

1AA

Top to bottom:
Mitch
Lightfoot,
Christian
Braun,
Marcus
Garrett,
Jalen Wilson,
Ochai Agbaji
and Dajuan
Harris

Journal-
World File
Photos

FILL IN YOUR PICKS! **BRACKET, PAGE 4AA**

L A W R E N C E

JOURNAL-WORLD®

PUBLISHED SINCE 1891

Monday • March 15 • 2021

2021 NCAA TOURNEY PREVIEW

NEXT STOP:

INDY



#3 IN THE WEST
Kansas' tourney fate. **2AA**



THE CONTENDERS
Teams that could win it all. **7AA**

TOURNEY REWIND

3 decades of March history at KU. **8AA**



No further virus issues for 3rd-seeded Kansas

By Matt Tait
mtait@ljworld.com

The Kansas men's basketball team received a No. 3 seed in the West region in the NCAA Tournament on Sunday, and KU coach Bill Self said that the COVID-19 issues that kept the Jayhawks from finishing the Big 12 tournament had not created any further problems.

"Knock on wood, we think we're in as good a shape as we can be in," Self said in a Zoom call after the bracket came out. "We're going to Indy (this week) with a healthy group; it's just a smaller group. We're minus three bodies right now."

Two of those three — junior David McCormack and sophomore Tristan Enaruna — were ruled out before the start of the



"We're going to Indy (this week) with a healthy group; it's just a smaller group."

— Kansas coach Bill Self

Big 12 tournament. Self said he expected both to re-join the team at some point this week in Indianapolis.

The third player, who tested positive for COVID-19 on Friday morning, remains unnamed and is expected to be out for KU's first two games of the NCAA Tournament, in accordance with the tournament's protocols.

With the exception of those players, the team was scheduled to depart on Monday.

While the Jayhawks are shorthanded as they prepare to kick off a postseason run for an

NCAA-record 31st consecutive NCAA Tournament, Self said the rest of the team had tested negative multiple times since Friday and that he was appreciative that the Jayhawks' first game of this year's tournament was not until Saturday.

"I'm actually glad that we have an extra day," Self said. "Not only for (the players who've been out), but for all our bodies and (so we can) practice together closer to game time. So I thought that the draw we got was fair."

When the full KU gang gets together again, the Jayhawks (20-8) will prepare to face 14th-seeded

Eastern Washington, which earned a spot in the field by winning the Big Sky postseason tournament and is 16-7 overall. The game is scheduled for 12:15 p.m. Saturday on TBS.

Kansas landed in the same region as No. 1 seed Gonzaga, which defeated KU in the season opener on Thanksgiving. Iowa is the 2 seed in the West, and Virginia and Creighton round out the region's top five.

The winner of KU's game with Eastern Washington will play the winner of the 6-11 matchup between USC and the winner of the First Four matchup between 11 seeds Wichita State and Drake.

Self said that while every team in the field deserved respect, nearly all of the teams in the West region had something in common. "The one thing that jumps out in our bracket that would be the hardest thing, and I think there's

15 other teams that can attest to this, is that Gonzaga is in our bracket," Self said. "To get to a Final Four, you're going to have to eventually probably go through one of the better teams our sport has seen in recent memory."

"Since that's the draw we got, I might as well be comfortable with it and like it," Self added. "I certainly don't dislike it."

Gonzaga ran through the regular season and West Coast Conference tournament at 26-0 and enters the NCAA Tournament as the No. 1 overall seed.

Despite that potential challenge looming, which senior guard Marcus Garrett said was "definitely something we'd look forward to," Self said his team's focus was solely on Eastern Washington, USC, Wichita State and Drake.

SEED, 6AA

KU can't look too far ahead



At a program with the college basketball pedigree of Kansas, one of the time-honored traditions of Selection Sunday is inspecting the rest of whatever region the Jayhawks ended up in.

That flies most years, particularly when KU is a top seed with a legitimate chance of making a run at the championship. But right now, mere days removed from withdrawing from the Big 12 tournament, KU has far too much else to worry about.

Forget about Gonzaga, Iowa, Virginia and the rest of the teams in the West region. The Jayhawks don't even know with absolute certainty at this point how their shorthanded rotation will play in their NCAA Tournament debut Saturday against Eastern Washington.

AHEAD, 6AA

By Matt Tait
mtait@ljworld.com

Out of all the ways the COVID-19 pandemic reshaped the 2020-21 college basketball season, Kansas coach Bill Self says the changes made to the format of the 2021 NCAA Tournament could be some of the most enjoyable.

With all 68 teams headed to Indiana this week, the majority of them will be in Indianapolis, where 55 of the

tournament's 67 games will take place.

Self said recently that four Indianapolis hotels were slated to be team headquarters for most, if not all, of

the teams in Indianapolis. And while that will be decidedly different from what any of them are used to — with the tournament typically being spread across

the country at more than a dozen host sites — Self said it could add to the intensity of the competition.

INDY, 10AA

ALL ROADS LEAD TO INDY

... & that's fine with Bill Self

Shutterstock Photo

LUCAS OIL STADIUM WILL HOST THIS YEAR'S FINAL FOUR GAMES, AS WELL AS THE NATIONAL TITLE GAME.

Get to know Eastern Washington, KU's first-round foe

By Benton Smith
basmith@ljworld.com

Before the Jayhawks can start worrying about how they match up with USC, Wichita State or Drake — or even dream about looking ahead in the West region to Iowa or Gonzaga — the Kansas

basketball team first will have to get past a hot Eastern Washington team in the first round of the NCAA Tournament.

The Eagles, who are the Big Sky Conference champions, enter the Big Dance on a four-game winning streak, and they've won 13 of their last 14 games.

Eastern Washington (16-7) is ranked No. 110 in the nation by KenPom.com and is led by Tanner Groves, the Big Sky's MVP this season.

Groves, a 6-foot-9, 235-pound junior forward, leads a balanced offense (78 points per game). He contributes 16.4 points, 8.1 rebounds, 55.7% shooting and the ability to stretch

the floor (17-for-52 on 3-pointers).

Now in his fourth season leading the Eagles, head coach Shantay Legans has a .610 career winning percentage entering the NCAA Tournament. This is the program's first berth since 2015.

FOE, 7AA



AP File Photo

EASTERN WASHINGTON FORWARD TANNER GROVES, LEFT, shoots over Arizona forward Ira Lee on Dec. 5, 2020, in Tucson, Ariz. Arizona won 70-67.

Yello Sub

THE OVEN BAKED ORIGINAL.

OPEN SUNDAY-THURSDAY 10AM-9PM,
AND FRIDAY AND SATURDAY 10AM-10PM
FOR CURBSIDE PICKUP AND DELIVERY

Dine In Seating currently open
Monday-Saturday: 10am-9pm

Thank You for Voting Us #1!

\$7.99

ANY SUB

Choose any Footlong Sub from our menu

Best of Lawrence

Present this coupon or show us a picture of it.
(Limit 2 per customer. Delivery or carry out only. Price effective until 4/30/2021.)

CALL OR ORDER ONLINE!
785-843-6000 | 1814 W. 23RD ST, LAWRENCE, KS
YELLO-SUB.PLANETSUB.COM

We install the **BEST**

AND REPAIR THE REST!

Serving Lawrence since 1984

Action

PLUMBING

Service & Repair | Water Heaters | Remodeling

Angie's list

785.843.5670

ActionPlumbingLawrence.com

WELCOME BACK



Our lobbies are now open! Stop by today to see why we've been voted the **Best Credit Union in Lawrence** nine years in a row.

- ▶ **NEW** Checking Accounts — *Now with Mobile Phone Coverage**
- ▶ **FREE** Digital Banking Solutions
- ▶ Low Mortgage Rates and **FAST** Closings
- ▶ Low Auto Rates and Online Preapproval
- ▶ **FREE** Lawrence High and Free State Spirit Debit Cards

Find out more at TruityCU.org.



WAC

*Some restrictions apply. See TruityCU.org/Checking for details.


