

2001 Season Review

The Kentucky Wildcats set out to make the 2001 season one to remember, not just because it was the 25th anniversary of a tradition-rich program, but because the squad was looking to put a disappointing 2000 campaign behind it for good.

Looking toward the future with renewed hope and a talented group of newcomers, the Cats opened the schedule in the month of August for only the fourth time in program history at the Southern Methodist Invitational in Dallas, Texas over Labor Day weekend. UK won its fourth season opener in five years with a 3-1 win over host SMU. After dropping a close 3-2 decision to Duke, UK took second-place honors with a 3-1 win over Weber State. Sophomore Sissy Canfield and junior Kristen Batt earned All-Tournament honors.

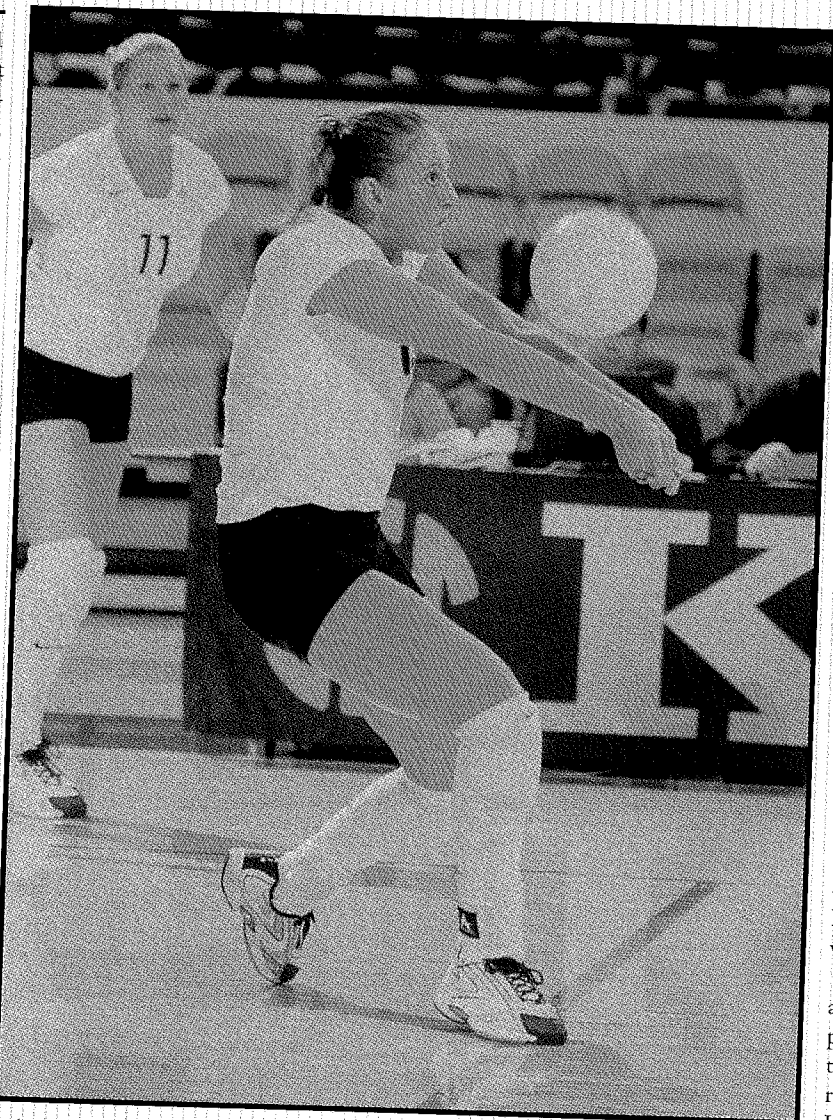
The Cats returned home for a mid-week opener against intrastate rival Western Kentucky. Kentucky gave up an early first-game lead to the Hilltoppers before taking the second round. WKU returned to take the third game before a close battle in the fourth proved to be the decider. The Wildcats managed to even the score at 28 before Western took the match.

Kentucky returned to the road for the second consecutive weekend to play in the Western Michigan Radisson Invitational. UK dropped its second straight 3-1 decision to host WMU to open the tournament before rebounding with back-to-back wins over James Madison and Valparaiso to improve to 4-3 on the season.

Following the September 11 terrorists attacks on New York and Washington, D.C., a match with intrastate rival Louisville was postponed and the Kentucky Conference Challenge set for the weekend following the attacks was canceled as the Southeastern Conference and many others halted athletics for the weekend in memory of the fallen.

UK returned to the court after a 13-day absence to open SEC play in Lexington against Arkansas. The time off the court appeared to have affected the Wildcats, as they fell in three games to the Razorbacks. However, Kentucky closed the weekend with a solid 3-0 sweep of LSU.

