

# Bring the Madness

By Kevin Faris

Doesn't it feel good for March to mean something this year? A year ago, as UK headed into the SEC tournament, the Wildcats were coming off a Senior Day loss to UGA and a loss to UF where the head coach may have told the best player to stop shooting. It seems like a long, long time ago, but it was only a year.

Now, heading into the SEC tournament, the Wildcats are ranked #2 in the country, and along with Kansas and Syracuse, viewed as one of the favorites to make it to Indianapolis for the Final Four. UK's return to the national spotlight means a return to the national conversation. So, when you are watching Dick Vitale or Andy Katz on ESPN or Seth Davis or Clark Kellogg on CBS, be careful taking what they say about the Cats as the gospel. National writers, announcers, and commentators watch a lot of games and see a lot of teams, but they often overlook the details in favor of going with the more popular or superficial meme. In an effort to dig a little deeper, here is the truth behind what you'll hear about UK over the next few weeks.

UK's inconsistent perimeter shooting will hurt them in the tournament. This opinion was very popular directly after UK's 74-65 loss to Tennessee where they went 2-22 from three-point range. This was actually a theory dating all the way back to the beginning of the season, or even further back to when Jodie Meeks announced for the NBA. Some surprising shooting from Eric Bledsoe and Patrick Patterson, combined with Darnel Dodson and Darius Miller, pushed this aside for awhile, but the UT game brought it all back. So, is that true? While bad shooting could hurt UK, if the Cats lose it will probably be, at best, the third reason. Those who focus on the UT game overlook the poor perimeter shooting in the Vanderbilt and Mississippi games that preceded it. Despite shooting 4-24 against MSU and 3-16 against Vandy, UK still won. Why? Defense. If UK plays solid defense, and keeps the other team off the boards, they can survive bad three point shooting and, as seen in the regular season finale against UF, good three point shooting can mask poor defense and rebounding. But, to go far they need to do two of the three.

UK's lack of experience will hurt them in the heat of postseason play. This was set up early in the season, mainly as a way to contrast UK and KU. The theory is that UK has the talent, but KU has the experience to go with that talent. The truth is that experience and talent is the best combination, but I feel pretty confident in saying that while Coach Cal



Coach Calipari and John Wall

is at UK, the chances UK ever starts 3 or more seniors is going to be pretty low. So talent is going to be what we have and to be honest, the idea of experience is a little overrated.

Although Carmelo Anthony at Syracuse is the only freshmen-led team to win the NCAA title that stat is a little skewed. Kobe Bryant, LeBron James, Kevin Garnett, and Tracy McGrady are a few of the current NBA superstars who never played a game of college and after watching LeBron dominate during his first NBA year, I have a hard time believing he couldn't lead a team to an NCAA tournament title. The best comparison to UK's current situation is the Ohio State team of 2007. That team, led by a great big man in Greg Oden, a great point guard in Mike Conley, and a young sharpshooter in Daquean Cook finished as the runners-up to Florida. If that sounds familiar, it should. Cousins is better offensively than Oden, Wall is better overall than Conley, and Bledsoe is a bit more well rounded than Cook. Plus, OSU had no one to compare to Patrick Patterson. Freshmen-led teams may not have won the title, but they can get there. So, experience is nice, but talent is pretty good too.

UK's Demarcus Cousins will lose his cool and cost the team. Cousins arrived in Lexington with this reputation (presumably well deserved) and despite not having any incidents since the UL game, still hears announcer after announcer discuss his temper. The truth is quality big men are fouled, hacked, and abused more than we can imagine, and Cousins is no exception. Despite the fouls, despite the trash talk, despite opposing fans calling and leaving racist messages, Cousins has not had a blow up. In fact, he probably deserves a little praise for keeping his temper in check, something Fox Sports Jeff Goodman has noticed, but which other basketball writers have overlooked. To be honest, if there was a UK player I would worry about losing their temper on the court, I would worry more about Bledsoe than Cousins. Unfortunately for Cousins, his reputation is alive and well in the minds of the refs. I don't think it will be an issue, but if it is at least UK still has Daniel Orton.

