

# Dear Dr. Todd and Mr. Barnhart

## For UK Basketball To Be Premier, Coach Smith Must Step Down Now.

Adolph Rupp built the University of Kentucky Basketball Program upon his standards of excellence. Coaches Hall and Pitino honored and sustained Rupp's tradition of excellence for decades, and UK remained the premier program in the game. Coach Smith has transformed this once preeminent college basketball program into mediocrity with his lowered expectations. This deterioration has occurred in Recruiting, Player Retention, Style of Play, and National Competitiveness, which have destroyed the program's "public aura." The press has publicly ridiculed the program's diminished condition. This program is more important than any single coach, player, administrator, or fan, and the following examples illustrate why Coach Smith must step down **NOW**.

### RECRUITING HAS BECOME AN AFTERTHOUGHT FOR THIS PROGRAM

- For decades, youngsters dreamed of playing for Kentucky, but today's top players do not include UK on their dream lists.
- UK has now gone two recruiting years without a viable replacement for Chuck Hayes at Power Forward.
- Chris Lofton, Kentucky Mr. Basketball in 2004 did not receive a scholarship offer from Coach Smith.
- Coach Smith has never recruited and coached his own chosen player in a Final Four.
- "The Wildcats are turning into bargain hunters because of their failings, which also include unfocused recruiting tactics." <http://www.courier-journal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060517/COLUMNISTS02/605170525/1002/SPORTS>

### PLAYER RETENTION HAS BEEN ABYSMAL

- Over the last 9 years, UK has signed 37 recruits. 17 left early, but none to the NBA [Rondo is likely to make the NBA, but that is pending], and at least four more tried to flee before they completed their college eligibility.
- Of the seven new players in the last two recruiting classes, three fled the program, and two others tried to flee.
- As Rondo has pointed out, skill development for many players, who have chosen the UK program, has lagged.
- "Rondo said he realized by midseason that the style of play at Kentucky was hurting his draft chances, and so making the decision to jump to the NBA was relatively easy. 'Coach agreed that the style we were playing probably wasn't the best fit for me.' Rondo said." [http://insider.espn.go.com/espn/blog/index?entryID=2461970&name=ford\\_chad](http://insider.espn.go.com/espn/blog/index?entryID=2461970&name=ford_chad)

### STYLE OF PLAY IS NOT WHAT COACH SMITH PROMISED OR THE PLAYERS AND FANS WANT

- When Coach Smith arrived, he promised to continue the pressing, up-tempo style of his predecessor.
- With each new season, Coach Smith has promised to increase the tempo of his game.
- Consider these facts about UK's game since Coach Smith arrived at UK:
  - Pace immediately slowed, and has steadily slowed further over the past nine seasons
  - Offensive output immediately fell and has never regained its prior levels of effectiveness over the past nine seasons
  - Defensive effectiveness immediately fell, and has steadily declined further over the past nine seasons
  - Average Margins of Victory immediately declined, and have steadily declined further over the last nine seasons
- Brandon Wright said he chose UNC over UK because of UNC's up-tempo pace.
- "Recruiting woes are only the by-product of UK's inability to reach championship status, not the cause. UK's 'style of play' is the chief underlying cause of why recruiting is down. Players (and fans) who grew up watching UK's intense full and half-court pressure, followed by an equally intense fast break, do not want to play for [a] team bent on half-court offense 100 percent of the time." [http://www.courierpress.com/ecp/gleaner\\_sports/article/0,1626,ECP\\_4477\\_4700568,00.html](http://www.courierpress.com/ecp/gleaner_sports/article/0,1626,ECP_4477_4700568,00.html)
- "Kentucky's current philosophy seems more 'play not to lose.' rather than 'let's get 'em.' If you take a thoroughbred and train it slow down, that's what you get -- a good horse that loses. Don't blame the horse." [http://www.courierpress.com/ecp/gleaner\\_sports/article/0,1626,ECP\\_4477\\_4700568,00.html](http://www.courierpress.com/ecp/gleaner_sports/article/0,1626,ECP_4477_4700568,00.html)

### NATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS HAS DISAPPEARED

- Coach Smith is the highest paid coach in the history of college basketball, yet UK's program has declined from greatness under his watch.
- Coach Smith is responsible for the longest Final Four Drought in UK History under a single coach
- Coach Smith's teams have lost ten or more games in four of the last seven seasons [Nothing in UK's history comes close]
- During the last eight years, Seven Teams earned multiple trips to the Final Four taking 17 of the 32 spots and claiming 7 of the 8 titles. The teams were Mich. St [4/1], Duke [3/1], U Conn [2/2], UNC [2/1], Florida [2/1], Maryland [2/1], and Kansas [2/0]. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_NCAA\\_Tournament\\_Final\\_Four\\_Participants](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_NCAA_Tournament_Final_Four_Participants)

### "PUBLIC AURA" HAS DIMINISHED

- "First, the court pointed to testimony by Doug Dickey, a former athletic director at the University of Tennessee. The court found his testimony 'impressive and convincing' concerning the need for a college basketball program to have a particular 'public aura.' That testimony included assertions that since basketball programs are in the marketing and entertainment business, for a program to be successful, the public needs to know that its coach is ... [looking out for the long-term interests of the program] so that fans will buy tickets and support the team." **Nolan Richardson, Jr., v. B. Alan Sugg, et al., Nos. 04-3049/3187 (8th Cir. 2006) at 21.** <http://www.ca8.uscourts.gov/opndir/06/05/043049P.pdf>

Coach Smith has not protected and preserved the long-term interests of the program, has allowed the program to fall from greatness into mediocrity, and has stated that he regards his work at UK as simply another "job." The fans and boosters believe that you are aware of these and other facts, and that you share these concerns about the state of our Basketball program. We want you to know that UK fans will support your decision to make this badly needed change **NOW** before the Program sustains any further damage.

## Concerned Fans for UK Basketball

For more information about how you can join our efforts, please email: [ConcernedFans4UK@alltel.net](mailto:ConcernedFans4UK@alltel.net)