to learn the new library. But few are really complaining.

"The library is great, it was definitely worth waiting for," said nursing sophomore Ann Schroder.

Many students share her opinion. The library has many state-of-the-art touches that make everything easier to find and use.

Marc Samuel, a management and finance sophomore, said he's very excited about the library being so close to South Campus.

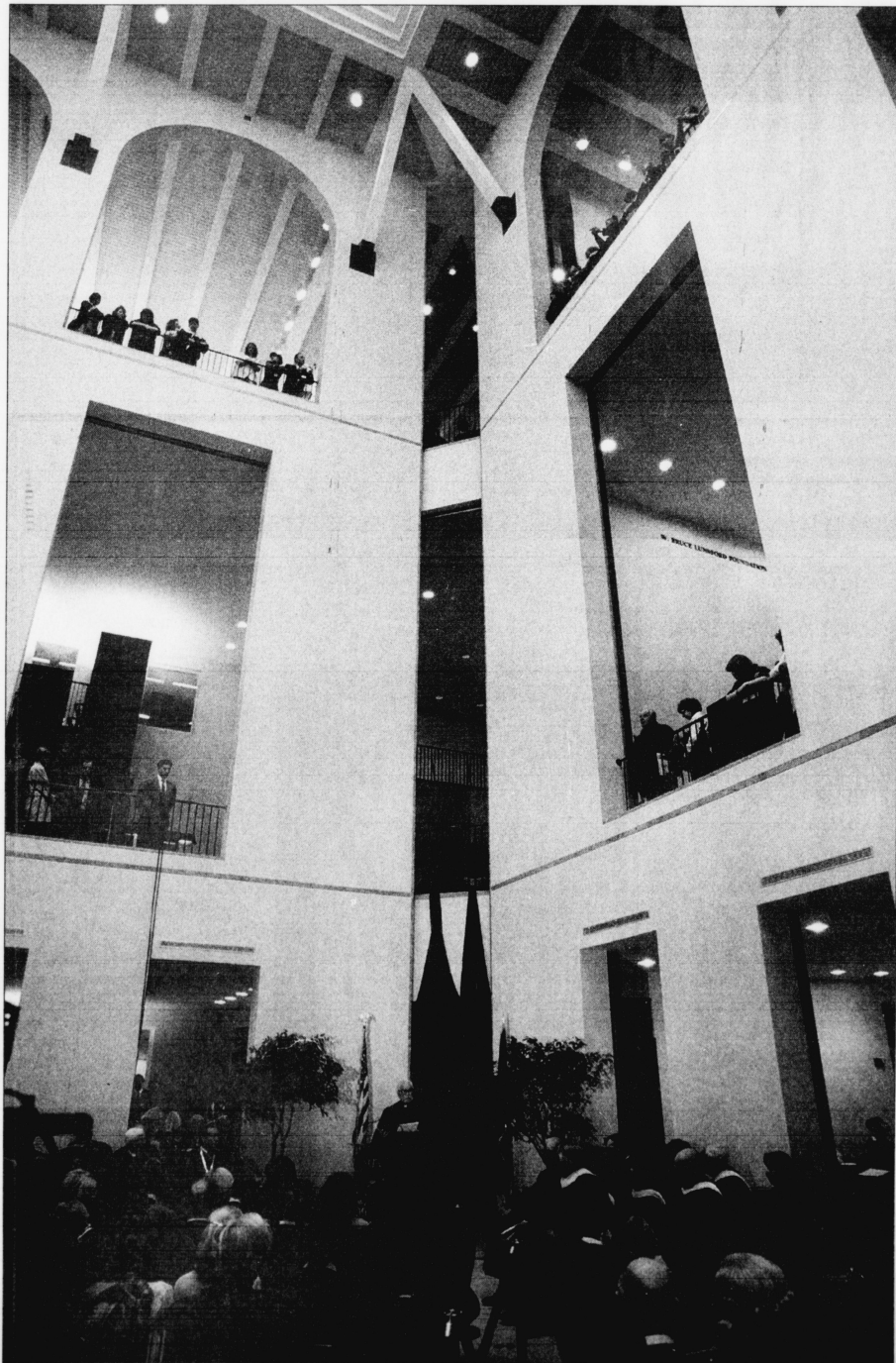
"It's much more accessible for students on South Campus," he said. "Maybe now people will be more motivated to go to the library. It was too far to go all the way to M. I. King."

