

KENTUCKY KERNEL

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UK dorm rape case to go before grand jury

Alice Haymond
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A UK police officer told a judge yesterday that Michael Strong admitted to having sex with a 17-year-old at Blanding Tower earlier this month.

Strong, who was clean-shaven and dressed in a shirt and tie, did not testify at a preliminary hearing in Fayette District Court, but Sgt. Robert McPherson said Strong told police he had consensual sex with the girl without knowing she was a minor.

The 21-year-old UK junior soccer player was arrested Feb. 4 on charges of first-degree rape. District Judge Megan Lake Thornton ruled to send the case to a grand jury in Fayette County Circuit Court to decide whether or not to indict Strong on the charge. The date of that hearing has not been set.

It is the kernel's policy not to identify victims of sexual crimes.

McPherson and the roommate of the girl's sister, who was with Strong and the girl on Feb. 2, the night of the alleged rape, answered a series of mostly yes-or-no questions during the hearing.

McPherson talked to the girl, her sister, her sister's roommate and Strong after the incident was reported. He and the roommate both testified that the girl was drunk the night of the rape. The girl told police she does not remember anything between leaving the bathroom at the bar where they were that evening and waking up at 9 the next morning.

McPherson testified that the sister and her roommate said they couldn't account for the time during the rape, but said the girl was passed out when they tried to wake her immediately afterward. Strong, however, told McPherson the girl had given consent and they removed each other's clothes.

The girl, a high school student from out of state, was at UK that weekend visiting her sister,

who is a freshman. Her sister had met Strong through a family friend early last semester, and the roommate told the court they had been to his residence several times before.

By all accounts, Strong picked up the girl, her sister and her sister's roommate that night, went to his residence and then to Blue Line Diner, an 18-and-older bar, before returning to the dorm.

Early Saturday morning, the group took a cab back to Blanding Tower where Strong told police he spent the night because he didn't want to walk home in the cold.

After returning to the dorm, the roommate and the sister helped the girl get ready for bed. She was not sick, but noticeably drunk, the roommate said.

Though she was not certain how much her friend had to drink, the roommate said the group took shots of vodka before going to the bar. She could not remember whether the girl continued to drink at the bar.

Later that night, the girl and her sister fell asleep in her sister's bed while Strong slept on the floor and her roommate slept in the other bed. During the night, Strong told police that he saw the girl's sister asleep on the floor and decided to get into bed with the girl.

Strong told police that after shaking the girl awake, he asked her if she wanted to have sex and she consented.

The girl's sister told police she woke up on the floor during the night and saw Strong on top of her sister in bed. She began yelling at Strong, telling him her sister was only 17.

After Strong left the dorm, the girl's sister and the roommate tried to wake the girl, but said she was unconscious.

McPherson testified that Strong was not surprised to see him at his door Sunday. McPherson said he only suggested that Strong accompany

See Strong on page 6

Students disagree on use of n-word

By Linsen Li
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Using the n-word is an act of ignorance, according to most of the audience members at an event discussing the word last night.

"Regardless of the speaker, the word should not be used, black male or not," said history freshman Rory Pope.

The event, titled "History of the N-word," was in the Martin Luther King Jr. Center.

Veleashia Smith, the center's director, first gave a brief overview of the history of the n-word.

The word was firmly established as a derogatory term in the early 1800s when it was also used against other ethnic groups, Smith said.

Both the Civil War and the Civil Rights Movement consolidated its negativity and made it exclusive to the black race, she said.

"Then came the hip-hop era, and thanks to NWA, we went from 'fight the power' to 'gin and juice' in three years," Smith said. "It also made the n-word acceptable to the hip-hop generation."

Smith said that the n-word itself is not offensive; it is the speaker's intention that makes it derogatory.

"No matter what, the word is just a word," she said. "It's the (speaker's) actions following the word that is damaging."

In contrast, Pope said the n-word itself is offensive.