TRUITY
CREDIT UNION



**FEDERALLY
INSURED
BY NCUA**



LYNN ELECTRIC, INC. & COMMUNICATIONS

Lynn Electric & Communications
725 North 2nd, Suite K, Lawrence, KS 66044
785.843.LYNN | 785.843.5079
lynnelectric.com



**16 BEERS!
ONE CHAMPION!**

Join us online
or in person

Go to lawrence.mrbrewstaphouse.com
for more information

3140 Iowa St Lawrence, KS 66044 • 785-856-1010
lawrence@mrbrewstaphouse.com



ARBOR COURT
RETIREMENT COMMUNITY
AT ALVAMAR

Starting at **\$1600 Per Month!**
Including all utilities, breakfast, lunch and transportation.

YOUR LIFE. YOUR STYLE. YOUR HOME.
1510 St Andrews Drive Lawrence, KS 66047
785-841-6845

**PICK 2 OR MORE
\$9.99 EACH**

Order up at TOPPERS.COM

SHOW IT OFF @ TD

Toppers

Proud Partner of Lawrence Journal-World



Wakarusa
Oral Surgery
785-856-6010



Shawnee
Oral Surgery
913-441-7868

Justin W. Labart, DDS, MD

Visit us at
www.wakashaw.com

LOCALLY OWNED AND OPERATED
VOTED #1 BBQ 2016 THROUGH 2020

BIEMER'S BBQ

Try Our
Contactless
Drive-Thru

Call Us For Catering That's A SLAM DUNK!
2120 W. 9th St • Lawrence, KS
785-842-0800 www.biemers.com



Berry

NOW HIRING
Operators, Maintenance,
Process Techs, and Drivers

Apply at:
berryglobal.com/careers



MEADOWBROOK APARTMENTS
WWW.MEADOWBROOKAPARTMENTS.NET

**NOW
HIRING**
Package
Handlers

Text **FXGprint** to **33011**

Message and data rates may apply. 1 message per request.
Text HELP to 33011 for help. Text STOP to 33011 to cancel. FedEx
Ground is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer (Minorities/
Females/Disability/Veterans) committed to a diverse workforce.





Yello Sub
THE OVEN BAKED ORIGINAL
YELLO-SUB.PLANETSUB.COM

HOOPS DEAL
\$3.99 ANY SUB
Choose any 6 inch Sub from our menu
(Limit 2 per customer. Dine in or carry out only. Price effective until 4/30/21)

785-843-6000
1814 W. 23RD ST
LAWRENCE, KS



D&D TIRE INC.
SERVING LAWRENCE SINCE 1972
An Independent Tire Dealer
And Family-Owned Auto Repair Shop
Conveniently Located In Downtown Lawrence



 (785) 843-0191  **1000 Vermont St., Lawrence**



**MIND BODY MECHANICS
CHIROPRACTIC**
ALIGN YOUR GEOMETRY FOR A VITAL LIFE

785-218-1599
mindbodymechanicschiropractic.com



TRUITY
CREDIT UNION



WIN \$500

**BRACKET
CHALLENGE**



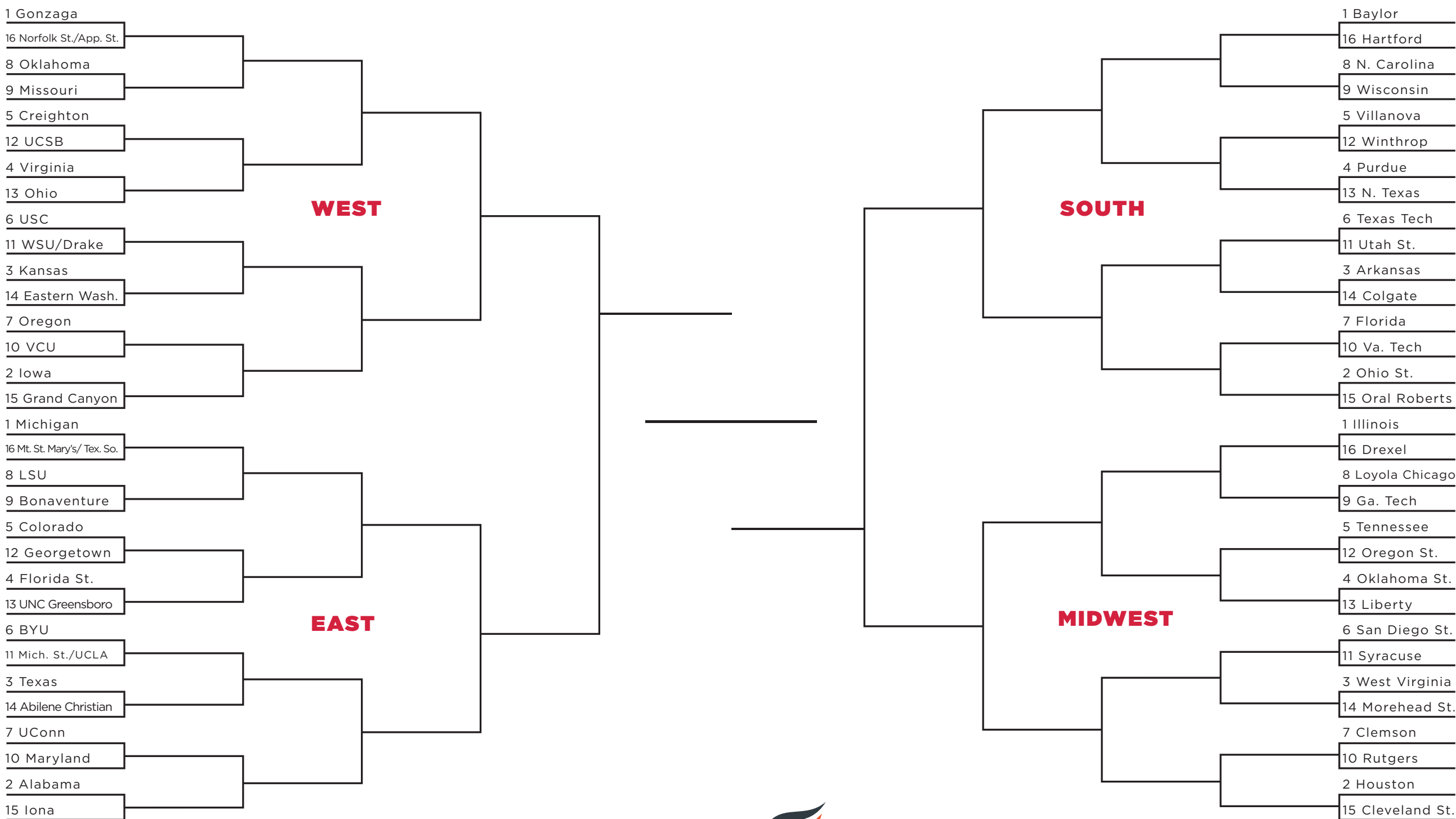
PIONEER RIDGE
ASSISTED LIVING
mh A Member of the Midwest Health Family

785-503-3802 • Pioneer-Ridge.com

SPIN!
PIZZA

785.856.2418 • SpinPizza.com

KUSPORTS.COM/BRACKETCHALLENGE



785.856.6200

FIND YOUR NEW HOME!



ReeceNichols
PREFERRED REALTY
An Independently Owned and Operated Member of the Reece & Nichols Alliance, Inc.

3801 W. 6th St., Lawrence, KS 66049

Lawrence.ReeceNichols.com
Lawrence@ReeceNichols.com



**STANLEY JAMES
SMOKEHOUSE**
MOST WANTED
Breakfast • Ribs • Brisket • Pulled Pork • Burnt Ends
1500 E 23rd St. Lawrence, KS at Phillips 66 & Car Wash
Hours Mon-Sat 6am-9pm Sun 7am-9pm
785-841-9691

**BUY 1 GET 1 FREE BBQ SANDWICH
or any BREAKFAST SANDWICH
OR BURRITO.**
Limit one per visit Offer valid thru 4/16/2021

SJSMOKEHOUSE.COM 



**TUNE UP YOUR AUDIO SYSTEM
WITH SOUND INNOVATION!**
WE DO BOAT, CAR, AND
POWER SPORTS VEHICLES!
Give us a call at 785-856-2604
to fix your audio today!

sound innovations
1501 W. 6th St., Suite A, Lawrence, KS 66044



JL AUDIO
GOING UP



CEK
INSURANCE
Then. Now. Tomorrow.