Matthew Johnson, an agricultural economics freshman, said the computer lab is the best feature of the library.

"I'm glad to have a resource center on South Campus that will be big enough to accommodate all of the students," Johnson said.

The library will be open Monday-Thursday from 8 a.m. to 9:30 p.m., Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. The computer labs close 15 minutes before the library.

This schedule is effective until June 10, the end of the four-week intercession. Books are scheduled to be moved into the new library by the end of the intercession.



PHOTOS BY MATT BARTON Kernel staff

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Major Professor: Dr. Douglas G. McManus
Date: April 6, 1998
Time: 10:00 a.m.
Place: 601A Chandler Medical Center

Name: Michael McGrath
Program: Spanish & Italian
Dissertation Title: Dramatic Activity in Seventeenth Century Segovia: Study and Documents
Major Professor: Dr. John J. Allen
Date: April 6, 1998
Time: 4:00 p.m.
Place: 601A Chandler Medical Center

Name: Christopher B. Japunt
Program: Geography
Dissertation Title: Geopolitics and Environmental Security: A Case Study of Japan's Environmental Aid to Indonesia
Major Professor: Dr. P. P. Kinn
Date: April 5, 1998
Time: 10:00 a.m.
Place: Miller Hall Bldg

Name: Tara M. Brand
Program: Agricultural Engineering
Dissertation Title: Heterocyclics and Growth of High Iron Growth Yeast Under Thermal Stress
Major Professor: Dr. Gary W. Turner
Date: April 7, 1998
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DiVersions

GeLost

By Jonathan D. Gent
Staff Writer



STAR TREK 'Friends' actor, Matt LeBlanc, stars in the latest TV-show-gone-Hollywood, 'Lost in Space.' It plays at Woodhill, Southpark and Turfland.

"Danger Will Robinson!" Another vintage television series has been recycled into Hollywood tripe. Wait a minute, that's a generalization, because not all television shows turned into movies recently have been awful. *The Addams Family* was pretty good, and *The Brady Bunch* had its perks.

For all of the good, there has been a lot of bad. *The Beverly Hills Cop* and *Leave it to Beaver* both come to mind, and please don't get me started on helicopters flying into tunnels while hooked to trains.

So, *Lost in Space* is neither the first nor the last old small screen hit to move to the big screen. The story of the Robinson family, the evil stowaway Doctor Smith, and the loving robot is well-known to everyone, but this time a little twist has been put on the old story, involving a time machinery.

Updates happen, but it's how the film adjusts to the present that usually figures in its success.

Of course, movies always leave questions to be answered. Can Will Robinson — boy genius — annoy the hell out of the audience like he did in the series? Will Dr. Smith get what's coming to him? Will Matt LeBlanc prove that a cast member of "Friends" other than Courteney Cox have a box office winner? And precisely what the hell is Mimi Rogers doing in this movie?

This film has a very bizarre cast. William Hurt (last seen in *Dark City*), is normally known for his critically acclaimed roles.

Heather Graham (last seen looking gorgeous in anything) has a reputation for small, independent films (and *License to Drive*). Lacey Chabert, the final "Party of Five" chick to journey to the big

screen, joins LeBlanc as the television alumni. Finally, Gary Oldman plays the sniveling Dr. Smith (let's see his stellar accents save him now).

Oldman as well as the rest of the cast goes down swinging, that's for sure. In a film where special effects should save the day, they take away from it. Special effects are supposed to make things look real, right? Thought so. These don't do that, they just look like effects, kind of like *Highlander 2*. Hopefully the new *Star Wars* films don't look like this.

This film is built to be a blockbuster, with the spectacular (although weird) cast, but especially behind the scenes. The screenwriter is Akiva Goldsman, the man responsible for that deluge called *Batman Forever*, and the nail in the coffin of the caped crusader, *Batman and Robin*. Can't wait until he kills Superman.

Stephen Hopkins is the director responsible for *The Ghost and the Darkness*, *Blown Away*, and one of the *Nightmare on Elm Street* movies (like it matters which one).