"The historical origin of the word is completely negative," he said. "It was a racial slur slave owners used against our ancestors."

Lori Clemons, an elementary education junior, agreed the word should be abolished in everyday usage.

"Using the n-word is ignoring the cruel past of the African-Americans," she said. "It is wrong to be used under any circumstances."

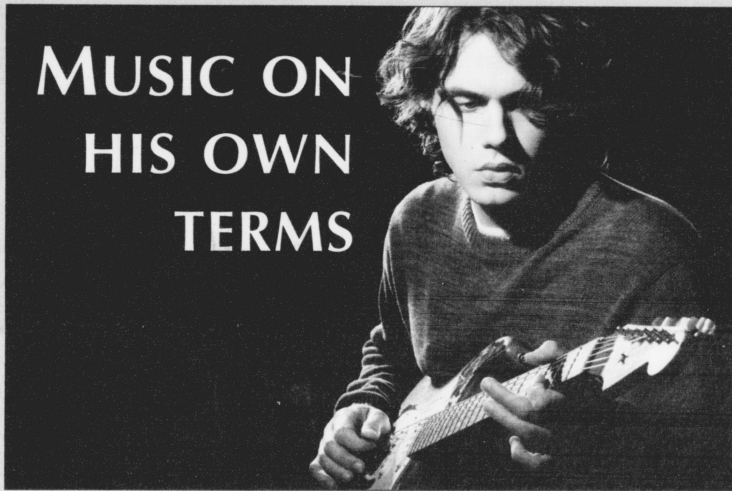
Even the young black hip-hop generation should not be allowed to glorify the n-word, Smith said.

"Some black people use the word and think it's empowerment to our race, but I say it's ignorance," Smith said. "We are not ignorant of our history, we are educated, and we mustn't degrade ourselves by using this word."

Clemons said she was surprised to see

See N-word on page 6

MUSIC ON HIS OWN TERMS



Musician John Mayer will play mostly songs from his new album, "Continuum," when he comes to Rupp Arena tomorrow at 8 p.m.

COURTESY OF COLUMBIA RECORDS

Grammy winner considers newest album his best

By Whitney Waters
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John Mayer may be known for singing bubble-gum pop songs and (maybe) dating Jessica Simpson, but Mayer doesn't want his talent to get lost in this pop-star persona.

Pop stars' talent is often overlooked in favor of their personal lives and media attention. But Mayer doesn't want to be just recognized as a celebrity, rather as a musician. He is waiting on the world to change its view of him.

"I could use some more rock-star stereotypes," Mayer said. "Not the pop star, singer-songwriter stereotype."

He may be getting closer. Mayer was nominated for five Grammy Awards, including two in the rock genre: Best Rock Album for "Try" with the John Mayer Trio and Best Solo Rock Vocal Performance for "Route 66" from the soundtrack to the movie "Cars."

And though the two Grammys he snagged came in the Best Pop Vocal Album and Best Male Pop Vocal Performance categories, Mayer hasn't given up on revamping his repu-

ration. Mayer was recently named a "Guitar God" by Rolling Stone Magazine, an honor not usually reserved for pop stars. "It's not the lexicon that I would use in my mind," Mayer said. "But I can't deny the thrill; it feels great."

Mayer, who said his personality is changing as he gets older, will perform Saturday night at 8 in Rupp Arena.

In his new song "I Don't Trust Myself (With Loving You)" from "Continuum" Mayer says that he is not the man he used to be lately.

"I was really intense in my early 20s," Mayer said. "I'm more Zen now. (At 20) you are experimenting with information that you just learned."

Getting older is a motif that runs through-out Mayer's latest album.

"I could go into the studio and make 'Continuum' in a genuine way," Mayer said. "There is an emotional connection this record makes that isn't blocked by part of myself."

In the songs "Waiting on the World to Change" and "Belief," Mayer sings about social awareness. Mayer did say, however, he wouldn't feel justified writing only about a

political climate in all of his songs.

