

Old-school Malachi Wood making his dream come true



Larry Vaught
Contributing Writer

If you want to call Kentucky offensive lineman Malachi Wood an old-school type of person, he's fine with that.

The former three-star prospect from Madison Central picked Kentucky over other schools because he wanted to stay close to home. He redshirted in 2023, made 10 starts in 2024 and then was in for only 43 snaps in 2025. However, rather than transfer looking for additional playing time like many players are doing, Wood wanted to stick it out at Kentucky.

Now he's in position to be Kentucky's starting right tackle when the season opens Sept. 5.

"Me and my grandfather (who played college football at Cincinnati) have talked about that (being an old-school player), especially in today's college football with everybody hitting the transfer portal and all the craziness that's been going on," said the 6-foot-8, 329-pound junior. "But I am just really committed to being here, and it's a dream come true to play here. There's nowhere else I'd rather be."

That didn't change when former coach Mark Stoops was fired and new coach Will Stein was hired in December. He's also now with his third offensive line coach, Cutter Leftwich, at Kentucky.

"Yeah I was here no matter what," Wood said. "I'm

really excited about this season. I got a really good feeling about this year with all the buzz in the building and how excited everybody is. I have a really good feeling about how the year is going to go."

So why is Wood an old-school soul?

"I don't know. Maybe it is just being close to home, or maybe I just love Kentucky. I mean, this is where I always wanted to play at so I didn't see any point in leaving," he said. "This is where I started my college career and is where I want to finish. I believe in finishing what you start."

"I wasn't worried about the coaching change. I was just going to come in every day and work as hard as I could. If I got a shot (to start), I got a shot. But if not, I was just still gonna be here for the long term."

Kentucky offensive coordinator Joe Sloan likes all he has seen from Wood.

"I think he's a very talented football player. He can run, he can move, he can bend. He's got length," Sloan said. "I know he played really well a couple years ago. Had some injuries or whatever last year, and I think he's worked himself out of that."

"I think he's done a really nice job of kind of working into our system, learning the plays. As he got to participate

more and more in the spring, he really attacked it. I'm pumped for him."

Even defensive coordinator Jay Bateman has an appreciation for what Woods has done.

"When we first got here he was still a little dinged up," Bateman said. "He's a giant human. He definitely looks like an offensive tackle. He's also a really smart player. I think he will play this game as long as his body allows him to."

Leftwich agrees about Wood's football IQ but also likes other one trait a lot.

"People that size normally don't have the hip flexibility, the ankle flexibility to be able to sink their hips and explode through blocks and finish blocks. You see that consistently with how he plays," Leftwich said.

Wood felt he put on "good weight" in the offseason along with muscle he needed to help his body move better and quicker.

"I got thrown into the fire a couple years ago. You always think you're ready until it happens, and then you kind of get hit in the mouth and realize that you're a little under prepared," the former Madison Central standout said. "So I think over-preparing has been a big thing for me. I've also been working really hard on getting as strong as I can and being able to bend as well as I can."

He'll likely be starting with four transfers in the offensive line anchored by Baylor transfer Coleton Price at center.

"He's our center, so that's really who you look to be the calm in the chaos on and off the field. Really look to him to lead us," Wood said. "But all these guys really understand the offense. We take

time to learn the little things. Connection is our first DNA trait. We lift together, eat lunch together, hang out and do whatever we can to be together."

Wood has leaned on Tennessee transfer Lance Heard, UK's expected starting left tackle, for guidance. Heard expects Wood to be a future NFL draft pick.

"That's huge coming from him because he's one of the guys that I look up to," Wood said. "He's been playing at a high level in the SEC for longer than I have, so being able to pick his brain has been amazing. It's a huge compliment from a guy I look up to and I really appreciate the confidence he has in me."

Kentucky backup center Reece Potter has liked what he's seen from Zoom Diallo and Alex Wilkins, Mark Pope's expected starting backcourt next season.

Potter calls Diallo, a point guard who transferred from Washington, as a "very vocal guy" who is a natural leader.

"He's very vocal about his losses even in practice. He hasn't had many yet, but when he loses, you know it," Potter said. "He's had some tremendous practices and I think he is going to be very impactful for us at point guard this year. He's that leader you want."

"He's always vocal, win or lose. He makes sure you know it is about winning. It's very important to have a point guard like him who is such a great leader. That means so much to a team to have a vocal, talented point guard."

