

# Cats hook Longhorns, win season-best fourth straight game

**By Keith Taylor**  
*Kentucky Today*

LEXINGTON, Ky. (KT) — Make it four in a row for Kentucky.

The Wildcats (13-6, 4-2 Southeastern Conference) won for the fourth straight time for the first time this season with an 85-80 triumph over Texas on Wednesday night.

Unlike its three previous comeback victories, Kentucky didn't need a second-half rally to defeat the Longhorns. The Cats finished it off at the foul line, hitting 6 of 8 free throws in the final minute after not making a field goal in the last 5:48 of the game.

“We played one of the top offensive teams in the country and I thought we had some great individual efforts on the defensive end and some team efforts,” Kentucky coach Mark Pope said. “I’m proud of our guys for grinding out the win.”

Denzel Aberdeen made all six free throws in the final minutes and led the Wildcats with 19 points. Paced by Aberdeen, the Wildcats made 30 of its 35 foul shots and connected on 23 of those in the second half. Kentucky withstood 11 lead changes and 11 ties.

Collin Chandler and

Otega Oweh added 18 points each, with Chandler scoring a career-high. Playing with an illness, Chandler played a big role in the second half and scored 14 points, including a pair of 3-pointers. Chandler missed the shoot-around prior to the contest because of a stomach bug.

“I thought he was great and it was hard,” Pope said. “You’re kind of like cold sweats in bed for three straight days and then get up and come compete in the game. For him to come perform like he did, I thought he was elite.”

Chandler practiced despite the illness but took a break to prepare for the game.

“I missed shoot-around today mostly to just catch up on sleep and rest and being sure I had all my energy for tonight, but there was never doubt on whether I was going to play or not,” he said. “I haven’t been feverish which has been the nicest thing about it, but there’s been stuff going around. That’s just how the winter is so it’s something I get every year.”

While he was effective offensively, Pope also praised Chandler’s performance



**Collin Chandler scored a career-high 18 points in Kentucky’s 80-75 victory over Texas on Wednesday night.**  
*(Photo by Les Nicholson)*

on the defensive end against Texas guard Jordan Pope.

“He put together a really incredible performance, seven rebounds in a game where that was (against) one of the best offensive rebound teams in the country, and unbelievable job on Pope when he was guarding him,” Pope said. “I thought both (Aberdeen) and Collin really gave us great efforts trying to try to corral Pope.”

Texas coach Sean Miller said Chandler was a difference-maker for Kentucky. Chandler got the call after Kam Williams left the

game in the first half with a broken foot.

“They have great depth,” Miller said. “They have the ability to bring guys in off the bench that can make a difference and make plays. Collin Chandler was six-for-six from the line, 18 points. He really hurt us tonight. He had two really big threes. He comes off

the bench and he can change the game. He is a really good player and I think he’s an important player for Kentucky.”

Pope said Williams broke a bone in his foot and will be sidelined “for a while.”

“He’s just a beautiful kid,” Pope said. “I thought he actually made some special

plays tonight. So we’re going to get him back healthy as soon as we possibly can.”

Malachi Moreno provided eight points but was a factor on the defensive end with five blocks and added six assists with only two turnovers.

“That’s a ridiculous number,” Pope said of the blocks. “That’s really good.”

Miller also praised the outing by Moreno against his squad.

“I think he’s one of the best freshmen in the country certainly has a big role on Kentucky’s team, and I think he’s improving,” he said.

Texas forward Dailyn Swain led all scorers with 29 points. The Longhorns, who edged the Wildcats 82-78 a year ago in Austin, fell to 11-8 and 2-4 on the season.

Gametracker: Ole Miss at Kentucky, noon, Saturday. TV/Radio: ESPN, UK Radio Network.

## ‘I like where we stand right now:’ Stein happy with first UK roster

**By KEITH TAYLOR**  
*Kentucky Today*

LEXINGTON, Ky. (KT) — Will Stein’s first roster at Kentucky is nearly intact.

The first-year Wildcats’ coach is eager to focus solely on Kentucky after he helped lead Oregon to the national semifinals. Stein said he feels “really good with where we’re at” during a press conference Monday at Kroger Field.

“We were strongly resourced to make sure that we got the right players,” he said. “We’re still pushing the envelope there, but we have fielded a team I believe that can go out there and compete immediately. It really starts with depth, that’s the key part in college football.”

Stein credited general manager Pat Biondo and assistant Pete Notchta for filling the void while he finished out his term as Oregon’s offensive coordinator.

“Those guys really spearheaded building this roster, along with me,” Stein said. “I like where we stand right now.”

The Wildcats focused on rebuilding and fine-tuning the offensive line, a component that Stein considers beneficial especially during the latter part of the season.

“That was a major, major thing,” Stein said. “The teams that win in November, December, January, (are good) in the trenches. So, making sure that we are solidifying the offensive line

was a major piece to this puzzle.”

The Wildcats added Notre Dame transfer quarterback Kenny Minchey along with veteran running backs CJ Baxter (Texas) and Jovantae Barnes (Oklahoma), coupled with the addition of former Oklahoma and LSU wide receiver Nic Anderson.

A former signal caller himself, Stein likes what Minchey brings to his offensive system.

“(He’s) extremely accurate (and) he’s got great athleticism,” he said. “Think when you talk to him and you guys meet him, he is phenomenal person, very smart. We did our background on him, everybody we talked to, even guys on that staff, felt like they still would have won 10 games with Kenny out there playing quarterback ... I feel like he’s got a really high upside in this game and he’s somebody that I was really excited to get.”