"Political singers singing about political things have passed us," Mayer said. "Waiting on the World to Change" and "Belief" are more about emotions. I can only write about what I feel."

Writing music geared toward emotions has allowed him to see the overall picture.

Mayer said. "Continuum" came out exactly the way he wanted. This album is better than anything he has done before, he said.

"I understand that this is an important record," Mayer said. "This is the first record

that I've gotten right"

Mayer said he is excited about the set list and playing songs from the album while on tour — especially "Belief" and "Gravity."

"I don't have a record that unfolds on stage the way this one does," Mayer said.

On Saturday fans will have the chance to see and hear the way Mayer's music unfolds on stage and will watch how Mayer walks away from his pop persona to play his way into the rock world.

If you go

What: John Mayer with Mat Kearney
When: Tomorrow, 8 p.m.
Where: Rupp Arena
Tickets: \$39-\$44

Student turnout small at forum on hiring diversity administrator

By Katie Saltz
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Four students turned out to hear administrators outline UK's priorities in the search for a new diversity administrator position at a student forum yesterday afternoon. Two of those students were covering the event for WFRL.

"We need to have an office for diversity at higher levels," said Carol Jordan, co-chair of the selection committee. "We think it is wise to create a university climate that is more diverse."

The vice president for institutional diversity will be responsible for institu-

tional leadership, being an adviser, and being in a policy-making position on matters of university diversity.

"The provost (Kumbe Subbaswamy) wants a person who will eat, sleep and dream diversity," said John Harris, education professor and the other co-chair selection committee.

The position, which UK hopes to fill by July 1, requires someone with a doctorate, experience in university administration, a track record of success with diversity and ability to be tenured. The focus on diversity fits into



Jordan

UK's push for top-20 status, Jordan said.

"Most of UK's benchmark universities have a chief diversity officer," Jordan said.

Harris agreed that diversity is necessary for the achievement of the Top 20 goal.

"Those are the institutions we aspire to be like," Harris said. "We want to move up in terms of academics, but also diversity."

While the position of the VPID is important, every person at UK is responsible for cultivating diversity, Jordan said.

"Everybody at UK has a role to play," Jordan said. "The VPID would just be the loudest. This person will instigate and motivate and make sure that things are done well."

The committee members said they have taken measures to ensure candidates are not only qualified, but diverse as well.

"We have proactively sought diverse and top quality candidates," Jordan said. "We need to do a better job at recruiting diversity in faculty, staff and students, and then retaining them."

Dean of Students Victor Hazard, a selection committee member, encour-

aged students to get involved in the selection process.

"Students will be the end product of diversity here, and it's so important for them to have a voice in choosing the person for this position," Hazard said. "This helps prepare students to the diversity they will face after graduation."

Students will have a chance to address the VPID finalists when they come to campus.

"The challenge will be getting the candidates before the right audience, an audience who will ask tough questions," Hazard said. "We want students to come forward and have a voice."



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HOT STUFF

Jen & Vince - Birthday Reunion!

THE DISH

They really are still friends! The exes toast her 38th

Thanks to Vince Vaughn, Jennifer Aniston had a happy - if romance-free - birthday. The actor, 36, showed up to celebrate his ex's 38th at an intimate gathering at Courteney Cox and David Arquette's Beverly Hills home on February 10. Not only did he bring a gift, but he "smiled and seemed excited" about the party, a witness tells Hot Stuff. "Jen hugged him several times and thanked him for coming," said a source. "It was a little uncomfortable, but her friends really like him. They don't blame him like they do Brad Pitt." Of course, though Aniston may be officially friends with Vaughn, she hasn't quite transitioned to dating again - despite a tabloid report that she recently attended a Sting concert with a guy. (Her rep tells Us, "There was no date. She was there with Vaughn's assistant.") Lately, she's had more luck just hanging out with the girls. On February 8, she dined at Beverly Hills eatery Spago with two female pals, smoking, eating and sipping wine. "They talked quietly, but laughed out loud a lot."

