

Running On Empty

Wanderings from the Woods & Water
by Jay Bicknell
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It runs the truck on empty and by the end of the season the old body is running on empty. When opening day rolls around next season I will be ready to do it all over again.

Dates to Remember

- Last day of February; time to buy new hunting/fishing license
 - 2014 Elk Season permit drawing is open to apply.
 - Time to clean out wood duck boxes
 - Woodcock starts spring migration; great time to work bird dogs.
 - Time to get the boat ready for spring fishing.
- Until next week, get out and enjoy God's creation!

Cold feet, frozen fingers, blurry eyes, early mornings, frustration, breaking ice, wading frigid water, ducks stopping short, geese not even giving a look.

That pretty much sums up water fowling, and I love every second of it; especially when it all comes together.

When everything works just right, the ducks are committed and the geese drop from the sky to get in the decoys.

My wonderful, beautiful wife let me know the other day that I was spending more money than usual on fuel. I played dumb to her comment, but in reality the reason the tank is running on empty more than normal

is waterfowl.

The past few weeks I have been driving, looking for ducks and geese. I have even driven by spots that I can't hunt, to see if it's holding ducks and geese.

Waterfowl hunting is a serious addiction that has no cure! I decided before duck season started, I would not hunt as much. I decided, I would not get so worked up over chasing these things. All it took to change my decision was one duck cupped and committed into the decoys, and I was back more than before.

Duck season lasts for 60 days and at the end of January it over. I am not sure why I love waterfowl hunting so much. I just can't give it up.



Kentucky hunters harvested 20 bears during the 2013 bear season that concluded this past December. The Kentucky bear hunting zone expanded from four counties to 16 for the 2013 season and a new archery and crossbow bear season was implemented.



Winter Hints

Dear readers, do you have any special hints, tips, ideas or things that work to keep birds well-fed during the winter that you'd like to share? Please email me at birdingbits@cfl.rr.com, and I will print them. Thank you! Let's keep birds happy this winter.

E-mail: birdingbits@cfl.rr.com
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Bob Watkins' Sports In Kentucky

'Omaha' to media opportunity, has sports journalism gone soft to Process?



Bob Watkins

Never, never be afraid to do what's right, especially if well-being of a person or animal is at stake. Society's punishments are small compared to wounds we inflict on our soul when we look the other way.

- **Martin Luther King Jr.**
Doctor King's words resonate still. And, all the way to my profession.

Sports writers and broadcasters today have become fans, competing with bloggers and Eye Candy holding forth at ESPN. Dance tune? Money. Who has it, who's demanding more, who's the next kid who's going to get it and how soon. Education be damned and ball coaches shop for bigger jobs. Short of a now-and-then Who's Your Daddy from Sports Illustrated in 1999 and an occasional 30 for 30 on ESPN, talking heads are cool and imitation-worthy for local markets.

Last week, the word Omaha became the rage. Peyton Manning used the word in line-of-scrimmage cadence 31 times against the Patriots. Everyone was impressed. Word out of Manning's mouth raised \$24,800 for his foundation. Noble undertaking, but a Pandora's Box precedent.

What do fans think? Well, business is business, man. Just look the other way.

Closer to home

in Kentucky . . .
Coaches. Believed-to-be honorable men affix their names to five-six year contracts, then bolt for more money and higher place on the pole. Many sports media stand admiring the ballet which is Process - guesses, clandestine meetings, rumors, flirtations, then blanket denials, then presto: A ball coach introductory press conference. The speed of Process is a fascination.

Charlie Strong, one year into an eight year contract, left. Story line? Louisville's Tom Jurich became media darling for his skill and daring to rob a serial job jumper from another school.

Contract? What contract? Strong and Bobby Petrino neither answered to his fans (in Louisville or Bowling Green).