Lawrence, KS: 785-843-2772
Kansas City Metro: 816-453-8584
cekinsurance.com





TRUITY
CREDIT UNION

Truity Credit Union proudly supports the University of Kansas and KU Sports.

TRUITYCU.ORG » 800.897.6991 » 1300 W. 23RD ST. » 3400 W. 6TH ST. » 2221 W. 31ST ST.

By Matt Tait



mtait@ljworld.com

No one's picking Kansas as a lock Final Four team entering the 2021 NCAA Tournament, but the Jayhawks themselves still believe a memorable March is possible.

Despite a couple of rough stretches, during which the Jayhawks lost three in a row and six of 10 from Jan. 2 to Feb. 6, Kansas is banking on the fact that it started and ended the season playing some of its best basketball.

KU's defensive improvement throughout February played a big role in that and helped give Bill Self's squad the identity that it had been missing.

What becomes of the Jayhawks' postseason fate this month remains to be seen, but here are four reasons Kansas fans should be optimistic about their team's chances.

Defense wins

It took these Jayhawks longer than most to figure out what Self demands from his teams on defense. But when they did, that understanding not only saved their season but also gave Kansas a clear identity.

Since then, KU has been one of the best defensive teams in the country, climbing all the way up to No. 7 in KenPom.

Don't let the rough stretches fool you — these Jayhawks are still a threat in March.

WHY KANSAS CAN MAKE A RUN

com's defensive efficiency ratings, holding opponents well under 1 point per possession and keeping foes' scores in the 50s and 60s. Self has said that this team needs to embrace playing games in the 60s, and, since the start of February, the Jayhawks have done just that. KU adjusted its ball-screen defense — at the point of attack and in rotations behind it — to protect the lane and play to its strengths, and senior leader Marcus Garrett and redshirt freshman Dajuan Harris take pride in pestering opposing guards to the point of mistakes that benefit the Jayhawks, both in preventing points and scoring in transition.

The numbers

An eight-loss season is not what Kansas fans are accustomed to seeing from their team, but

Self has repeatedly pointed out throughout the season that none of KU's losses was anything to be ashamed about. All of them came at the hands of teams ranked in KenPom's top 40, and all of those teams spent significant time in the Associated Press Top 25 poll throughout the season, as well. Add to that the fact that just one team (Kentucky) played more Quadrant 1 regular-season games than Kansas, and the Wildcats were 3-12 in those games, while KU went 6-8. Beyond that, the Jayhawks were 12-0 against teams in Quadrants 2, 3 and 4, and they finished the regular season ranked No. 11 in the AP poll, No. 15 in the NET rankings and No. 22 in the KenPom.com rankings. KU's stat sheet is full of solid numbers, but the three most important areas to watch are defensive field goal percentage, offensive rebounding

rate and 3-point percentage. If KU consistently fares well in those three areas this month, a run could be in the works.

The experience

Let's not forget that four Kansas veterans — Garrett, Ochai Agbaji, Christian Braun and David McCormack — were among the top seven players on last season's team, which was poised to enter the NCAA Tournament as the No. 1 overall seed and the betting favorite to win it all. Sure, they played different roles a year ago than they're playing today. And yes, that team was led by two All-Americans — Udoka Azubuike and Devon Dotson. But Agbaji, Garrett and McCormack still played a huge part in Kansas' 28-3 season in 2019-20, and they each started or played 20 or more minutes in the

Jayhawks' most recent NCAA Tournament game. Kansas' veterans have played in a bunch of big games, and their confidence is at a season high entering this year's NCAA Tournament.

The bracket

Outside of Gonzaga and Baylor, the top three or four seed lines in this year's bracket include a bunch of talented teams that can beat nearly anybody on any given night, but also can lose to just about anybody. Iowa lost twice to Indiana. Ohio State lost to Northwestern. Illinois lost to Missouri. Villanova dropped games to Providence and St. John's. Alabama lost to Western Kentucky. Houston's three losses are to Tulsa, East Carolina and Wichita State. The list goes on and on. Even though the Jayhawks do not have any bad losses on their resume, their season did include a handful of close calls and forgettable moments, most notably the recent home win over UTEP and double-digit losses to Texas and Tennessee earlier in the season. However, the RPI ranked the Big 12 Conference as the toughest conference in the country this season in both overall winning percentage and strength of schedule. There are not many teams out there that could have finished second behind Baylor, but Kansas did. That, along with the Jayhawks' solid stretches in some of their losses, should have this team believing it has as good a chance as anybody out there.

Notebook: Self says Kansas' reserves will need to step up

By Matt Tait



mtait@ljworld.com

With third-seeded Kansas shorthanded entering the 2021 NCAA Tournament, KU coach Bill Self was certain that some of his reserves would need to step up in the week ahead to help Kansas survive and advance.

"Oh, there's no question," Self said Sunday evening after the bracket was revealed.

One player whom Self singled out emphatically was junior Tyon Grant-Foster, a juco transfer in his first year with the Jayhawks.

"I haven't given Tyon Grant-Foster many opportunities to play," Self said. "But as long as we

Also: A look at other Big 12 seedings

all stay healthy from this point forward, he's going to get every opportunity to be an impact player for us in this tournament."

Grant-Foster, who was the top-rated junior college prospect in the country last year, has appeared in 20 of KU's 28 games this season, averaging 31 points and 2.2 rebounds in 8.3 minutes per game. He has not played since a two-minute stint at Kansas State on Feb. 17.

When asked about the role of KU's reserves in the week ahead, junior guard Ochai Agbaji said Grant-Foster and others would have to be "more focused than ever."

"Those guys coming off the bench are going to be special and key for us

moving forward," Agbaji said. "They know their role, and they're going to have to do it to the best of their ability. It's win or go home."

The Jayhawks are slated to head to Indianapolis without three of their regular rotation players. David McCormack and Tristan Enaruna are in the final stages of COVID-19 protocols, and a third, still-unnamed player who tested positive for COVID-19 Friday morning was not expected to be with the team in the week ahead.

"We think that that won't be until we complete the first two games, if we're fortunate enough to advance," Self said of the third player's return.

"(McCormack and Enaruna) we hope get there this next week, as long as nothing negative happens in the meantime. We're not going to count our chickens before they hatch. It's just a daily deal that you get nervous every time you test, and we'll just have to wait and see how the tests go."



As expected, seven Big 12 teams made this year's field of 68, with No. 1 seed Baylor leading the way and Kansas, West Virginia and Texas all seeded third in different regions. Oklahoma State (4), Texas Tech (6) and Oklahoma (8) rounded out the list of Big 12 teams included in the field.

"Obviously the conference is very well respected," Self said. "To have four teams on the 3 line or better, I think those were all deserved."

If anything, Self said he thought Texas, Oklahoma State and Oklahoma were all underseeded.

"I thought they could be a little bit higher than that," he said. "But I think that every league in the country (could say that about some teams)."

All seven teams that defeated Kansas this season made the tournament, with Oklahoma coming in as the lowest seeded of the bunch.

KU's eight losses this season came to teams who carry an average seed of 3.5 into this year's NCAA Tournament.

"It just shows that we had one of the best conferences in college basketball," senior guard Marcus Garrett said.



Shortly after the bracket was released, the NCAA unveiled the overall seed list, and Kansas was ranked No. 12, making the Jayhawks the last 3 seed in the field ... The 3-14 matchup has produced 21 NCAA Tournament upsets in 140 tries; the higher seed owns a 119-21 record in first-round meetings ... The last time KU was a 3 seed was in 2009, and the Jayhawks are 8-4 all-time in the NCAA Tournament as a No. 3 seed. KU also was a 3 seed in 1985, 1991, 2005 and 2009.