This is not to say that UK will win the title or even make the Final Four. The truth there is that none of us know. In a single elimination tournament, anything can happen. That being said, you have to like UK's chances and despite any real or perceived weaknesses, I think we all prefer the situation this year to the one last year. Remember last year, when UK went to the NIT? Yeah, me neither. ■

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# The Calipari Era

## Lessons from Year One

### By Heather C. Watson

When John Calipari assumed his role as the Men's Basketball Coach at the University of Kentucky last March, even the most casual fan knew that we were in for some changes. Coach Cal's patented dribble-drive offense would move the game farther inside the paint than we were used to seeing. The superstar recruits would bring heightened attention to the program. These changes were nothing new to Kentucky fans, though. New coaches bring new styles of play; that's why we hire them. And the attention is nothing new; we've had our fair share of high-profile fans, Sports Illustrated covers, and accolades over the years. We were prepared for change upon Coach Calipari's arrival. We weren't, however, expecting a full-scale paradigm shift. As the first regular season of the Calipari era draws to the end, we've come to realize that it isn't just a new coach we've signed up for; it's a whole new ball game.

As Calipari Era fans, we've not only had to adjust to the new style of play and the renewed interest in the team. We've actually had to re-learn fundamental tenants of the game and fandom. The rules have changed quickly and, oftentimes, for the better. Not since the NCAA's 1986 adoption of the three-point shot have we had to reassess our view of the game so radically and so quickly. The very lexicon of Kentucky basketball has shifted in the past year, presenting fans with a steep learning curve. The lessons of the first year of the

Coach Cal Era are about changing our perceptions and expectations, and always setting our goals higher.

The first lesson of the Calipari Era ran counter to our most fundamental understanding of the sport. A win is a win, Coach Cal taught us, except when it's a loss. Early on, Calipari's candid assessment of poorly-played yet ultimately victorious games drew sharp criticism from diehard fans. As Coach enumerated the wins which were punctuated by lackadaisical performance or good luck, diehard fans began to bristle. What win was good enough for this guy?, we asked. Soon, we learned that Coach Cal expects his players to not only win games, but to live up to the highest expectations possible. This is the kind of perfectionism that pays off in the post-season, and in life itself.

Knowledge is power. Now, of course, Schoolhouse Rocky taught us this important lesson years ago. Coach Cal, however, has transformed it into the mantra of Kentucky Basketball. Calipari has opened up to the media and the fans in an unprecedented manner. To the basketball purist, this means that Coach Cal provides almost unprecedentedly informative post-game interviews, in which he breaks down plays and provides meaningful insight and analysis. To a more casual observer, Coach Cal's open-book policy makes Coca-Cola seem under-advertised. Coach Cal has turned Kentucky Basketball into what business marketing experts would term "an international brand." He is everywhere: on Facebook and Twitter, on the App Store, in China, and he is spreading the message of Kentucky Basketball to new and unlikely fans, resulting in growth, revenue, and respect for the program. This studied, methodical approach to informing the



public about the Wildcats would earn Coach Cal an A in business school, and certainly solidifies fans' faith in our coach.

The SEC Tournament doesn't mean that much. Now, for generations of fans who faithfully trek South for a weekend of drinking, eating, socializing, shopping, and maybe even watching a game, this may be the hardest lesson of all. The SEC Tournament is a great time to escape to a sunnier climate and break out the conference team mascots needlepoint belts our mamas lovingly made for us to wear every March. It's an even better time to assert our dominance over our longtime rivals. In the Coach Cal Era, we've been told that the Southeastern Conference Tournament title doesn't mean too much; we should, rather, keep our eyes on the ultimate goal, the NCAA Tournament. While this seems unsettling to those of us whose granddaddies raised us to believe that beating Tennessee is more important than just about anything on the planet, Coach does raise a valid point. Our impressive season ranking has secured us a high seed in The Big Dance. We should, at least theoretically, reserve our efforts for when they are needed most. Even though winning would be nice.

A Freshman is a Freshman is a.... The Coach Cal Era has also led us to re-interpret the very nature of our players' seniority. As we speculate whether our players are "True Freshmen" or "One-and-Dones," we question how these distinctions color our perception of their performance. A Freshman mistake is a lot more forgivable if we believe the offending player has two or three more years to redeem himself, rather than a handful of games. And we wouldn't be at all offended if P-Pat were to participate in two Senior Days. The lesson of Coach Cal's roster is that we need to look past preconceived notions of age and seniority to see the player's talents and contribution.