Between the two of them, they've destroyed a comic book movie franchise, made Tommy Lee Jones sing U2 in an Irish brogue, almost let Jim Carrey get upstaged by Chris O'Donnell, and brutally ripped apart Michael Douglas (that's actually a good thing).

In updating the storyline, they've caused dysfunction to run rampant, and with its inferior writing, left the film to depend solely on its special effects.

The major problem as said above is the special effects could just as easily be found on an Etch-a-Sketch.

They lost one entire sub-plot to allow for a sequel, which unfortunately, will probably happen.

This movie isn't even fun to watch in a special-effects laden, science-fiction, high-speed visceral way. If not for the acting, this movie could really drop off the face of the Earth, and really, get lost.

MOVIE review
★★
(out of five)
'Lost In Space'
New Line

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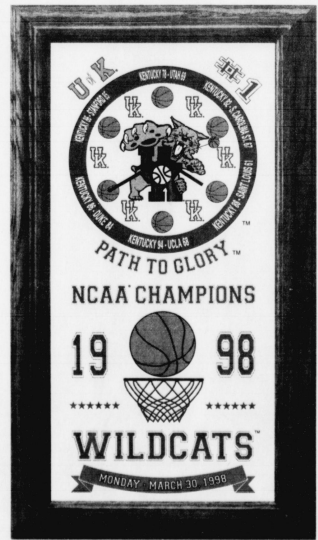
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SPORTS

Gators get offensive over UK

Florida scores 64 runs in three-game series vs. Cats

By Mike Heppermann
Staff Writer

The Florida Gators proved this weekend why they lead the Eastern Division of the Southeastern Conference and are ranked fifth in the country.

Florida scored 64 runs in a three-game series against UK at Cliff Hagan Stadium to make one wonder if football season started early this year. The Gators' 63 hits helped them sweep UK for the second year in a row.

The Gators beat the Cats 12-2 yesterday in their lowest run total of the series, handing the Wildcats their fourth loss in a row and sixth in a row in the SEC.

Florida leadoff hitter Mark Ellis set the pace early in yesterday's game by ripping a home run off UK starter Brandon Webb in the top of the first inning.

Webb pitched the first six innings and gave up nine hits and

seven runs, picking up his second loss of the year. Ellis' leadoff dinger didn't discourage him, though.

"That first solo shot didn't really mean anything," Webb said. "It was the late ones that hurt us."

The first "late" one came from Greg Catalanotte in the top of the fifth. His two-run shot extended the Florida lead to 7-2. When the smoke cleared, the Gators had six home runs and 14 hits. They scored at least one run in all but two innings.

After Ellis' homer, UK kept Florida at bay in the first. The Cats used three singles in the bottom of the inning to take a 2-1 lead. It would be the last time UK would score.

The Cats' nemesis was starting Gator All-American pitcher Brad Wilkerson. Wilkerson, an Owensboro native, allowed only five hits and shut out UK over the next four innings.

UK head coach Keith Madison

thought the rest of the game should have mirrored the first inning for the Cats.

"We sort of let (Wilkerson) off the hook," Madison said. "We had men on base in the second and third and Wilkerson wasn't as sharp as he usually is at that point."

"We weren't aggressive enough at the plate, and we allowed him to get into a rhythm," he said.

Florida's starting pitcher on Friday, Matt McClendon, couldn't find quite the same rhythm in the first game of the series. He allowed six hits and eight runs, but that didn't matter because UK pitchers couldn't find their rhythm either.

The Cats used five pitchers to try and contain the Gators, with none lasting longer than three- and one-third innings. Tim Rowland started for UK and gave up five runs on five hits, picking up his first loss of the year.

Despite scoring 10 runs on 10 hits, the Cats lost by 10 (20-10) while watching the Gators rip 23 hits. That was the highest number of hits given up by the

Cats all season. The record, however, stood for less than 24 hours.

Florida smacked 26 hits on Saturday in its 32-10 shellacking of the Cats. UK managed to shut out Florida in the first, but then the Gators exploded for 17 runs in the second inning alone.

An NCAA-record 20 consecutive batters reached base for Florida over two innings.

The Gators led 22-0 after two- and one-half innings, but the Cats refused to lay down and die.

The Wildcats had 16 hits and scored 10 runs over the next four innings, but couldn't overcome the overpowering Gators.