Seed

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2A

"That's all I'm going to think about," Self said. "The NCAA Tournament is a series of two-game tournaments. You have to go into a weekend and win a two-game tournament, and that's the only bracket I'm thinking about."

There were other things on Self's mind on Sunday. Most notable among them was the pride he felt in his team for elevating itself to the position of a 3 seed.

After finishing the month of January at 3-5, with a stretch of four losses in five games, the Jayhawks were reeling and talked about by many as one of the worst teams Self has had at Kansas. Plenty outside of the program also projected that Self's stretch of never being

seeded lower than 4 during his days at KU also could come to an end this year.

"To go from that to being a 3 seed, I think, is a pretty strong statement (about) how much our team got better and how much the players improved," Self said of his squad, which enters the NCAA Tournament having won eight of its last nine games. "I actually am probably about as excited as I've been on a Sunday

of the selection show. I'm really proud of (this team) and I'm excited."

While the Selection Sunday experience was still new to most of the Jayhawks' roster — especially given the fact that last season's tournament was canceled at the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic — Self said he sensed an element of pride from the players as they watched Sunday's bracket come out.

"I think that they were proud of themselves, to be honest," Self said. "I think they feel good about themselves. But not good in a way that we've accomplished anything. Just good in a way of, 'Well, so far so good. We put ourselves in a decent position; now we have to take advantage of this opportunity.'"

That there was an opportunity awaiting at all was reason enough for KU's leading

scorer, Ochai Agbaji, to get excited.

"It's been tough," Agbaji said of staying patient and upbeat during the past few days. "Kind of (started) getting the same feel from last year when we didn't play the Big 12 tournament (or NCAA Tournament) at all. But we've been sitting around (and) practicing, and we're thankful that we still have the opportunity to play in the NCAA Tournament."

Ahead

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2A

Head coach Bill Self never has entered the Big Dance with KU facing so many moving pieces and question marks. Self and the Jayhawks expect (read: are hopeful) that starting big man David McCormack and reserve wing Tristan Enaruna will be able to clear COVID-19 protocols and practice with the rest of the team in Indianapolis later this week.

But as we all have learned during this pandemic, there are no guarantees. By the time No. 3 seed KU (20-8) faces No. 14 Eastern Washington (16-7), McCormack will have gone 16 days without playing in a game.

Enaruna had fallen out of KU's rotation late in the season. He didn't play at all in the regular-season finale versus UTEP, and the last time he played more than two minutes in a game was at Kansas State on Feb. 17.

However, the Jayhawks actually need Enaruna again. The identity of the KU player who tested

positive for COVID, leading to the team's abrupt exit from the conference tournament, is being kept private. But let's just assume it is a rotation player who won't be available for at least the tournament's opening weekend. It's a safe assumption, because Self said Sunday evening Tyon Grant-Foster, who hasn't played a minute in a game since Feb. 17, will get an opportunity to make an impact. Enaruna is a more trusted contributor than Grant-Foster. How will Enaruna, a 6-foot-8 sophomore, handle being thrust back into a key role?

Then there's the matter of who will be missing when KU takes the floor on Saturday. Veterans Marcus Garrett and Ochai Agbaji spoke with the media Sunday after the brackets came out. They're not in quarantine. Neither are Mitch Lightfoot, Christian Braun, Bryce Thompson and Dajuan Harris, all of whom could be spotted in social media posts from KU's official account following the selection show.

So what if the Jayhawks have to play without Jalen Wilson, their best rebounder and ideal small-ball five?

It's possible KU will have to try to get to the second round and the Sweet 16 without him.

How the Jayhawks will handle all of this shuffling amid the pressure of playing in the NCAA Tournament remains to be seen. Even in pre-COVID times, there were a lot of unknowns to navigate in a typical March. What KU has on its plate now is something else entirely.

It would be a blast to see the Jayhawks take on Luka Garza and Iowa in the Sweet 16. And a rematch with Gonzaga in the Elite Eight would

be fascinating. But if ever there was a time to pump the brakes on such thought exercises, it would be now.

Self's been at this too long to ever get caught looking ahead. He said Sunday night he used to fill out a bracket, but probably hasn't bothered in about 15 years.

He'll have the perfect approach for this challenging week ahead.

Don't get caught looking ahead in this loaded West region. The Jayhawks have too much going on right in front of them for that.

CORK & BARREL
WINE • SPIRITS • BEER

1801 W. 23rd St
Lawrence, KS
785-331-4242

901 Mississippi St
Lawrence, KS
785-842-4450



www.corkbarrel.com



MARCH Specials

WINE	LIQUOR	BEER
BOTA BOX 3 LITER ALL VARIETIES C&B EDLP: \$18.99..... SALE \$15.99	KIRK AND SWEENEY 12YR RUM 750ML C&B EDLP \$29.99..... SALE \$23.89 LORD CALVERT CANADIAN WHISKEY 1.75L C&B EDLP \$18.99..... SALE \$16.29 TULLAMORE DEW IRISH WHISKEY 1.75L C&B EDLP \$39.99..... SALE \$34.29 PINNACLE VODKA 1.75L C&B EDLP \$16.99..... SALE \$13.99 ELIJAH CRAIG BOURBON WHISKEY 750ML C&B EDLP \$29.99..... SALE \$25.69 SEAGRAM'S 7 AMERICAN WHISKEY 1.75L C&B EDLP \$19.99..... SALE \$16.99	BREWERY OF THE MONTH: BELL'S BREWERY 6 PKS \$1 OFF 12 PKS \$3 OFF MICHELOB ULTRA ORGANIC SELTZER 12 PKS \$13.99 GUINNESS 12 PK \$11.99 SIERRA NEVADA 12 PKS \$2 OFF

A quick glance at some top contenders:

By Matt Tait

mtait@ljworld.com

We've waited two full years to see another NCAA Tournament bracket, and now that it's finally out, here's a quick look at eight teams that could win six games in the next three weeks, some obvious and others not as much.

1: Gonzaga

There are going to be brackets out there that do not have the Zags in the Final Four. But there should not be many of them. Yes, the Zags play in a lousy conference. But this team has proven all season long that it is the cream of the crop in college basketball this season. Beyond the early-season nonconference victories that strengthened its resume, Gonzaga's roster construction and blend of experience and youth is elite. Simply put: This team is the favorite to win the NCAA title this season, and it absolutely should be.

2: Baylor

A lot was made about Baylor missing four Big 12 games and struggling to find its footing after a three-week COVID-19 pause, but the Bears regrouped and finished the regular season strong, only strengthening their case as one of the nation's top teams. Baylor has a three-headed monster in Jared Butler, MaCio Teague and Davion Mitchell, who can all do varying degrees of damage against anybody on any night. And Baylor's strong and athletic frontcourt, headlined by Mark Vital, complements them perfectly. This team plays D, can kill you from 3-point range and is willing to scrap with anybody.

3: Iowa

One of the most popular ways to pick a team that can make a run during the NCAA Tournament is to go with one that has an unquestioned

TEAMS THAT CAN WIN IT ALL



GONZAGA'S JALEN SUGGS



BAYLOR'S JARED BUTLER



IOWA'S LUKA GARZA



ILLINOIS' AYO DOSUNMU



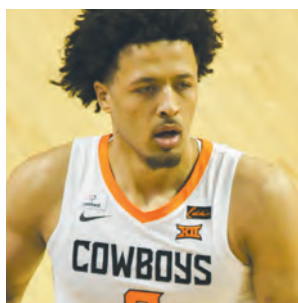
LOYOLA CHICAGO'S LUCAS WILLIAMSON



ALABAMA'S JAHVON QUINERLY



TEXAS' JERICO SIMS



OKLAHOMA STATE'S CADE CUNNINGHAM

AP File Photos

star. Iowa has that in likely national player of the year Luka Garza. After bypassing the NBA draft following his junior season, Garza turned in an even better senior year, averaging 23.9 points and 8.4 rebounds to lead the Hawkeyes through the rough-and-tumble Big Ten. There's more to this Iowa team than Garza. But the 6-foot-11 center gives the Hawkeyes an advantage against anybody.