Minchey will get the early nod to replace Cutter Boley, who entered the transfer portal late and transferred to Arizona State.

“I wish him nothing but the best,” Stein said. “No. 1, (he’s a) great person. Obviously (we) recruited him prior out to Oregon. There’s some things that are out of our control and felt like we put a really good plan together in place and it just didn’t work out. There is nothing wrong with that. I’m really excited about what he does at his next

spot, his next venture ... I just think he’s a great person.”


Stein’s first recruiting class, a mixture of transfers and newcomers, features 10 players from Texas, seven from Georgia and five from Florida and three from Kentucky. Stein’s overall philosophy is to recruit the home state first for the best talent.

“The best way that we’re going to move forward is really starting inside the state of Kentucky - it has to,” Stein said. “In this next class, there’s a lot of really good talent in the state right now, a lot. When I’ve seen Kentucky at its best, it’s homegrown talent. That’s where you got to start.”

However, Stein added the Wildcats will do whatever it takes to recruit the best players to fit the system.

“(After that) then you look at really the five-, six-hour radius around us, Nashville, Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Chicago, Detroit. I’m even going to Charlotte, Atlanta, those are the cities that you really want to hone in on, even St Louis.

“This is a national brand — the University of Kentucky. This logo holds weight. This is where you can use your resources and your relationships that you built, maybe prior to going to a state like Texas, to really dive into South Florida, even the DMV area, to use those connections to acquire players that want to be here. We’ll go wherever.”



**ALLISON BALL**  
AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

**Independent Auditor's Report**

The Honorable Michael Williams, Livingston County Judge/Executive  
The Honorable Sonya Williams, Livingston County Clerk  
Members of the Livingston County Fiscal Court  
**Report on the Audit of the Financial Statement Opinions**

We have audited the accompanying Statement of Receipts, Disbursements, and Excess Fees - Regulatory Basis of the County Clerk of Livingston County, Kentucky, for the year ended December 31, 2024, and the related notes to the financial statement.

**Unmodified Opinion on Regulatory Basis of Accounting**  
In our opinion, the accompanying financial statement presents fairly, in all material respects, the receipts, disbursements, and excess fees of the Livingston County Clerk for the year ended December 31, 2024, in accordance with the basis of accounting practices prescribed or permitted by the Commonwealth of Kentucky to demonstrate compliance with the Commonwealth of Kentucky's regulatory basis of accounting and budget laws as described in Note 1.

**Adverse Opinion on U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles**  
In our opinion, because of the significance of the matter discussed in the Basis for Adverse Opinion on U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles section of our report, the financial statement does not present fairly, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, the financial position of the Livingston County Clerk, as of December 31, 2024, or changes in financial position or cash flows thereof for the year then ended.

**Basis for Opinion**  
We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS) and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards (GAS), issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, and the Audit Program for County Fee Officials issued by the Auditor of Public Accounts, Commonwealth of Kentucky. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statement section of our report. We are required to be independent of the Livingston County Clerk and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audit. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinions.

**Basis for Adverse Opinion on U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles**  
As described in Note 1 of the financial statement, the financial statement is prepared by the Livingston County Clerk on the basis of the accounting practices prescribed or permitted by the laws of Kentucky to demonstrate compliance with the Commonwealth of Kentucky's regulatory basis of accounting and budget laws, which is a basis of accounting other than accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. The effects on the financial statement of the variances between the regulatory basis of accounting described in Note 1 and accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, although not reasonably determinable, are presumed to be material and pervasive.

**Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statement**  
Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of this financial statement in accordance with accounting practices prescribed or permitted by the laws of Kentucky to demonstrate compliance with the Commonwealth of Kentucky's regulatory basis of accounting and budget laws. Management is also responsible for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of a financial statement that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial statement, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Livingston County Clerk's ability to continue as a going concern for twelve months beyond the financial statement date, including any currently known information that may raise substantial doubt shortly thereafter. Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statement  
Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statement as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinions. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with GAAS and GAS will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statement.


In performing an audit in accordance with GAAS and GAS, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statement, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statement.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Livingston County Clerk's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statement.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Livingston County Clerk's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time. We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control-related matters that we have identified during the audit.

**Other Reporting Required by Government Auditing Standards**  
In accordance with Government Auditing Standards, we have also issued our report dated September 19, 2025, on our consideration of the Livingston County Clerk's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, grant agreements, and other matters. The purpose of that report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with Government Auditing Standards in considering the Livingston County Clerk's internal control over financial reporting and compliance. Based on the results of our audit, we have presented the accompanying Schedule of Findings and Responses, included herein, which discusses the following report finding:  
2024-001 The Livingston County Clerk's Office Does Not Have Adequate Segregation Of Duties  
Respectfully submitted,

Allison Ball  
Auditor of Public Accounts  
Frankfort, KY  
September 19, 2025

State law requires the Auditor of Public Accounts to annually audit fiscal courts, county clerks, and sheriffs; and print the results in a newspaper having general circulation in the county. The complete audit and any other audit of state agencies, fiscal courts, county clerks, sheriffs, and property valuation administrators may be viewed in the reports section of the Auditor of Public Accounts' website at auditor.ky.gov or upon request by calling 1-800-247-9126.



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