Florida quickly reverted to form, scoring five runs in the eighth and three runs in the ninth.

Madison said he hopes they can learn from the series. "I hope we learn that you have to pitch ahead in the count and stay ahead in the count," Madison said.

"We have to get batters out."

UK (12-20) will try to swing back into the win column starting at 6 p.m. on Tuesday at home against Morehead State.

SPORTSbytes

Cats complete first scrimmage

The UK football team wrapped up its first week of 1998 spring practice with a one-hour, 15-minute scrimmage Saturday afternoon in Commonwealth Stadium.

The first-team offense, under the direction of quarterback Tim Couch, tallied one touchdown and one field goal in four possessions against the first-team defense. Couch completed 9-of-15 passes for 137 yards and one TD, a 23-yard scoring strike to wide receiver Craig Yeast. Fullback Derek Homer gained 40 yards on six carries.

Back-up quarterback Matt Mumme, guiding a mix of first- and second-team offensive players, completed 6-of-11 passes for 89 yards in three possessions against the first-team defense.

Asked about the performance of his son Matt at quarterback, UK head coach Hal Mumme replied, "I was pleased with Matt. He and Tim (Couch) went against our No. 1 defense and I feel that he can make some positive plays for us."

In addition to Mumme, Couch

and Yeast, wide receiver Garry Davis also had a good day with four catches for 141 yards. Freshman fullback Mike Kamphake, who enrolled at UK in January, rushed for 38 yards on 11 carries in his first scrimmage action as a Wildcat.

The first-team defense allowed only 10 points on seven possessions and tallied six quarterback sacks.

"So far, spring practice has been more enjoyable (than last year)," Mumme said. "The players know more about what to expect and what is going on. The emphasis this year has been more about individual development because the players know the system."

UK has four more practices scheduled in the coming week. The Cats have two-hour workouts scheduled at 2:30 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday and Friday at the Nutter Training Facility. The team's second scrimmage is slated for Saturday at 11 a.m. at Commonwealth Stadium.

The Blue-White Spring Game completes spring practice on Saturday, April 25.

Cats compete in Georgia

Two Wildcats provisionally

qualified for the NCAA Championships as the UK men's and women's track and field squads ran wild at the University of Georgia's Spec Towns Invitational Saturday.

Ola Sesay provisionally qualified in the long jump with her first-place leap of 20 feet, 10 inches. Valerie Williams finished second with her mark of 19 feet, 5.75 inches.

Williams later returned to claim the top spot in the triple jump with a leap of 40 feet, 11.75 inches.

The second Wildcat to provisionally qualify was Latusha Shittu in the 100-meter hurdles. Shittu finished second with a time of 13.69 seconds in a wind-aided performance. Shonishia Johnson and Sesay finished third and fourth with respective times of 13.79 and 13.84 seconds.

On the men's squad, Christopher Daniel's first-place showing of 15 feet, five inches in the pole vault was a high mark for the UK team.

Jeffrey Ellis claimed the other UK individual crown for the men's squad with his 52.30 second performance in the 400-meter intermediate hurdles.

UK gymnastics finishes fifth

The UK gymnastics team (4-6, 2-3) took fifth out of seven places with a score of 192.150 at the NCAA Southeast Regionals Saturday.

The 24th-ranked GymKats, competing in Olympic order (vault, uneven bars, balance beam and floor exercise) led the competition after the second rotation with a combined score of 96.725. Ashley Burkholder, SEC Freshman of the Year, was the top vaulter among the GymKats with a score of 9.750. Junior Misty Marink was the top UK finisher on bars with a score of 9.875. On beam, senior Whitney Ellis scored a 9.750 and on floor Marink and Burkholder both scored a 9.775.

"Tonight was a disappointing way to finish the season," said UK coach Leah Little.

"We started (the regular season) good with rankings in the Top 10 but then we lost our top all-arounder (sophomore Kressy Hoerlein dislocated her left elbow in the meet against Alabama on Feb. 20) and we had other injuries. We did the best we could tonight and I am proud of the girls."

Compiled from staff reports.