4: Illinois

Playing without their best player, the Illini blasted No. 2 Michigan on its home floor on March 2 to add the strongest of a series of signature wins to their resume. If Brad Underwood's tougher-than-nails team didn't have your attention before then, that surely

grabbed it. Illinois is fast and physical, battle tested, well coached and playing with a ton of confidence. Beyond that, the combination of elite guard Ayo Dosunmu and bruising big man Kofi Cockburn provides Illinois with a roster than can play any style. The Illini are one of just two teams on this list to finish in the top 10 of KenPom.com's adjusted offensive and defensive rankings.

5: Loyola Chicago

The last time Porter Moser's team made the Big Dance, it reached the Final Four as one of those special Cinderella stories. This time, the Ramblers, who were ranked in the AP Top 25 most of the season, are without question one of the

better teams in the country. Their defense finished the regular season ranked No. 1 in the KenPom efficiency rankings after holding 17 of their 28 opponents to 55 points or fewer. That, combined with a top-50 offense, had Loyola at No. 9 in KenPom's overall rankings.

6: Alabama

I'm not a huge believer in the SEC this season, so Alabama almost didn't make this list. But this team defends with the best of them (No. 3 in KenPom's defensive efficiency rankings) and uses that defense to create easy offense. What's more, Nate Oats' squad has

one of the best 3-point defenses in the country — that helps you avoid getting upset in March — and shoots it well enough to be in the top 100. Combine that with the fact that 'Bama's balanced offense (four players averaging double figures) can be explosive in spurts, and you're looking at a tough matchup for anybody.

7: Texas

Athletes, size and guards galore. Someone on Twitter recently posed a question: What would Texas' record be if Kansas coach Bill Self had that roster? Possibly undefeated. That's not a knock on Shaka Smart, more an indication that the Longhorns' roster looks an awful lot like what you'd imagine Self wanting his ideal roster to look like. If UT can stay consistent and commit to defending, it can beat anybody.

8: Oklahoma State

Call it the Carmelo Anthony Effect, but there's just something that tells me that dynamic OSU freshman Cade Cunningham could lead Mike Boynton's Cowboys on a memorable run this month. The expected No. 1 pick in the NBA draft has everything you could want in a player and then some. He also appears to be due for a few clutch performances, which eluded him a little throughout the regular season. Cunningham is far from the only talented player on OSU's roster, and the Cowboys' style of in-your-face defense and blazing speed in the open court could be a recipe for something special.

Foe

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2AA

Eastern Washington at a glance:

Strength: The Eagles are one of the best free-throw-shooting teams

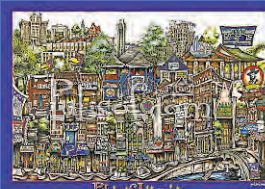
in the country, ranking sixth nationally at 79.9%.

Weakness: Eastern Washington doesn't create a ton of havoc defensively, with a steal percentage of 6.8%, which ranks 317th in the country.

Best win: Most of the teams in the Big Sky lagged far behind the Eagles this season, according to KenPom. The

highest-ranked team the Eagles defeated was Southern Utah (currently No. 141).

Toughest stretch: The Eagles opened the season with three straight road losses against Pac-12 teams — Washington State, Arizona and Oregon. Their 1-4 start to the season also included a road loss at Saint Mary's.

Framewoods Gallery

Chainsaw carvings

ADD TOP SELLERS TO YOUR JAYHAWK ROOM
Custom Framing | KU Collectibles | KU Prints

www.framewoodslawrence.com

785-842-4900 | 819 MASSACHUSETTS ST. LAWRENCE, KS 66044

**RUNZA® MAKES IT ALL BETTER**LAWRENCE
2700 IOWA STREET

RUNZA.COM

Lawrence Journal World

\$9.99
plus taxOriginal Runza® Sandwich
1/4 lb. Hamburger
Medium Fries
Medium Onion Rings
Two Medium Drinks

Please present this coupon before ordering. Valid at the Lawrence Runza® Restaurant location. One coupon per person or car per visit. Substitutions and additions extra. Not valid with any other coupon or special discount. Expires 4/30/2021

785-331-2710
804 Iowa St. Lawrence, KS**SAVE 15%
ON YOUR ORDER**Not valid with other offers. One Coupon per table.
Exp date 4/30/2021

Looking back at KU's decadeslong streak

By Matt Tait

mtait@ljworld.com

After missing out on what looked to be a golden opportunity to make a run at a national championship in 2020 because of the pandemic, the Kansas Jayhawks have been selected for the NCAA Tournament for an NCAA-record 31st consecutive season.

Not only is this streak — 14 seasons under Roy Williams and 17 seasons under Bill Self — the longest active streak in the country, it also is the longest in NCAA Tournament history, now a full recruiting cycle ahead of North Carolina's 27-year streak from 1975 to 2001.

While we wait to see what the 2021 tournament has in store for Self's squad, here's a quick look back at the Jayhawks' NCAA Tournament successes and failures in past seasons.

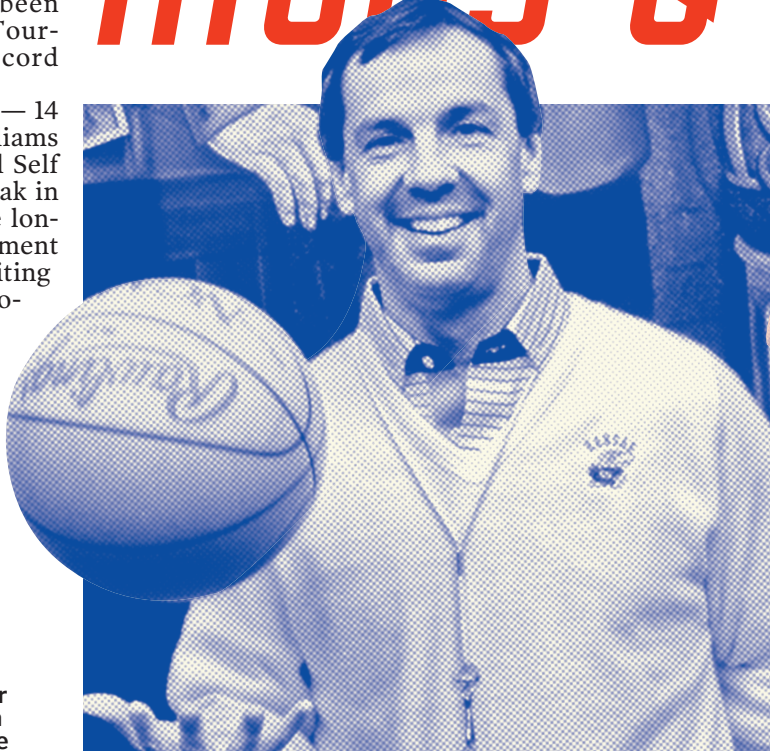
1989-90

Back in the Big Dance after serving a one-year probation from the Larry Brown era, the Jayhawks began their streak of consecutive NCAA Tournament appearances under little-known head coach Williams. Led by senior guard Kevin Pritchard (14.5 ppg) and junior forward Mark Randall (13.5 ppg), the second-seeded Jayhawks finished 30-5 but lost in the second round of the tournament to UCLA.

1990-91

In just his third season leading the Jayhawks, Williams took Kansas to the first of four Final Fours in 15 seasons under his direction. Kansas, a 3 seed led by senior sharpshooter Terry Brown (16 ppg) and Randall (15 ppg), made it all the way to the title game, where the Jayhawks lost to Grant Hill and Duke. One

JAYHAWKS' HIGHS & LOWS



LEFT: ROY WILLIAMS, PICTURED HERE IN 1988, led Kansas to 14 of its record 31 consecutive appearances in the NCAA tournament.