Tyra: Dating Brit's 'Manny'?

America's next top couple? At the Rodeo Drive Walk of Style Awards February 8 in Beverly Hills, a source says Tyra Banks, 33, "flirted up a storm" with her security guard. Britney Spears' ex-"manny" Perry Taylor "She was cooing, 'Perry,

come here' with a sexy, come-hither look." Her rep had no comment.

Paris' Uneasy Upchuck

Paris Hilton was definitely not hot at Rolling Stone's February 9 Grammy bash in L.A. Though she's known to be the life of the party, the heiress, 26, "puked in the bathroom" that night, says a witness. (Her rep tells Hot Stuff, "That is not true.")

Drew Barrymore - Fab's Pain

Fabrizio Moretti is singing the blues over his recent split with Drew Barrymore. At a February 2 get-together with some pals at L.A.'s Chateau Marmont, the Strokes drummer, 26, was overheard saying "he would do anything to get her back," a nearby diner tells Hot Stuff. He even claimed he is still in the dark about why the actress, 32, broke it off. Still, a friend of Barrymore tells Us that while she wanted to reconcile "for a minute," she now "loves being single." (Barrymore's rep had no comment.) As for Moretti's rebound with actress Kristen Dunst, 24, the Chateau guest continues, "his friends were saying she's using him for publicity, and he agreed." (Dunst's rep tells Us, "Kirsten is not one to ever want publicity, so the notion that she is with anyone for publicity is laughable." Moretti's rep didn't respond to requests for comment.)

Heath Starts His Own La-

belle! Time for Heath Ledger, 27, to update his resume! A source tells Us he's launching a label, Mells Music Co., with singer Ben Harper. At the February 9 opening of L.A. lounge Edison, he unveiled his first act, Aussie teen Grace Woodroffe, whose voice "he fell in love with," says the source. Indeed, Ledger's also shooting her music video at Edison. His rep did not respond to requests for comment.

Keith Urban - Back to Work

It didn't take Keith Urban

long to get his musical mojo back. Less than two weeks after being released from rehab in mid-January, Nicole Kidman's crooner hubby, 39, was in the studio, singing and playing guitar on a track for country star Martina McBride's next CD, *Waking Up Laughing* (out April 3). "This is the first thing he's done since he's been out," McBride, 40, tells Hot Stuff. "I saved this song for him. His was the only voice for it." And how is Urban, who made his post-rehab TV debut on Saturday Night Live February 10, doing outside the studio? The singer recently told German magazine Stern that his marriage to Kidman, 39, gave him "the strength to get through" rehab and that he's now striving to be the "best husband, the best son, brother and uncle." He even joked about that second wedding celebration: "We haven't spoken about that yet, but it sounds like a good idea." (Urban's rep had no comment.)

US WEEKLY

LIVE PATIO MUSIC **THE WORLD FAMOUS TWO KEYS TAVERN** **UNDER NEW OWNERSHIP**

HOROSCOPES

By Linda C. Black
To get the advantage, check the day's rating. 10 is the easiest day, 0 the most challenging.

Aries (March 21 April 19) - Today is a 7 - Getting the money's relatively easy this time. Holding onto it is the challenge. Don't hide it in your favorite places. Try something more secure.

Taurus (April 20 May 20) - Today is an 8 - You're good at setting long-term goals, and seeing them through to fruition. Convince the others to follow your lead and you won't have to do it alone. It'll be more fun with a team.

Gemini (May 21 June 21) - Today is an 8 - Allow the others to offer up their best arguments. Use their imaginations to fine-tune your proposal.

Cancer (June 22 July 22) - Today is an 8 - Others come to you with all sorts of wants and needs. Empower them to be responsible, and learn how to solve their own problems.

Leo (July 23 Aug. 22) - Today is a 7 - Your quick thinking and decisive action is making a good impression. Continue to figure out what's needed and speedily provide it.