Come to think of it, the Lessons of the Coach Cal Era apply to a lot more than just basketball. ■

## On the cover

This Week's guest Ace Cover Artist, Photographer, and Cover Designer (subbing in for designer Clif Dickens) is Larry Joe Treadway, better known as **Tread**, with two new limited edition books *Blurfect* and *Game Day*. *Game Day* is a super-limited edition handmade artist's book that documents a day at the cathedral of basketball—Rupp Arena—as 24,000 fans showed up for ESPN's "Game Day" program.

At gotreadgo.com, Tread hosts his photoblog. Collectors can contact him about prints there. Lookers and readers can go too, and comment and follow his links to the work of his colleagues around the world.

*Blurfect*, features indeed 36 of Tread's canonical toy camera images. But it also features 36 Tread koans: "As a kid, was there any greater freedom than that damned orange bike? I miss that kind of free." [blurfect.com](http://blurfect.com)

What you're looking at when you're looking at Tread

We ask musicians about their influences and then probe aural corners to see if we were right. These are some great photographers who fly around the edges of Tread's work.

Edward Weston: (1886-1958) A Highland Park, Ill. native who worked in California near Big Sur for most of his life,

taking photographs. Founder of *f/64*. Known for work with still lifes (his peppers series) nudes, landscape and depth of field. ([edward-weston.com](http://edward-weston.com))

**William Eggleston:** (1939-) Memphis native, credited with introducing color to art photography in his Museum of Modern Art show in 1976 and for finding beauty in ordinary scenes in the South. Eggleston himself was influenced by Robert Frank and Henri Cartier-Bresson and is known for his "democratic camera" approach. His "The Red



Ceiling" (1973) is his most famous work, and was used as album cover art on the Big Star "Radio City" record. ([egglestrust.com](http://egglestrust.com))

**Ralph Eugene Meatyard:** (1925-1972)

Worked here in Lexington, where he was a one-time

optician at Tinder-Krauss-Tinder and a founder of the Lexington Camera Club. Now acknowledged as one of the great photographers, worked in relative isolation here in Kentucky, developing a "No Focus" imagery style and portraying unsettling questions visually. Family members, dolls and masks are some of the trademarks of his imagery. David Grubbs, the Louisville musician behind has a tune called "Eyeglasses of Kentucky" that is a tribute to Meatyard on his current record. ([masters-of-photography.com](http://masters-of-photography.com))

**Larry Fink:** (1941-) Originally from Brooklyn, Fink is also influenced by Cartier-Bresson. His one-man shows at the Whitney, Museum of Modern Art and his commercial work for clients like Smirnoff, Vanity Fair and the New York Times Magazine, show the focus on the moment and intimacy of gesture. ([larryfinkphotography.com](http://larryfinkphotography.com))

**Robert Mapplethorpe:** (1946-1989) Originally from Floral Park, N.Y., Mapplethorpe worked with a Hasselblad medium format camera, shooting floral still life, portraits of celebrities like Grace Jones and Andy Warhol, and nude studies, which included homoerotic scenes. The Patti Smith "Horses" album cover portrait is by Mapplethorpe, who was central in the NYC 1970s punk scene. Near the end of his life, controversy over the subject matter of some of his works became a national debate over the funding of art, with "The Perfect Moment" show in Cincinnati as one point of contention. ([mapplethorpe.org](http://mapplethorpe.org)). ■



**TREAD — Selected shows**

- PhotoMedia Center "Holga 3.0"  
Pittsburgh
- "Toy Joy" Houston's FotoFest  
Houston
- "The Art of Photography"  
Lyceum Gallery, San Diego
- "Toy Polloy – An International Showing"  
The Icehouse, Lexington
- "We Are All Photographers Now"  
Musée de L'Elysée, Lausanne  
Museum for Photography  
Switzerland
- Soho Photo  
New York

**TREAD — Selected awards**

- "Best of Show B/W"  
PhotoMedia Center "Holga 3.0"
- "Juror's Award"  
Photography – What Now?
- Winner  
Al Smith Professional Award  
Kentucky Arts Council
- Winner  
World Toy Camera Day 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007
- Winner, Best Writing 2006
- Winner, Best Writing 2007
- Nominee, Best Toy Camera Photography
- Nominee Photoblog of The Year  
Photobloggie Awards ■

**Toy, blur, filmwasting backstory**

In January 2010, in Los Angeles – a city that could be said to know its way around an image and photographic technology—the "Best in Show" at Photo LA 2010 was awarded to a blurred black and white grouping shot with a plastic camera held together with black tape.