ABOVE: Raef LaFrentz and Paul Pierce were key components of Kansas' lineup in the mid-'90s.

game earlier, Williams matched up with mentor Dean Smith and North Carolina and knocked off his old boss, 79-73. KU finished the season 27-8.

1991-92

Despite KU finishing the regular season ranked No. 2 in the nation and 27-5 overall, the 1991-92 season marked the first of a handful of heartbreaking and disappointing tournament exits under Williams. Kansas earned a No. 1 seed in the Big Dance but was bounced in the second round by UTEP, 66-60, in Dayton, Ohio. Transfer guard Rex Walters (16 ppg) and junior Adonis Jordan

(12.8 ppg) led KU's attack, with sophomore forward Richard Scott (10.1) also breaking onto the scene.

1992-93

Led by the dynamic backcourt of seniors Jordan and Walters, the Jayhawks marched back to the Final Four for the second time in three seasons, this time falling to North Carolina in the national semifinals, 78-68, in New Orleans. Second-seeded Kansas got past Jason Kidd and Cal in the Sweet 16 and then upended Bob Knight and Indiana in the regional final

before losing to the eventual national champs. KU finished 29-7, and Walters (15.3 ppg) and Jordan (12.1) led the balanced offensive attack.

1993-94

This season famously ended with Purdue standout Glenn Robinson dunking over KU's Greg Ostertag, who solicited a handshake after the nasty slam. Led by senior guard Steve Woodberry (15.5 ppg) and senior forward Scott (13.7 ppg), the Jayhawks earned a No. 4 seed in the NCAA Tournament and finished 27-8 after bowing out in the Sweet 16.

1994-95

With a No. 1 seed and the path to the Final Four going through Kansas City, Mo., the Jayhawks stumbled again, this time to a physical bunch from Virginia that beat the Jayhawks, 67-58, on a night when Kansas never found its rhythm. Led by a core group (Jerod Haase, Jacques Vaughn, Raef LaFrentz and Scot Pollard) that what would go on to make up one of the best teams in school history a couple of years down the road, the Jayhawks finished 25-6.

1995-96

With most key members of the previous team back and standout freshman Paul Pierce joining the crew, the Jayhawks earned a No. 2 seed and advanced to the Elite Eight before falling to fourth-seed and eventual national runner-up Syracuse in Denver. LaFrentz (13.4 ppg) and Pierce (11.9 ppg) led KU in scoring, and the Jayhawks finished 29-5.

1996-97

Arguably the best team in school history joined the group of tourney heartbreak when the top-seeded Jayhawks were upset by No. 4 seed Arizona in the Sweet 16. Again led by LaFrentz (18.5 ppg) and Pierce (16.3 ppg), with the backcourt of Vaughn and Haase serving as the perfect complement to those future pros, the Jayhawks finished 34-2 and were the first of three No. 1 seeds to fall to the Wildcats during Arizona's historic run to the national title.

1997-98

For the third consecutive season, Pierce (20.4) and LaFrentz (19.8) led the Jayhawks in scoring, but for the third year in a row, the highly favored Jayhawks were bounced from the tournament in heartbreaking fashion. Entering the tournament with two All-Americans and at 34-3 overall, top-seeded KU drubbed Prairie View A&M, 110-52, in the opener before falling to No. 8 seed Rhode Island, 80-75, in Round 2. LaFrentz graduated and Pierce left a year early, ending one of the best three-year stretches in KU history.

> STREAK, 9AA

Enter now to win local prizes!

TRUITY CREDIT UNION

BRACKET CHALLENGE

1st Prize: \$500

2nd Prize \$250

3rd Prize \$100

KUSPORTS.COM/BRACKETCHALLENGE

We love trees and happy customers!



FAST AND PROMPT SERVICE!

YOUR LOCAL TREE EXPERTS:



Kenny



Nick



Chad



Cuinn

785-843-TREE

KansasTreeCare.com

Streak

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8AA

1998-99

The loss of Pierce and LaFrentz brought the Jayhawks back down to earth, and Kansas finished the 1998-99 season with double-digit losses for the first time in Williams' tenure at KU. Sophomore center Eric Chenoweth (13.5 ppg) and senior guard Ryan Robertson (12.8 ppg) led the KU offense, but the Jayhawks managed just a No. 6 seed and, despite a career-high 31 points from Robertson, fell to third-seeded Kentucky, 92-89 in overtime, in the second round.

1999-2000

The slide continued for Kansas after the 10-loss 1998-99 season. But 2000 also marked the beginning of a major surge. Led by junior Kenny Gregory (12.8 ppg) and talented freshmen Nick Collison, Drew Gooden and Kirk Hinrich, the Jayhawks struggled to a No. 8 seed and lost to top-seeded Duke in the second round, 69-64, in a game that featured a battle between Hinrich and former Duke point guard Jason Williams. KU finished the season 24-10.

2000-01

Sophomores Gooden (15.8 ppg), Collison (14 ppg) and Hinrich (11.5) and senior Gregory (15.6 ppg) led the Jayhawks to a 26-7 record and No. 4 seed in the Big Dance. But after easy victories over Cal State Northridge and Syracuse in Dayton, Ohio, the Jayhawks were knocked out by top-seeded Illinois, which was led by future Kansas head coach Self. The young Jayhawks were beaten up by the more physical and veteran Illini squad, and the disappointment of that loss paved the way for back-to-back Final Fours in the next two seasons.

2001-02

Back in the Final Four for the third time under Roy Williams, and the first time since 1993, Kansas entered the tournament as a No. 1 seed for the first time since 1998. After surviving an injury scare to Hinrich in the first round, KU got revenge on Illinois from the previous year and then rolled over high-scoring Oregon, 104-86, in the Elite Eight. The Jayhawks caught a bad break with their Final Four matchup, losing 97-88 to eventual national champion Maryland in



Journal-World File Photo

THE 2007-08 JAYHAWKS won the program's first national championship since 1988.

a game that many said should have been the national title game. Gooden (19.8 ppg), Collison (15.6 ppg) and Hinrich (14.8 ppg) led the Jayhawks, who finished 33-4.

2002-03

The Jayhawks' talented trio of seniors-to-be lost Gooden to the NBA draft, but that didn't stop Hinrich (17.3 ppg) and Collison (18.5 ppg), with the emergence of sophomores Aaron Miles, Keith Langford and Wayne Simien, from getting back to the Final Four. Second-seeded Kansas lost six regular-season games and bowed out early in the Big 12 tourney but reached the Final Four for a second straight season by going through a bracket that included tough wins over No. 3 seed Duke and No. 1 seed Arizona. From there, the Jayhawks blitzed Dwyane Wade and Marquette in the Final Four before falling to Syracuse, 81-78, in the national title game. The loss to Carmelo Anthony and the Orangemen wound up being the last coached by Roy Williams at Kansas, and the Jayhawks finished the season 30-8.

2003-04

Kansas' first NCAA Tournament run under Self came as close as it gets to the Final Four without actually reaching it. Led by juniors Simien (17.8 ppg) and Langford (15.5 ppg), the fourth-seeded Jayhawks lost to Georgia Tech in overtime in the Elite Eight after drubbing a UAB team that knocked off top-seeded Kentucky. Self, who left Illinois to come to Kansas, led the Jayhawks to a 24-9 record during his first season in Lawrence.

2004-05

The incredible four-year run of seniors Simien (20.3 ppg), Langford (14.4 ppg), Miles (9.3 ppg) and Michael Lee ended in heartbreak in Oklahoma City. That's where No. 3 seed KU fell to 14th-seeded Bucknell in the opening round of the tournament, when Simien's last-gasp chance at a game winner fell short in the final seconds. Kansas finished 23-7 during Self's second season in charge.

2005-06

With three freshmen finishing among the top four in scoring, the Jayhawks ushered in a whole new era of leading men. Brandon Rush (13.5 ppg), who led the team in scoring in all three of his seasons at KU, joined Mario Chalmers (11.5 ppg) and Julian Wright (8.5 ppg) to lead the new-look squad made more in Self's mold. Before they could become champions, these young Jayhawks had to take their lumps, and never did the blow hit harder than in the NCAA Tournament, where 13th-seeded Bradley became the second team in a row to knock the Jayhawks out in the first round. Fourth-seeded KU finished the year 25-8.

