UA19/16/2 Volleyball Press Releases

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BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – For the fourth time in the last five seasons, WKU Volleyball will be represented at the U.S. Women’s Volleyball National Team Open Tryouts in Colorado Springs, Colo., as Paige Briggs and Lauren Matthews will vie for a chance to wear the red, white and blue. Tryouts are slated to take place at the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Training Center from Friday-Sunday, Feb. 21-23.

The tryout will evaluate athletes from 95 colleges from across the country for spots on the U.S. Women’s National Team and the U.S. Collegiate National Team (CNT) program. Plus, four athletes will also be trying out for the 2020 U.S. Women’s Junior National Team. The breakdown for the tryout includes 67 outside hitters, 48 liberos, 37 middles, 37 setters and 25 opposites.

The tryout will involve four sessions with three waves per session. Friday’s first session goes from 3-9 p.m. CT, while Saturday’s two sessions are at 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. The final session on Sunday begins at 8:30 a.m. with tournament style play, along with 16-18 athletes selected by the U.S. Women’s National Team staff to participate in a “USA” training session. The Sunday session wraps up at 11:30 a.m.

All sessions minus the USA training session on Sunday morning will be streamed live by clicking here. USA Volleyball will use #USAVtryout as the event hashtag for photos, notes, quotes and stories posted to its social media platforms Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter and Instagram under the handle @usavolleyball.

In just her second season on The Hill, Matthews was selected as both the AVCA South Region Player of the Year and Conference USA Player of the Year prior to landing AVCA Honorable Mention All-American honors. The Indianapolis, Ind., native spent more than two months leading all of NCAA Volleyball in hitting percentage and ranks first with a .448 clip, which sits second on WKUs' single-season list. Throughout the course of the season, Matthews earned four of the league's Offensive Player of the Week honors in addition to setting WKU's single-match hitting percentage record at .882.

In league matches, Matthews worked at a scorching .483 mark. The sophomore finished with 470 kills with 205 coming in C-USA matches. Matthews has also been a force to be reckoned with at the net defensively, tallying 139 blocks for a 1.18 blocks per set average this season. She owns 36 solo blocks (fifth on WKU’s single season list) and 103 block assists (eighth on WKU's single season list).

After earning C-USA’s Player of the Year honor, Matthews also collected C-USA Tournament MVP recognition after an outstanding showing in Houston.

An Ortonville, Mich., native, Briggs made an immediate impact for the Lady Toppers and made her presence felt on the conference scene as well, claiming three of the first four Freshman of the Week accolades. She went on to finish the season even stronger, winning four of the final five honors. The Ortonville, Mich., native posted 14 double-double performances across the season, including one at
both No. 17 Rice and No. 24 Louisville. Briggs started all 118 sets for the Tops this season as a six-rotation player and racked up 388 kills and 344 digs across the season while working at a .281 hitting clip. WKU's third-ever AVCA South Region Freshman of the Year, Briggs also earned a spot on C-USA's All-Tournament Team.

In addition to collecting AVCA South Region Freshman of the Year nod, Briggs was also named Conference USA's Freshman of the Year.

This past season, Matthews and Briggs helped the Lady Toppers post an overall record of 32-2 to earn the program's best-ever winning percentage at .941. The Tops ran the table in league play with a perfect 14-0 record after being picked third in the preseason and ultimately claiming both the regular season and tournament championships. WKU has now won 10 of the possible 12 championships since joining Conference USA prior to the 2014 campaign.

Briggs and Matthews are looking to join a special group of Lady Topper greats who have been a part of USA Volleyball. In 2007, Megan Argabright (2005-08) was named to the USA Developmental team that travelled to Buenos Aires to compete against the Argentina National Team. Aquila Orr (2006-09) was a member of the USA Third Degree Team that traveled to Italy to compete during the summer of 2007. Ashley Potts (2010-13) was named an alternate for the USA Volleyball A2 National Team in 2013. Prior to her junior season on The Hill in 2017, Rachel Anderson (2015-18) earned a spot on the U.S. Collegiate National Team – Minneapolis Program.
HUDSON ANNOUNCES WKU VOLLEYBALL STAFF CHANGES

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – WKU Volleyball head coach Travis Hudson has announced the addition of former Lady Topper standout Jessica Lucas to his staff with movements by assistants Craig Bere and Kristi Griffin as well. Lucas joins the WKU staff as an assistant coach while Griffin moves into the program’s director of operations role. Bere has been elevated to the first assistant position.

“We are incredibly excited to bring Jessica back into the WKU Volleyball family as a coach,” Hudson opened. “It’s always nice to bring someone back home, but this is way bigger than that. Jess is a very, very talented young coach that I believe will help us keep moving in a positive direction and continue to make noise on the national level.”