Kentucky played its SEC road opener in Gainesville against the Florida Gators. Despite keeping things close in the first game, UK had no



Kristen Batt moved onto UK's career top-10 lists for kills, digs and attack attempts during the 2001 season.

answer to the dominant UF service game and dropped the match in three games. The Cats again rebounded to close the weekend, however, grabbing a 3-1 win over the Georgia Bulldogs. The win tied UK's total number of wins in the 2000 season and was the Cats' first over the Dogs since 1996. Freshman Sarah Spinner had a game-high 22 kills in the contest.

The Wildcats returned home to face Morehead State, not fully prepared for the tenacious play of the Eagles. MSU managed to grab its first game-win over the Cats since 1994 and with the final 3-2 UK margin, earned two wins in a match for the first time in 21 years. Kristen Batt sealed the win at 15-9 in the fifth game.

South Carolina visited Lexington on Oct. 5 and left with a 3-1 win, continuing a back-and-forth

UK season and dropping the Wildcats' record to 7-6. UK stayed on the winning side in another thrilling mid-week match up by defeating Evansville 3-2.

The Cats' six-game home stand continued when Alabama came to town on Oct. 12. UK shot a measly .069 on the match, giving the Tide the 3-0 win with just a .171 hitting percentage. Kentucky went on to split its third consecutive two-match SEC weekend series with a 3-0 win over Auburn. Junior Anne Koester had nine kills in 10 attempts for a .900 hitting performance in the win.

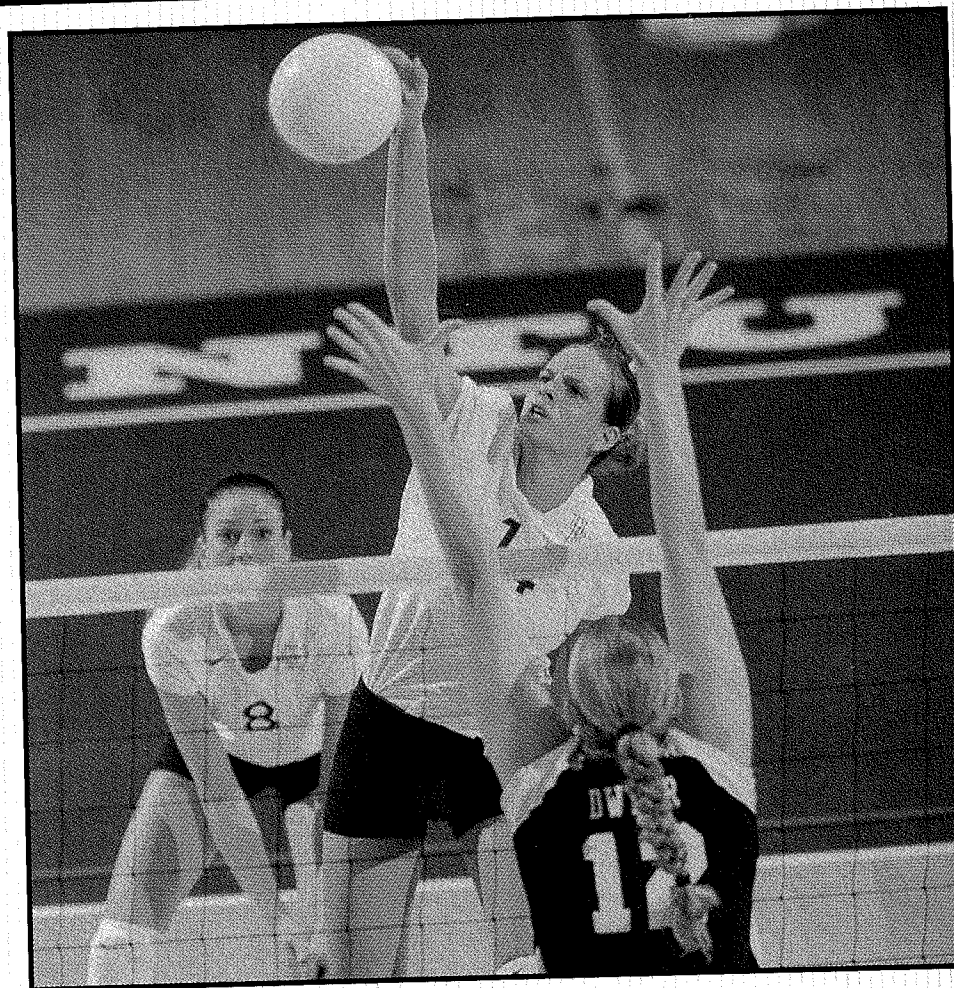
UK received another non-conference challenge when Butler came to town. After winning the first game, 30-26, Kentucky went up 2-0 on a 30-28 game two win. The Bulldogs weren't ready to quit though, and took a tight third game, 30-28. The teams fought through 14 ties in the decisive fourth game before Kentucky sealed the match with the 31-29 win.

Kentucky had a setback after the Butler victory, dropping back-to-back matches to South Carolina on the road and Notre Dame in Lexington. After being swept

by the Gamecocks in Columbia, UK returned home for a tough test against the Irish. The teams fought to a fifth game before UND walked away with a 17-15 game five win.