2006-07

After back-to-back first-round exits, the top-seeded Jayhawks, led by sophomores Rush (13.8 ppg), Chalmers (12.2 ppg) and Wright (12.0 ppg), got back on track with a deep tourney run that ended with a 68-55 loss to second-seeded UCLA in the Elite Eight. KU's run featured a second-round win over No. 8 seed Kentucky and Rajon Rondo and a dog-fight win

over Southern Illinois in the Sweet 16. KU finished the season 33-5.

2007-08

Led by a group of juniors who suffered a first-round loss to Bradley in the tournament during their freshman season, the Jayhawks rolled to the program's first national championship since 1988, knocking off Davidson and Steph Curry, North Carolina and Roy Williams and Memphis and John Calipari along the way. The Jayhawks were a part of history during this run, as all four No. 1 seeds reached the Final Four for the first time. Led by Rush (13.3 ppg), Chalmers (12.8 ppg), Darnell Jackson (11.2 ppg) and sophomore forward Darrell Arthur (12.8 ppg), KU drubbed UNC in the national semifinals, leading Carolina 40-12 at one point, and ripped off an incredible comeback from 9 down with 2:12 to play to knock off Memphis in overtime in the title game. Chalmers' miracle 3-pointer in the final seconds tied the game, and KU dominated in OT to finish the season on top of the mountain with a 37-3 overall record.

2008-09

Forced to replace all five starters from the national championship team one year earlier, the Jayhawks leaned on the dynamic duo of junior Sherron Collins (18.9 ppg) and sophomore Cole Aldrich (14.9 ppg) to finish the season 27-8. Freshman point guard Tyshawn Taylor and freshman forward Marcus Morris, whose brother, Markieff, also was on the team, helped KU survive the loss of six of the eight players who played in the title game in 2008. Seeded third in

the Big Dance, Kansas lost in the Sweet 16, 67-62, to a Michigan State team that went on to lose to North Carolina in the national championship game.

2009-10

With Collins (15.5 ppg) and Aldrich (11.3 ppg) back to lead the team one more time, Kansas roared to a monster regular season, losing just twice en route to a No. 1 seed in the Midwest regional. Freshman starter Xavier Henry (13.4 ppg) added firepower to KU's lineup, and the Jayhawks rolled into the tournament as the No. 1 overall seed. But KU ran into a tough Northern Iowa team in Oklahoma City, and a monster shot by Ali Farokhmanesh was the final dagger in UNI's upset over the Jayhawks, who finished the season 33-3.

2010-11

With one of its most veteran squads since the 2008 national title, Kansas, for the second season in a row, enjoyed a two-loss regular season and entered the NCAA Tournament with a No. 1 seed. As if that weren't enough, KU's Southwest regional blew wide open early on, paving the way for what looked to be a favorable road to the Final Four. Seeds 2 through 8 lost in the first or second round, and KU rolled into the Elite Eight, where it faced 11th-seeded VCU and up-and-coming coach Shaka Smart. The Jayhawks, led by the Morris twins (Marcus 17.2 ppg and Markieff 13.6 ppg), never got going offensively and shot poorly from the outside in the regional final in San Antonio, and they were knocked out by VCU, 71-61, ending the season with a 35-3 record.

2011-12

Back as a starter for the fourth year in a row, senior point guard Taylor (16.6 ppg) teamed up with junior forward and All-American Thomas Robinson (17.7 ppg) to lead a thin but talented KU squad on a run all the way to the national title game. Second-seeded Kansas squeaked by Purdue in Omaha, Neb., to get the run started and then played stellar defense in wins over North Carolina State, North Carolina and Ohio State to reach the title game against Anthony Davis and a loaded Kentucky team. The Jayhawks fought, but the Wildcats were simply too much, and UK delivered Calipari his first national championship, 67-59. KU finished the season 32-7.

➤ **HISTORY, 10AA**

*"Saving You Money
Is a Slam Dunk!"*

- Kurt Goeser State Farm Agency

Talk to your neighbors, then talk to Kurt.

Odds are, they're already part of the State Farm® family.

With so many ways to save and discounts of up to 40 percent, you'll want to be part of the family too. Like a good neighbor, State Farm is here. **CALL FOR A QUOTE 24/7.**



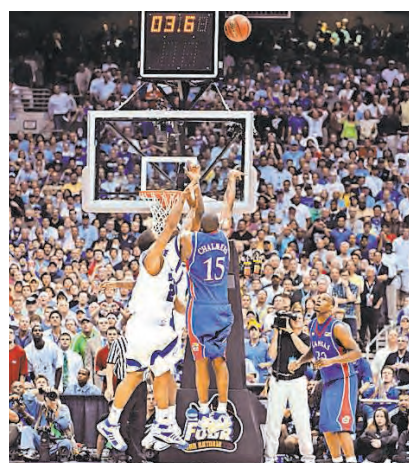
Kurt Goeser, Agent
1811 Wakarusa Dr., Ste. 100
Bus: 785-843-0003
www.kurtinsures.com
Serving Lawrence Over 10 Years

State Farm™

statefarm.com®

*Discounts vary by states. State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company State Farm Indemnity Company, Bloomington, IL

**LAWRENCE
PHOTO STORE**



**PRINTS OF ICONIC
KU BASKETBALL
PHOTOGRAPHS
NOW AVAILABLE**

LawrencePhotoStore.com

LAWRENCE
JOURNAL-WORLD

KU
sports
L.com

**Authentic
Tortillas
Made In
House**

El Potro
Mexican Cafe

**Best of
Lawrence**

**Voted #1 Mexican Food
in Lawrence 8 years in a row!**

**Open for dine in or patio dining.
Also offering Curbside Delivery or Doordash
and EatStreet for home delivery**

3333 S. Iowa St, Lawrence, KS
(In Front of the Movie Theater)
785-331-2500 • www.elpotrokc.com

**SAVE \$5
WITH A \$30 ORDER OR MORE**

(Cannot be combined with other offers. One coupon per table. Coupon Expires 4/30/2021)

History

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9AA

2012-13

With seniors Elijah Johnson (9.9 ppg) and Jeff Withey (13.7 ppg) stepping into the roles vacated by Taylor and Robinson, Kansas earned a No. 1 seed behind the strong play of future lottery pick Ben McLemore, who sat out the 2012 run and averaged 15.9 points during his first season. The Jayhawks, for the third time since he left, faced former KU coach Roy Williams in the tournament — this time in the second round in Kansas City, Mo. — and Self improved to 3-0 at Kansas against his predecessor. That put Kansas into the Sweet 16, where the top-seeded Jayhawks played well for 35 minutes but collapsed late against No. 4 seed Michigan and lost in overtime. KU finished the season 31-6.

2013-14

Landing Andrew Wiggins, the top-rated player in the 2013 recruiting class and future No. 1 overall pick in the NBA draft, helped the Jayhawks survive after the departure of some mainstays, but Wiggins (17.1 ppg) was not enough to lead the Jayhawks very far in the postseason. With dominant freshman center Joel Embiid (11.2 ppg) sidelined with a back injury for the final six games of the season, Kansas earned a No. 2 seed in the Midwest regional but did not make it out of the

first weekend, losing to No. 10 seed Stanford, 60-57, in St. Louis. Kansas finished the season 25-10, marking the first time since 1999-2000 that KU's loss total reached double digits.

2014-15

With the disappointment of an early exit in 2014 still lingering, junior Perry Ellis (13.8 ppg) and sophomores Frank Mason III (12.6 ppg) and Wayne Selden (9.4 ppg) led Kansas to a No. 2 seed and second-round match-up with surging Wichita State, which reached the Final Four in 2013 and saw an undefeated season go down in 2014 with a second-round tourney loss to Kentucky. For years, people had been clamoring for a KU-WSU matchup, and they finally got it in Omaha, Neb. With Ellis dealing with an injury, Ron Baker and Fred VanVleet proved to be too much for the Jayhawks, who fell, 78-65, and ended the season at 27-9.