The job jump at Louisville was shamefully arrogant, but not exceptional. More shameful was that media marveled at Strong's the Jurich's process; then a Biblical spin - prodigal-son-come-home, accorded Petrino. His contrition was redemptive enough to look the other way.

On Strong's blatant defection and Petrino's rehabilitation, UofL president James Ramsey deferred to tail that wags this dog, Jurich. And why not, man's a maestro with spin.

Fans? Those who buy tickets deserved a report on Strong's penalty pay, how much and when UofL is compensated and what happens to the money. And details on Petrino's deal, incentives to behave.

Petrino and Western? Likelihood of this ball coach facing Hilltopper fans being accountable on principle were laughably remote.

Lexington area?
Talk shows on in, sports journalism around Univer-

sity of Kentucky is pep rally and dog-and-pony show (UK officials call it Media Opportunity). Questions? I no longer attend, but from transcripts I see, they range from "Hey Cal, how good do you feel about Julius's cramp issues?" to "Cal, is this team improving to your expectations?"

Maybe fans might like to know: "How was it Arkansas was able to make a team infinitely more talented play at (coach) Mike Anderson's tempo?" or "Isn't blocking out on perimeter shots a fundamental kids (in Kentucky) learn in junior high?"

With few exceptions, media around UK are openly fraternal with our pal Cal. Fans? What about 'em? Business is business, man. Just look the other way.

NEWS & VIEWS

NEWS. Richie Farmer begins his 27 months in prison for "sense of entitlement" guilty plea in March.

VIEW. If he serves full term, Farmer will be near 48 when he leaves prison. Prime of life to make a new one. I wish him well. Maybe a book contract to help pay debts. But more important by a Cawood Ledford mile, reconciliation with his three children.

NEWS. Internet story headline said: NCAA's officials director says refs doing good job enforcing new rules.

VIEW. In fact, the number of phantom calls have increased.

VIEW II. The Referee story was accompanied by a photo (USATSI) for the ages. Find it. From the Kentucky at Arkansas game, referee Roger Ayers is getting an in-your-face plea from John Calipari. Kentucky's coach should have this one hanging in his office.

Comment: If you would like a copy, send your e-mail

address.
NEWS. Northwestern did what in Bloomington last Saturday?

VIEW. Here come those Wildcats! Now, if we can just get Vanderbilt on a roll.

NEWS. Eastern Kentucky scored a signature win in OVC play last week beating Belmont 74-63 in front of an EKV record crowd.

VIEW. Best part was reaction of EKV guard Corey Walden following the game: "That was the most fun I've had in a game in my life," he told reporters.

Comment: When's last time a player at Kentucky or Louisville said as much?

NEWS. More frequently these days Western Kentucky's Hilltoppers' point guard duties are going to newcomer Chris Harrison-Docks

VIEW. My candidate for college newcomer of year in Kentucky, Chris Harrison-Docks is a hard-nosed and gritty kid can't shoot like his dad did at Tollesboro, but he's got game and is an excellent fit. A freshman, Harrison-Docks is another "who knew" kid who should have signed at Western Kentucky, instead of Butler, in the first place.

NEWS. Last week, an internet site offered a list of college studs who project to be NBA duds, included: Tennessee junior Jarnell Stokes and North Carolina's James Michael McAdoo.

An underclassman playing himself onto this list or another year in college? Willie Cauley-Stein at Kentucky.

WORTH REPEATING DEPT.

Following Eastern Kentucky's win over Belmont last week, guard Corey Walden said: "That was the most fun I've had in a game in my life."

And so it goes.



Matt Plowman with a red fox he called in.

The Garden Bug

Whether it is found in the wild, or grown, harvested and dried, about 2 out of every 3 cats are affected by the **catnip** plant. Cats will roll in it or try to eat it. As a garden plant, it likes sunny spots, growing 3 feet or more, and displays delicate, bluish flowers in summer. Also used in teas, tinctures, or poultices for human use, it is known to induce calm, restfulness and healing.

- Brenda Weaver



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