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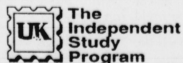
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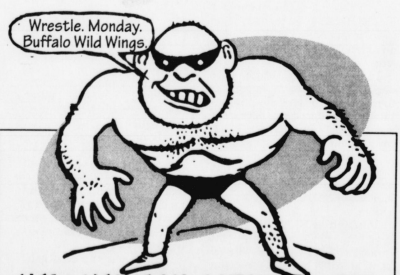
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Power play

It's a love/hate relationship we have with C.M. Newton.

We love it when he brings in coaches like Hal Mumme, Bill Curry, Rick Pitino and Tubby Smith.

We hate it that students still get the shaft when it comes to seating at Rupp Arena.

Today, however, we love him.

C.M. made a few calls last week that stopped a nasty little piece of legislation in its tracks. That is the power of UK basketball!

Are you taking notes, Dr. Wethington?

This specific piece of legislation was tucked into a crime bill and would have legalized ticket scalping in Kentucky. Who was the architect of this legislation?

State Sen. Tim Philpot, the same man who thought it necessary to videotape citizens as they entered an adult bookstore. "Nuff said.

Now we've all had moments when a little scalping would have gone a long way toward putting some much-needed cash in our pockets

or getting us into the latest Aerosmith concert.

However, opening the floodgates to scalpers will encourage brokers to take up residence right here in Lexington and make it easier for them to corner the market on tickets to sporting events and concerts.

So rather than opening up the market, it will constrict it and make it more difficult for "Joe Fan" to get tickets at a reasonable price.

In the case of UK basketball and football tickets, it would have become easier for the public to pick up an occasional ticket under legalized scalping; however, it would have reduced the incentives for those contributors to purchase season tickets and make hefty donations to keep those tickets.

Ultimately, the money generated by donors not only helps support a massive sports program, but also kicks in a hefty \$3 million annually for the new library.

As for die-hard capitalists, never fear. As long as there is UK basketball, there will be illegal scalping for "true blue" fans.

IN OUR OPINION

READERS' forum

Student slapped with dose of reality after championship

To the editor:

UK has done it again and we all know our parts, don't we? Let's go to the store, stock up on supplies and hang out with our friends in the streets until the wee hours of the dawn. Fellow students, I'm right there with you.

However, the championship night celebration took an unexpected twist for me. Separated from my friends, I decided to walk back to my apartment, near Kroger. Coming down one of the back streets I heard a woman yell for help and I investigated.

There was some guy trying to rape her and telling her to be quiet. He ran off when he saw that he'd been discovered and I walked with her until we were in a public place and she used her cell phone to arrange for a ride.

Talkback!

Cause of shooting a mystery

To the editor:

I, like Mr. Sandford, was raised in a household of guns. My father taught me to shoot around age 7, and to this day I can remember him lambasting me if the rifle or pistol even pointed in the general direction of a neighbor's house or farm.

I think Southern culture really doesn't have a major impact on the Jonesboro tragedy. Something else had to click. Perhaps it was the divorce of Mitch Johnson's parents.

We may never know.

The right mix of angst, determination and erosion of psychological controls can make anyone a killer.

If anything, I would rather have my child raised in the "Southern Gun Culture" where I know at least there is a good education in responsible gun use.

Eric Thigpen
undeclared sophomore

Michael Odell Walker
public service and leadership junior

Rabid squirrels plotting to take over, one nut at a time

Well, here I am shunning the "realities of scholastic life" once more to brave the mad-cap world of editorial journalism.

Recently, a brutally honest friend asked why I wrote such insane columns. She asked why I didn't write about serious issues.

I thought about it and realized the deep-down festering root of all my snide remarks and pointless ramblings. Why not?

Why should I write about the injustices of life? Were you unaware of them? Why should I advocate good clean living, equality for all, safe sex and the environment? Would it make a difference?

If I ever thought there would be one person who would read a column, realize the error of their ways and change into a good person, then I would put up my keyboard and never type again.

Just to spite those of you who read the Kernel in search of your latest thought, I'm going to write about a subject that, when measured up to the problems of the world, doesn't equal the pay of an English major (it's that small). I'm going to talk about squirrels.

Specifically, the UK squirrels, or as I like to call them, "furry little demons raining death and destruction from above." It's a long term, but I like it. Anyone who lives and walks around here has seen them, but very few have lived to tell the tale — pun intended.

I myself have been accosted by these fuzzy little hellspawn on three occasions. Each time the squirrels would stop, look at me, run up to hit my

shoe and then run away. I'm thinking this is some form of bizarre hazing ritual for a gang or a fraternity, same difference.