Looking for answers, the Wildcats took to the road for an important SEC weekend. UK's rebound came in the form of a 3-1 win over Ole Miss and a 3-0 sweep of Mississippi State. But the Cats continued their seesaw season, dropping a home-and-home weekend with Tennessee to open November. While Kentucky lost only one of its seven games with the Vols by more than 10 points, the losses seemed to dampen the sweep of the Mississippi schools.

In its final home weekend, however, UK rebounded with a win over Georgia, giving the Wildcats its first regular-season sweep of the Bulldogs since the 1996 season. Senior Day proved to be a different story for Kentucky. After bidding farewell to two very important team members, April Barnhorst and Whitney Sample, the Cats were dealt a tough 3-0 loss to league-leader Florida



Sarah Spinner recorded 349 kills in 2001, the most by a UK freshman since Krista Robinson in 1991.

to close out regular season league play.

Despite the ups and downs of the season, the Cats had accomplished one of its top goals, to return to the SEC Tournament. As the seventh seed in the tournament, Kentucky had its work cut out against No. 2 Arkansas. The Razorbacks finished the regular season with a 12-3 conference mark. After keeping things close in the first game, UK dropped to the Hogs, 30-28, 30-19, 30-19.

Kentucky still had two regular-season matches to play after the conference tourney because the SEC plays its tournament a week earlier than other leagues. The Cats first faced intrastate rival Louisville in a rescheduled match on Thanksgiving Eve. UK came out flat however as the tough Cardinal squad took the win in three games.

The final match of the season came on the road at Clemson on Nov. 23. In a tug-o-war battle, UK dropped the first game before taking the next two by scores of 30-25. The Tigers got in on the action in game four, taking the decision by the same score before eliminating UK's chances with a 15-10 game five win, ending UK's season at 13-15.

Though the record would indicate a less than stellar year to some, the Wildcats could be proud of tremendous growth and rebuilding. The team more than doubled its win total from the season before and returned to postseason play, setting the tone for seasons to come.

2001 Final Statistics

RECORD:	OVERALL	HOME	AWAY	NEUTRAL
ALL MATCHES	13-15	6-7	4-6	3-2
CONFERENCE	6-8	3-5	3-3	0-0
NON-CONFERENCE	7-7	3-2	1-3	3-2

No.	Player	ATTACK					Pct	Set		SERVE		DIG		BLOCKING								
		G	K	K/G	E	TA		A	A/G	SA	SE	SA/G	RE	DIG	Dig/G	BS	BA	Total	B/G	BE	BHE	
8	April Barnhorst	105	260	2.48	103	637	.246	16	0.15	17	25	0.16	31	198	1.89	28	79	107	1.02	10	1	
7	Sissy Canfield	105	280	2.67	121	660	.241	6	0.06	0	3	0.00	3	23	0.22	13	82	95	0.90	5	3	
10	Kristi Kelley	64	47	0.73	19	127	.220	601	9.39	18	21	0.28	2	104	1.62	1	24	25	0.39	1	19	
5	Anne Koester	100	212	2.12	95	531	.220	46	0.46	8	14	0.08	6	95	0.95	2	67	69	0.69	13	5	
13	Kristen Batt	104	368	3.54	162	988	.209	15	0.14	19	15	0.18	46	293	2.82	7	38	45	0.43	8	1	
11	Katie Bright	43	34	0.79	16	87	.207	3	0.07	2	5	0.05	12	56	1.30	0	7	7	0.16	1	0	
12	Whitney Sample	66	33	0.50	15	101	.178	699	10.59	18	35	0.27	4	132	2.00	0	11	11	0.17	2	16	
14	Sarah Spinner	104	349	3.36	198	922	.164	15	0.14	36	101	0.35	43	271	2.61	8	15	23	0.22	8	0	
9	Liz McCaslin	15	19	1.27	17	79	.025	0	0.00	0	2	0.00	1	8	0.53	2	4	6	0.40	0	0	
4	Leigh Marcum	0	0	0.00	0	0	.000	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0	0	0	0.00	0	0	
15	Julie Davis	0	0	0.00	0	0	.000	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0	0	0	0.00	0	1	
3	Toni Lee	35	1	0.03	2	13	-.077	5	0.14	0	5	0.00	8	55	1.57	0	0	0	0.00	0	2	
1	Lauren Speelman	44	0	0.00	1	11	-.091	3	0.07	8	8	0.18	16	83	1.89	0	0	0	0.00	0	1	
6	Aleisha Craven	105	2	0.02	6	33	-.121	18	0.17	17	29	0.16	32	222	2.11	0	0	0	0.00	0	1	
TEAM																						
UK		105	1605	15.29	755	4190	.203	1427	13.59	143	263	1.36	213	1540	14.67	61	327	224.5	2.14	48	49	
Opponents		105	1457	13.88	638	3961	.207	1299	12.37	204	228	1.94	142	1454	13.85	59	423	270.5	2.58	68	61	