

## Around the Dial

### The legacy of the Class of 2002

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By Tom Leach - UK Radio Network

"When we were 2-9, we never stopped fighting, ever. We just had a never-say-die attitude."

That was the response from senior cornerback Derrick Tatum, when asked what impression this group of seniors that are playing their final home game today will leave on this program - and as legacies go, that one isn't too shabby.

"Four" was considered an optimistic projection for the number of wins this team would achieve when the pundits made their picks back in August. But this year's edition of the Big Blue has put Kentucky football back on solid footing. And if the 2003 Wildcats end up playing in a bowl game, the guys who say their farewells today can smile and know they played a part in making it happen.



Derrick Tatum poses for a picture before his last home game as a Wildcat



Aaron Boone

"We'll probably be known as the guys that hung around as long as we could and did the best we could. We're a bunch of blue-collar guys - let's get it done and get out," said fullback Mike Kamphake of the legacy for this senior class. "It's been real exciting. You always wait for the best things last. You strive for it and hope it works out and this year is probably the most fun year I've had in a long time. I thought it was high here when I was a freshman and we went to the Outback Bowl, but this year is like a Cinderella story. Nobody expected anything."

Coaches love players like Kamphake. They work hard, never complain and always think "team" first. Kamphake is in his sixth year on the UK campus, the result of multiple knee injuries. He's been a starter this season but before that, he only saw action on special teams.

"It takes a lot to bring me down. I live by the phrase 'you have no regrets and you celebrate every situation.' If it's bad, something good is going to come out of it. The first time I hurt my knee," he said, "I learned how much I love the game. The second time, I learned how to heal. I don't have any regrets."

Tayo Agboke is another one of those players the average fan couldn't have identified as a Wildcat before this season. Agboke, a former walk-on, worked his way into a backup role at outside safety and has seen extensive action. "It's hard but it's fun," Agboke said. "You keep that dream in your mind that you're going to hit the field one day."

Not every story ends like the movie "Rudy," though, with the hero making a tackle and his teammates carrying him off the field. Some guys, like Greg Perdue, toil daily with little hope of recognition by the general Wildcat public. Offensive linemen in general are anonymous, so reserves get little media or fan attention. Of course, that's not the reason Perdue pursued his dream of playing for the Wildcats anyway.

"I've always followed football and I've always watched the Tennessees and Floridas and just to have a chance to come out here and play, it's a dream (come true)," he said. "It's not difficult for me, because I love this. I think it's great. Just because I'm not a starter, I enjoy being out here and working with the guys. And I love the coaching staff."

That's a sentiment echoed by Kamphake.

"They're all really good people. I don't think there's one bad person on the staff. They're all good, family people, take care of their kids and their family and we're a part of their family," he noted.



Glenn Pakulak

For running back Artose Pinner, punter Glenn Pakulak and perhaps one or two other seniors, there could be post-season recognition for their accomplishments this year.

But the sense of satisfaction at the end of a college football career is not directly proportional to minutes played or yards gained. So what is it that kept those who didn't get all of the "pub" going through times that were far from the best?

"The thing I've enjoyed most is just the camaraderie - just being out here and going to battle with your buddies," Perdue said.



Artose Pinner

"Hanging out with the guys," Agboke added. "Doing something that can get a whole sideline full of your friends excited about something."

And today, those friends will celebrate together the accomplishments of this senior class - and perhaps shed a tear or two.



Quentus Cumby



Otis Grigsby



Chase Harp



Ronnie Riley