Of course, the odd behavior could be due to a band of psychotic squirrels that see my tall green decked out in brown boots and a green coat, thereby mistaking me for a random piece of foliage.

Others have had traumatic, therapy-inducing incidents with these cuddly balls of hate. I've heard several accounts of squirrels raining down nuts from above and I've also heard stories of squirrels using trees as primitive slingshots, hurling their bodies through the air to land on an unsuspecting student, but I didn't believe it. That is, until I saw a man attacked from above by a squirrel who grasped onto his head like it was the biggest acorn in the world. The furry beast made a hellacious sound as he rode the poor, huckling student. I think that squirrel had one too many fermented berries.



Nicholas James Walker
Contributing Columnist

John Wayne lost the fight against a common enemy

American legend, others lose battle for their very lives

He is the standard by which all men are measured. He is an American legend. He is John Wayne.

In more than 50 films, he faced countless foes and defeated them all, except for one relentless killer who stalked him for nearly two decades — cancer.

In his fight with cancer he lost a left lung (1963); filmed *The Sons of Katie Elder* with the aid of an oxygen mask between takes (1965); won an Oscar for best actor in *True Grit*, despite declining health (1969); played a dying gunslinger riddled with cancer in *The Shootist*, a role that foreshadowed his own death (1976); endured open-heart surgery (1978); and had his entire cancerous stomach removed months before his death (1979).

The Duke's life and death were played out on the silver screen; however, most cancer victims pass away unnoticed by the world.

All the while, tobacco companies continue to play grim reaper to the tune of 160,000 deaths this year as another 171,500 new cases of lung cancer will be diagnosed by year's end.

Just two years ago this May, I watched my grandmother slowly wither away from emphysema and complications brought on by a lifetime of smoking. Oddly enough, she worked for more than 20 years at the very tobacco company (Brown & Williamson) whose hospital plan paid for her final two months of life at Good Samaritan Hospital near campus.

Her decline was so gradual that it slipped by, virtually unnoticed for six months.

We didn't realize how ill she was until two months after our last Christmas (1995) together.

One night I was at a friend's wedding in Louisville when my beeper suddenly went wild with dozens of messages from my brother! An hour or so later, my girlfriend and I were sitting in an emergency room while everyone filled us in on what had happened.

She barely made it through that first night and struggled to breathe with aid of a respirator, as food was pumped directly into her body through a tube in her nose because she was too weak to eat on her own. Within a week, her arms were bruised all over from the repeated needle pricks.

The entire family soon learned that months earlier her regular doctor wanted to put her on oxygen at home to make up with her severely diminished lung capacity. She never told us about it, presumably to save us from the worry, but perhaps she'd still be with us today if she had.

I remember the last time I saw her. I was the only one with her in the room as my mom was probably outside smoking — of course. The TV was on and my grandmother was dozing off and on while I studied in the corner.

She finally mumbled some-

thing — she couldn't speak clearly or lift a pen to write — so I got up and went over to her bed.

She kept nodding her head towards the foot of her bed. It took a moment, but I finally realized that she was cold so I lifted the blankets over her body. She shook her head at me again and mumbled something so I removed the blankets and she promptly shook her head a third time.

So there I stood alone with no idea what to do. Back and forth we went again with the blankets and each time she shook her head more vigorously "no." We were both getting frustrated and I told her that I didn't know what she wanted. She was on the verge of tears. By dumb luck I finally understood that she wanted the bed sheet over her, but not the heavier blanket.

That was the last time I saw her and I can only hope that my children won't have to see one of their grandparents like that. I know that dying in such a manner — hooked up to machines, feeding tubes and a respirator — was her worst nightmare and I remember her pleading with us to take her home.

Looking back, we should have known there was a problem because her thinking was becoming fuzzy and she wouldn't even leave the house for a five-minute run to the bank to deposit her social security checks, all because she was suffering from a lack of oxygen, unknown to us.

She knew of her emphysema for more than a decade, but continued to smoke right up until her final hospitalization. Of course, such addiction is not uncommon in my family. Both of my grandfathers had alcohol problems and to this very day my mom continues to smoke, even after promising to quit when my grandmother died.