Wilkins was a freshman standout at Furman who could play the point but is being counted on more as a scoring two guard.

"I saw clips of him last year in March Madness (against Connecticut) but seeing it in person is a lot different. He's very good and very quick and decisive," Potter said. "He makes all the right plays and is a very impactful player in so many ways."

"He's very speedy. He's



Vicki Graphy Photography
Kentucky defensive coordinator Jay Bateman thinks Malachi Wood could have a long professional football career

quicker than I realized. But he's also a very powerful player. He can impact a game scoring or passing. He's going to be very versatile and very good for us this year."

BURGIN INDEPENDENT BOARD OF EDUCATION NOTICE OF HEARING FOR RECALLABLE TAX RATES

The Burgin Independent Board of Education will hold a public hearing to hear comments from the public regarding a proposed General Fund tax levy of 76.8 cents on real property and 76.8 cents on personal property

PUBLIC HEARING
August 27, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. Eastern Time
(4:30 p.m. Central Time)
Burgin Independent School Cafeteria
440 E. Main Street, Burgin, Kentucky

The General Fund tax levied in fiscal year 2026 was 81.8 cents on real property and 81.8 cents on personal property and produced revenue of \$2,809,553.19. The proposed General Fund tax rate of 76.8 cents on real property and 76.8 cents on personal property is expected to produce \$3,147,068.70. Of this amount, \$201,759.23 is from new property and personal property. The compensating tax for 2027 is 69.6 cents on real property and 69.6 cents on personal property and is expected to produce \$2,852,031.01. The proposed rate is expected to generate more revenue than received in the preceding year. The general areas to which revenue of \$337,515.51 above 2026 revenue is to be allocated are as follows: Cost of collections, \$10,000.00; building fund, \$98,465.83; instruction, \$119,049.68; transportation, \$50,000.00; and maintenance of plant, \$60,000.00.

This notice is published pursuant to KRS 160.470. Under KRS 132.017, 4.4 cents of this proposed rate is subject to taxpayer recall. The General Assembly has required publication of this advertisement and information contained herein.

NOTICE: The tax rate advertisement in the 8/6/26 edition of The Harrodsburg Herald was inadvertently ran mistakenly by the newspaper. We apologize for the inconvenience.

PUBLIC NOTICE LEGAL NOTICE

TO: THE UNKNOWN HEIRS, UNKNOWN DEVISEES, UNKNOWN LEGATEES, UNKNOWN DISTRIBUTEES, UNKNOWN TRANSFEREES, AND UNKNOWN ASSIGNS OF THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS:

S.H. JONES, HETTIE JONES (SAME PERSON AS HETTIE BIRD AND HETTIE BYRD), S.B. JONES (SAME PERSON AS SAMUEL B. JONES), VIOLET C. JONES, LLOYD HUGHES JONES (SAME PERSON AS LOYD H. JONES), AND THEIR UNKNOWN SPOUSES, AND ANY AND ALL PERSONS CLAIMING ANY RIGHT, TITLE OR INTEREST IN OR LIEN UPON ANY OF THE LAND DESCRIBED HEREIN BEING TRACT THREE, CONTAINING 7.71 ACRES, MORE OR LESS, AS DESCRIBED MORE PARTICULARLY ON THE SUBDIVISION AND CONSOLIDATION PLAT OF L.H. JONES ESTATE AND LLOYD H. JONES, JR., DATED OCTOBER 15, 2024, AND OF RECORD IN PLAT CABINET E, SLIDE 193, MERCER COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE, AND TRACT FOUR, CONTAINING 114.77 ACRES, MORE OR LESS, AS DESCRIBED MORE PARTICULARLY ON THE BOUNDARY RETRACEMENT SURVEY AND CONSOLIDATION PLAT OF THE L.H. JONES ESTATE, DATED MARCH 24, 2026, AND OF RECORD IN PLAT CABINET E, SLIDE 336, MERCER COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE, AND GENERALLY ALL PERSONS WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Please be advised that the undersigned has been appointed as your Warning Order Attorney in Mercer Circuit Court, Case Number 26-CI-00241, styled as Susannah Jones, Clarice True McRae and Lloyd Hughes Jones, Jr. v. The Unknown Heirs, Unknown Devisees, Unknown Legatees, Unknown Distributees, Unknown Transferees, and Unknown Assigns of the following individuals: S.H. Jones, Hettie Jones (same person as Hettie Bird and Hettie Byrd), S.B. Jones (same person as Samuel B. Jones), Violet C. Jones, Lloyd Hughes Jones (same person as Loyd H. Jones), and their Unknown Spouses, and any and all persons claiming any right, title or interest in or lien upon any of the land described herein being Tract Three, containing 7.71 acres, more or less, as described more particularly on the Subdivision and Consolidation Plat of L.H. Jones Estate and Lloyd H. Jones, Jr., dated October 15, 2024, and of record in Plat Cabinet E, Slide 193, Mercer County Clerk's Office, and Tract Four, containing 114.77 acres, more or less, as described more particularly on the Boundary Retracement Survey and Consolidation Plat of the L.H. Jones Estate, dated March 24, 2026, and of record in Plat Cabinet E, Slide 336, Mercer County Clerk's Office, and generally all persons whom it may concern. This action concerns the Petition to Quiet Title.