2015-16

After a 27-4 regular season, the Jayhawks won three straight games in the Big 12 tournament to take the postseason crown and entered the NCAA Tournament at 30-4 and as the No. 1 overall seed in the Big Dance. After second- and third-round wins over big-name schools UConn and Maryland, Kansas faced second-seeded Villanova in the Elite Eight in Louisville, Ky., and lost a dogfight, 64-59. Leading scorer Ellis was limited to 4 points on five shots, and KU shot just 6 of 22 from 3-point range in its loss to the eventual national champions.



Journal-World File Photo

KANSAS GUARD DEVONTE' GRAHAM (4) HOISTS THE MIDWEST REGIONAL TROPHY as the 2017-18 Jayhawks celebrate a trip to the Final Four following their 85-81 overtime victory over Duke.

2016-17

Despite playing mostly with a four-guard lineup and limited depth, KU rolled to its 13th consecutive Big 12 title behind the strength of its guards: national player of the year Mason (20.9 ppg), Devonte' Graham (13.4 ppg) and Josh Jackson (16.3 ppg). Senior Landen Lucas held things down in the paint for a Kansas team that Self said "may not play the best, but there's no team tougher." Snagging a No. 1 seed for the seventh time in Self's 14 seasons, the Jayhawks played as well as any team in the tournament for three rounds, including a Sweet 16 dismantling of Purdue, before watching the wheels fall off in an Elite Eight loss to Oregon in Kansas City, Mo. KU finished the season 31-5.

2017-18

With Big 12 Player of the Year Graham teaming up with fellow senior Svi Mykhailiuk to lead another thin Kansas squad, the Jayhawks won an NCAA-record 14th consecutive Big 12 regular-season title and reached the program's first Final Four since 2012. After surviving No. 16 seed Penn and Seton Hall in Wichita, the Jayhawks topped Clemson in the Sweet 16 in Omaha, Neb., before knocking off No. 2 seed Duke in an overtime classic to reach the Final Four. Transfer Malik Newman, who was red hot throughout the postseason, scored all 13 KU points in OT, which was needed because of Newman's defense on Duke star Grayson Allen on the final possession of regulation. Back in San Antonio for the

Final Four with dreams of repeating the feat from 10 years earlier, the Jayhawks ran into a buzzsaw in the national semifinals, losing to eventual national champion Villanova, which hit 18 3-pointers in a 91-79 win, including an NCAA-record 13 in the first half. KU finished the season 31-8.

2018-19

Led by Dedric Lawson's 20 double-doubles, the Jayhawks finished the regular season at 23-8 overall and 12-6 in Big 12 play. While that showing was good enough to keep Kansas in the top 15 all season, it was not good enough to extend KU's streak of 14 consecutive Big 12 titles. The Jayhawks entered the NCAA Tournament as a 4 seed in Salt Lake City, and after a strong showing in Round 1 were blitzed by Final Four-bound Auburn in the second round. It marked the first time since 2015 that KU failed to get out of the first weekend, and the Jayhawks finished the season 26-10.

2019-20

With the All-American duo of Udoka Azubuike and Devon Dotson, the Jayhawks finished the regular season at 28-3 overall, 17-1 in Big 12 play and on a 16-game winning streak. Dotson led the Big 12 in scoring. Azubuike led the Big 12 with 15 double-doubles. And junior Marcus Garrett earned Naismith Defensive Player of the Year honors. Those three players, along with a defensive-minded supporting cast, were poised to deliver Kansas the No. 1 overall seed, but the COVID-19 pandemic put a halt to the 2020 tourney before the brackets were ever announced.

Indy

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2AA

"I think it'd be just like the NBA bubble was last year in Orlando," Self said. "Even though you think, 'Well there's not as many fans, or no fans, and how can you generate energy,' the energy comes from, 'See that guy there? He's trying to kick your butt, and you're trying to kick his.'"

The NCAA has announced that fans, up to 25% capacity, will be allowed into the handful

of venues hosting this year's tournament. So the games will not be played in empty venues like the one KU and Kentucky played in at Bankers Life Fieldhouse in Indianapolis earlier this season. But there's little doubt that the setup, both on game day and on off days, will be dramatically different from what the coaches and veteran players have experienced in the past.

Different doesn't necessarily mean bad, though.

"I think there's some pros," Self said. "I think being in Indy, hopefully for a long time, could be a positive. I think there'll

be less distractions this year than there ever has been, with tickets and family members and that kind of stuff, because we're not going to be able to interact with them.

"We're basically just stuck with each other," Self added. "So I can see that kind of being a positive. I can also see it be very draining and tiresome, too."

It's not just the accommodations that will be different. The tournament schedule also will be slightly altered since teams, fans and television crews will not have nearly as far to go between the different sites.

This year's NCAA Tournament will open with the First Four round on Thursday, and first-round games will follow on Friday and Saturday.

Round 2 games will be played on the next two days, March 21 and 22, and all eight Sweet 16 games will be played on Saturday, March 27, and Sunday, March 28, with each game getting its own time slot on television.

The Elite Eight will take place entirely in prime time on Monday, March 29, and Tuesday, March 30. And the Final Four and national title games will be played on

their original dates of Saturday, April 3, and Monday, April 5, at Lucas Oil Stadium.

Mackey Arena in West Lafayette, Ind., and Simon Skjodt Assembly Hall in Bloomington, Ind., will each host two First Four games on Thursday, March 18.

Those venues then will join Bankers Life Fieldhouse, Hinkle Fieldhouse, Indiana Farmers Coliseum and Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis as hosts of this year's first-round games.

Starting with the second round, the four Indianapolis venues will

host the rest of this year's tournament.

"When we go to Maui or when we go to Orlando or wherever, and you have the energy of having all those teams stay in the same hotels or whatnot and you know you're crossing paths all the time, pride becomes a factor," Self said. "You're not going to be able to go outside. You can't leave the hotel. You're stuck with everybody that's there, and there'll be some juices flowing just from the competitive standpoint, just inside the hotel, which I think will be good."

BEER MADNESS

2021

MR BREWS Taphouse

ALL AMERICAN BURGERS

WINNER

SCAN ME

Lucky Bucket Groover Hazy IPA

Goller Premium Lager

New Holland Dragon's Milk White

Crane Apricot Weisse

2nd Shift Big Little Hop Hazy Double IPA

Martin City Pub Ale

Great Divide Orabelle Tripel

Servaes Like Butterflies Sour Witbier

Fields & Ivy Kaw River Double IPA

Zipline Berried Gold Lager

Sandhills Barred Owl Scottish Export

Avery Ellies Brown

Limitless JOCO Juice Hazy IPA

Roughtail Polterweisse

Delirium Tremens

Left Hand Peanut Butter Milk Stout

MR BREWS Taphouse

BEER MADNESS

16 BEERS, 1 CHAMPION

16 BEERS! ONE CHAMPION!

Enter In Person or Online. Enter to win a \$50 dollar Gift Card. Provide name, phone number, and email address and consent to be contacted by us and entered into our pubclub. (All ages welcome to win) Enter Wed. March 17th thru Mon. April 5th.

\$25 Entry Will get you - 5oz Taster of each beer, a commemorative glass, and a chance to win the 1st, 2nd, or 3rd prize. Neon's, mirrors, glassware, T-shirts, \$100 dollar gift card, \$50 dollar gift card, \$25 dollar gift card. ID will be checked upon ordering before beer is served. Enter to win prizes between March 17th and March 25th. Purchasing of sixteen 5oz tasters & glass available until April 5th while supplies last. -MUST BE 21 YEARS OR OLDER

Determination of beers advancing to the next round will be based on the pints sold of each beer.

3140 Iowa St. Suite 106 Lawrence, KS
lawrence.mrbrewstaphouse.com | 785-856-1010