The addiction is so bad that a nurse once accused my mom of smoking in my grandmother's hospital room. At first, I didn't believe it.

I thought it must have been the deathly stench of smoke on her clothing that the nurse detected, but I later found out she had actually been smoking in the very room that kept my grandmother alive with an oxygen line. If that isn't scary, I don't know what is.

Of course, we shouldn't be surprised at the power of tobacco's appeal. The tobacco companies have spent decades crafting their messages, witholding research, denying the addictive and harmful nature of cigarettes, creating high-nicotine tobacco, targeting teens, women and minorities while flat out lying to the public.

Two years later the postman still delivers dozens of slick, colorful cigarette promotions addressed to her. The latest reads, "Enjoy Merit Ultra Lights on the deck of a luxury cruise ship as you visit the quiet fishing villages along the shore ..."

That's odd. I didn't know the dead could still enjoy a good smoke.



Todd Hash
Editor

Editorial Editor Todd Hash is a journalism senior. He can be reached at mtash1@pop.uky.edu.

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Then stand back and watch the carnage, but whatever we do, we'd better do it fast. Time is running out!

Have you ever walked through central campus early in the morning, still half asleep, and heard their insidious chatter? I'm sure they're plotting our demise.

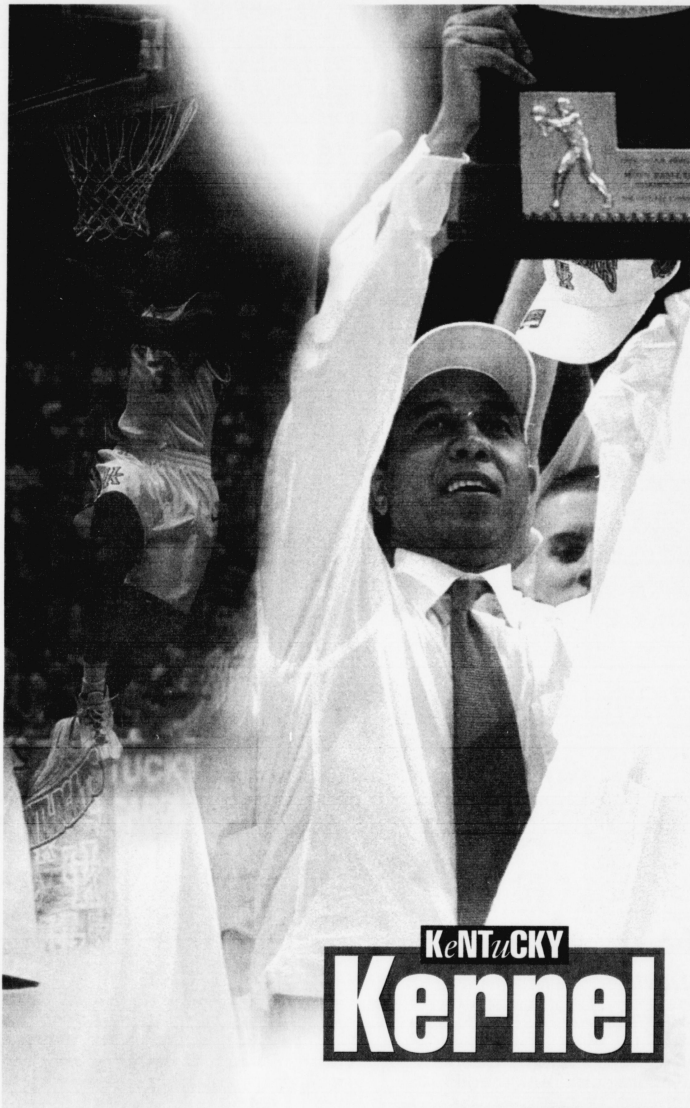
The only thing that has spared us so far is that opening doors would require opposable thumbs, the only true advantage we have over them.

Just you wait, they'll breed a better squirrel, an "uber-squirrel" if you will, and one day you'll awake, pinned down by acorns, unable to move as a squirrel sits on your belly wondering if you have a "nutty" flavor.

Sure, laugh while you can, but mark my words: in a secret lair, possibly in the basement of Funkhouser, the squirrels are plotting.

Contributing Columnist Nicholas James Walker is a nursing sophomore.

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