Virgo (Aug. 23 Sept. 22) - Today is a 7 - You'd better be taking notes, because there's a test coming up soon. You'll be asked to show how your recent excursion leads to money coming in. Tell them it helped clear your mind.

Libra (Sept. 23 Oct. 22) - Today is a 5 - One of the reasons you save your money is to spend in bigger amounts. Travel is a good way to do that, but don't launch immediately. Well, don't go very far.

Scorpio (Oct. 23 Nov. 21) - Today is a 7 - The right person will inspire you to save more of your money, and

shop around for better deals. This sometimes feels like nagging, but it's good for you.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22 Dec. 21) - Today is an 8 - Settle into a routine you enjoy, and let old worries fade. This will become second nature in no time at all. It's a comfortable place to be.

Capricorn (Dec. 22 Jan. 19) - Today is an 8 - Soon, you'll be anxious to get back to work. You'll be quick and efficient. Trust that this will happen. Set up to work over the weekend, and don't worry.

Aquarius (Jan. 20 Feb. 18) - Today is a 5 - This is more a time of outgo than income, as you may have noticed. That will all change later. In the meantime, exercise patience.

Pisces (Feb. 19 March 20) - Today is a 7 - More research is required, and you're the one to do it. You have the best chance of finding what's needed in the least possible time.

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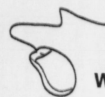
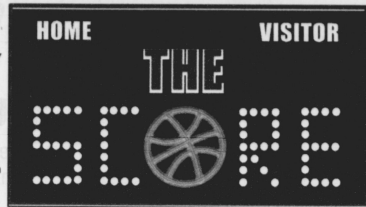
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ON THE WEB
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Chris DeLotell's men's basketball column UK will need a win over Vandy this weekend to get a bye in the upcoming Southeastern Conference tournament.

RISING STAR | Former UK soccer player follows dream to play across the pond



ELLIOTT HESS | STAFF

By Chris Miles
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Riley O'Neill had his dreams fixed on Europe, where the competition is intense and the paychecks are high — at least for soccer players.

When the former record-setting UK soccer player forewent his final semester at UK to make the transatlantic move last month, he could have easily transitioned into the United States' Major League Soccer.

"I think he would have been a high pick in the MLS," said UK head coach Ian Collins. "He's the kind of player who can step onto the professional field and play right away."

O'Neill finished his senior season with 17 goals for the Cats and broke the school record for the most game-winning goals, statistics that many MLS scouts drooled over.

But instead of staying in America, O'Neill followed his childhood ambitions to Northern Germany, where he signed a contract with S.V. Wilhelmshaven, a third division professional team.

"I thought it was the best place for me," O'Neill said in an e-mail. "I'm just trying to put myself in the right place to make it further in my career."

And while he could have stayed in the U.S., O'Neill wanted to play in the best league possible to develop as a player. With luck, he could move from Wilhelmshaven and land a spot on a better club. O'Neill hopes the journey will land him in the top leagues — England's Premier League or Germany's Bundesliga League, which feature two of soccer's better-known teams, Manchester United and Bayern Munich.

"You aspire to play abroad," UK sophomore player Karl Waasdorp said, highlighting O'Neill's decision. "The atmosphere is better."

Nathan Li, a former UK soccer player who also played his final season in the fall, said he thinks O'Neill will have a great shot at making it big.

"He has talent and commitment," Li said. "That can get him far."

Unlike O'Neill, Li decided at the end of the last season that he would not pursue a career playing professional soccer and instead will work toward a career in the medical field.

Originally, Li thought about playing professional soccer, which was one of the reasons he came to UK.

"(UK) is as close to professional as you can get," Li said. "I would be surprised if even Riley's team (now) has the facilities and resources we do. I came here because UK prepares you for the pros."

Collins said UK, like many strong college soccer schools, has all the necessary resources to prepare players for the next level, especially when it comes to the staff helping the players reach their goals.