Susan Burnstine is one of the original "Filmwasters," one name adopted by a group of art photographers who also are hailed by terms such as "lo-fi," "toy camera," "plastic," and "analog."

The group shoots with cheap plastic, toy cameras named Holga, Diana, Lomo or with retrofitted Polaroids or, as with Burnstine, cameras of their own design.

One leader in the group, Warren Harold, produces beautiful art with a pinhole camera made of a diaper box.

And, they work with film. In an era of nearly infinite digital possibility for manipulations unto perfection, they embrace, with as few interventions as possible, photography's original infinities: the light and the moment. And it is perfect.

The cameras by nature, "leak light" and create distinctive "vignetting" and "blur." The creation of art with them strips nearly every technology away. The light, the moment, the eye.

Communing on Web sites like filmwasters.org, toycamera.org, and flickr.com since about 2004, the group, which includes resident agent provocateur Tread, holds a World Toy Camera Day event, started out with shows like "Krappy Kamera" at Soho Photo and has grown to be part of (and the Best in ) shows like LA Photo 2010 and other major gallery exhibitions.

Now these "film" and "toy camera" and "Polaroid" effects are available as part of digital iPhone photo applications and image processing software packages. You can buy a white snake-skin motif Holga to go with your skinny jeans.

That will probably not stop these shooters with their 4-setting, taped, musty plastic cameras and their refrigerated film stashes.

Infinite light means there's enough for everyone. ■



## Dip into Basketball at The Melting Pot!

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meltingpot.com

## TALKING TREAD

We asked around about Tread. Here is what some leading photographers and photo editors said:

Tread's photography combines a touch of the ordinary with a surreal pinch of gothic South narrative imagery as seen through a crappy plastic lens. Throw in a little bit of Meatyard -- his photographic mentor and local hero -- with a fistful of rock and roll and you come out with an unforgettable pastiche of soulful, witty images filled with Southern charm and humor.

Bill Vaccaro

Fine Art Photographer

Chicago

<http://billvaccaro.visualserver.com/>

The nice thing about Tread - a guy I have never actually met - is that he seems to have a bit of twisted genius to him. His imagery has a kinetic maybe I should try that quality of someone who probably makes images easily, with a seeming punk rock lack of concern with perfection. And he then puts words together that bring a rhythmic bourbon and onion smack you with them. Photo tribes tend to repeat themselves endlessly and so the people that propel any group forward are fewer and further between and probably will come from without as often as not. Tread seems to fit the scout or outlander mold, the guy that just might bring the knowledge of ice to the glandlocked photo villagers. The combination of words and images may or may not always work but the combination will definitely leave an impression and I have the sense that, like most psycho-hobo wayfarers, Tread will have already moved on to something else, more or less unconcerned by the various critiques and interpretations of those in his wake.

Gordon Stettinius

[www.eyecaramba.com](http://www.eyecaramba.com)

Richmond, Virginia

When I first saw his work i was very much taken by it. I work as photo editor for Vice magazine and I have this website for talented photographers, so I see many pics every day. I am generally not too much into Holga photography, because I think that few people really know how to create a very interesting image, whilst many just find it interesting for the random "strange" pictures they take. Well, Tread is definitely one who knows what to do with it.

Lele Saveri, (has used Tread images in a couple of shows around Europe, some publications)

[ithoughtiwasonline.com](http://ithoughtiwasonline.com)

Milan, Italy

Tread exploits toy cameras of all kinds with stunning results. The endearing characteristics of these less than perfect cameras don't define his images. Instead they inform and accentuate the unrefined process of becoming a man. Light leaks, blur, aberrations and frayed edges all work together, illustrating the imperfections of change and memory.

When I first got involved with the online toy camera community, I immediately gravitated towards Tread's style and content. The hallmarks of growing from boy to man are captured and studied, reminding us of those joys and fears but without affectations. He not only tells these stories photographically and verbally but reaches a little deeper, urging me to be a better father, a better man.

Warren Harold

Photographer

Houston, Texas

[www.thatwasmymyfoot.com](http://www.thatwasmymyfoot.com)