The Warning Order Attorney must file a report not later than 50 days from its appointment. If there is any reason why the relief requested should not be granted, then you should advise the Warning Order Attorney so an assertion of the same as a defense can be made.

Further, if the person to whom this legal notice is addressed is deceased, an infant, a prisoner, incompetent or disabled, a member of the Armed Forces of the United States, or under any other legal disability or immunity, then the Warning Order Attorney should be advised of the same so that it may act as Guardian ad Litem to defend and protect the interest of such person.

Be advised that I am not your private legal counsel. I have been appointed by the Court for the sole purpose of warning you of this pending case. In the event you obtain legal counsel or act as your own attorney, then you should file a responsive pleading to this action, which sets forth any defense and/or denials. Otherwise, judgment may be entered against you for all relief requested. Any responsive pleading should be filed with the Mercer Circuit Court, Ms. Jennifer Edwards, Mercer County Judicial Center, 224 S. Main Street, Harrodsburg, Kentucky 40330.

Hon. Christopher J. Tucker
Sheehan, Barnett, Dean, Pennington,
Dexter & Tucker, P.S.C.
114 South Fourth Street
Danville, KY 40422
Telephone: 859-236-2641

Season

from 1B

and followed it up with an ace serve to force a Lincoln County timeout, 17-11.

Mercer let the Patriots back in the set with some errors and a miscommunication in the back line, 21-17. The Titans settled down and secured the set with Wilham scoring their match point on a kill set by Moore, 25-17.

Lincoln County scored the first two points of the third set and Mercer's first point came from a Patriots service error, 1-2. Flach had a kill just out of bounds, but an error from Lincoln County tied up the game, 3-3. Keller denied a patriots spike at the net and a dig from Nichols helped Moore score on a kill into the back line, 7-4. The Titans couldn't dial in their kills, making it a one-point game, 9-8. The Patriots took the lead on a net interference call on Mercer, 10-11.

Moore set up Whitenack for an easy point at the net, and Junior Katelyn Day had an ace serve to tie the game, 13-13. The Patriots strung together three points, capitalizing on the Titans' errors, 13-16. Mercer battled back with an ace from Nichols and a kill from Flach, 16-17. Wilham scored back-to-back from the service line to regain the lead for the Titans, 18-17. A kill from Flach into the Patriots' back line prompted a timeout to regroup, 20-17. Two errors from Lincoln County and a block from Whitenack set up match point, 24-18. Moore scored the final point on a kill to secure the win, 25-20.

The Titans had a strong opener and battled back from errors to put away the Patriots in three quick sets. Mercer plays next as part of the McCreary Invitational and will play four games at McCreary Central High School on Saturday, Aug. 22, starting at 9 am.

Stats
Kills: Flach 10, Moore 6, Wilham 5, Whitenack 4, Wilson 1, Stamps 1.
Assists: Moore 13,



The Harrodsburg Herald/Wesley Bird
Senior Charlee Flach worked the back line for the Titans in their 3-0 sweep against the Patriots on Monday, Aug. 17.



The Harrodsburg Herald/Wesley Bird
Freshman Karis Wilham handled the dig in Mercer's back line against the Patriots Monday, Aug. 17.

Wilham 6, Nichols 5.
Digs: Nichols 24, Moore 17, Wilham 7, Flach 6,
Wilson 2, Smith 2.
Blocks: Whitenack 2, Keller 1.