"UK is a good stepping stone," Waasdorp said. "Pro scouts are much more likely to watch a successful team. And in Riley's position, as the star of the successful team, you're getting much more attention."

For Waasdorp, the allure of playing professional soccer was one of the prime reasons he came to UK.

"You want to be paid, and you want to be paid for what you love to do," Waasdorp said. "The drive to reach that goal outweighs anything else."

"But there comes a point where you have to be realistic," Li said.

Li said it might not be a smart tradeoff between a college degree and potential jobs and bouncing around professional soccer clubs.

"A guy like Riley is playing for a third division German team," Li said. "You're living on low wages and it's risky, especially playing in a country where you don't know the language and have no friends. You need to balance your passion with realism."

Li said that in the case of O'Neill, taking the risk was the right choice.

"There's definitely an opportunity for success (for him)," Li said. "It takes a lot of hard work and adjustment. But if that's his passion he'll go for it."

O'Neill said the opportunity has been worth it, even with obstacles like the language barrier. O'Neill plays beside Brazilian, Argentine, Nigerian, Polish, French and Czech players and all of them, he said, share the same passion and goals he does, allow-

ing them to relate to each other easily.

And while being away from his friends and family is hard, O'Neill said they are still supportive.

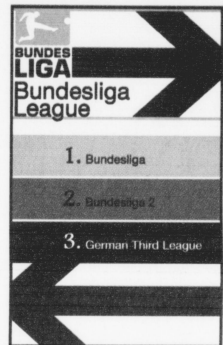
"My family and friends are very excited for me," O'Neill said. "Most of them are hoping I'll be a millionaire."

O'Neill has only seen the start of his success, Collins said, and he expects his former player is already making four times more than the salary of an MLS player.

"He's going to make more coming out of UK than a business graduate," Collins said. "He'll make a pretty good life."

But for O'Neill that life has just started. "I do hope to make a career out of it," O'Neill said. "I know I have to be patient and work really hard to make it to the top. But I think with time I'll make it to that level."







"Bayern Munich, yeah, that would be nice."

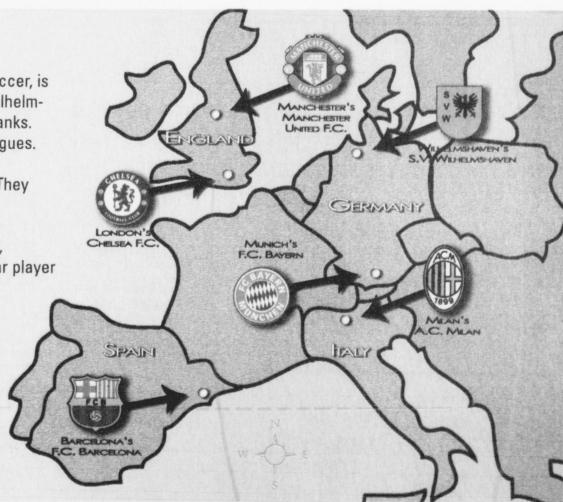


GRAPHICS BY ANDREA COATES | STAFF

Riley O'Neill will play for the team S.V. Wilhelmshaven in the professional German Third League. Two superior leagues, Bundesliga I and II, make up the rest of professional German soccer, with Bayern Munich as the top team.

Europe's Top Teams

-  S.V. Wilhelmshaven, in the third division of German pro soccer, is in northern Germany. Two other pro leagues are above Wilhelmshaven and typically pull lower-league players into their ranks. O'Neill has a strong possibility of moving up into these leagues.
-  Bayern Munich is considered the best pro German team. They have won the Bundesliga the last three seasons.
-  Manchester United, perhaps England's best pro club team, has made David Beckham famous. The club's-- current star player is Wayne Rooney.
-  Chelsea is in the English Premier League, considered the best pro soccer league in the world, and is the reigning champion.
-  Barcelona, with world-renowned Ronaldinho, was one of last season's strongest teams.
-  A.C. Milan includes players like Ronaldo and Kaka.





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