Lucas returns to The Hill after two years on the Purdue staff under head coach Dave Shondell. She held a graduate manager position with the Boilermakers for the 2018 and 2019 seasons. Over those seasons, Purdue posted records 24-9 and 24-8, respectively while registering a 3-2 record in the NCAA Tournament.

A 2018 graduate of WKU, Lucas returns home to The Hill where her decorated playing career took place. The Seymour, Ind., native is one of three WKU Volleyball players to earn AVCA All-American status all four seasons of her career (2014-17). Lucas was the first three-time Setter of the Year in Conference USA (2015-17) while also earning First Team All-American status as a finalist for the Senior CLASS Award. Across her career, Lucas would earn eight collective All-Americans nods and was a four-time C-USA First Team All-Conference selection among numerous additional accolades.

Across her four years on The Hill, Lucas and the Lady Toppers posted an overall record of 123-17 which included a 57-3 record in the program’s first four seasons as a Conference USA member. WKU claimed both the regular season and tournament titles all four years of Lucas’ career as her class became the program’s first to appear in the NCAA Tournament every year of their careers.

“I could not be happier to be back home,” shared Lucas. “This is an incredible opportunity on so many levels. I have countless unforgettable memories in Diddle Arena from my playing years and I can’t wait to add more as a WKU coach. I am incredibly grateful to both Travis Hudson and Todd Stewart for this opportunity and I am so excited to be a Lady Topper again.”

In her return to The Hill, Lucas will work primarily with the squad’s setters while also assisting with all other aspects of the game in addition to recruiting as she fills the role previously held by Griffin.

Moving into an administrative role to spend more time with her young family, Griffin will handle team logistics in addition to scheduling, camps and academics. Her move comes after 11 seasons as an
assistant on Hudson’s staff at WKU. Since Griffin became a Hilltopper prior to the 2009 season, WKU has posted a 318-61 overall record, a 156-14 reading in conference play, won 15 collective league championships, made eight NCAA Tournament appearances and has earned the AVCA Team Academic Award every season.

“I am excited for the opportunity to move into our Director of Operations position which will lessen the travel grind that comes with the recruiting aspect of coaching,” Griffin commented. “I am blessed to be able to stay within the WKU Volleyball family while being able to spend more time at home with my family as well. I am thrilled to see Jess added to our staff. I coached her for four years and will truly enjoy helping to mentor her as she begins her coaching career here at WKU.”

“Kristi is such a talented administrator on top of being a fantastic coach,” said Hudson. “She has really driven the administrative side of this program for many years. Kristi has coordinated all of our camps and did so many other things with recruiting and responsibilities of that nature. She’ll continue to make a massive impact on our program in this role but this will allow her to spend more time raising her boys.”

Prior to her time on The Hill, Griffin served as an assistant coach at Jacksonville State from 2004-07 and Southern Indiana – her alma mater – in 2003. Following her playing career with the Screaming Eagles’ from 1999-2002, Griffin joined none other than Craig Bere on the USI coaching staff.

As Griffin shifts into the director of operations position and Lucas joins the staff, Bere will be promoted to the Tops’ first assistant. The 2019 campaign marked Bere’s fifth year on Hudson’s staff and in that span, the Red and White have posted an overall record of 145-23 and a 67-5 mark in C-USA play. With Bere on staff, WKU has won eight combined conference championships while making four NCAA Tournament appearances.

“We’re just shifting a lot of responsibilities as we try to maximize the strengths of everybody involved,” Hudson added. “I have so much respect for the job that Craig and Kristi have done through the years and we’ve always approached this as a group effort much more than as a head coach and his assistants. That won’t change and we will continue to get better and better.”

BRIGGS & MATTHEWS SELECTED TO U.S. COLLEGIATE NATIONAL TEAM – ANAHEIM PROGRAM

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. – Paige Briggs and Lauren Matthews join a special group of WKU Volleyball greats who have taken part in the USA Volleyball pipeline as the rising sophomore and junior earned an invitation to the U.S. Collegiate National Team – Anaheim program. The pair of Lady Toppers are two of 28 current collegiate players on the roster.

The CNT Anaheim will train June 21-27 in Anaheim at the American Sports Centers where they will compete side-by-side with the U.S. Women’s National Team as it makes final preparations for the Tokyo Olympic Games.

Anota Adekunle from Rice Volleyball was also selected to the CNT-Anaheim squad as well, giving Conference USA three representatives.

Earlier this month USA Volleyball named the 28-player CNT-Gold roster, which will train July 5-12 in Anaheim. In total, 56 CNT athletes were selected through the U.S. Women’s National Team Open Tryouts held Feb. 21-23 at the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

This past season, Matthews and Briggs helped the Lady Toppers post an overall record of 32-2 to earn the program's best-ever winning percentage at .941. The Tops ran the table in league play with a perfect 14-0 record after being picked third in the preseason and ultimately claiming both the regular season and tournament championships. WKU has now won 10 of the possible 12 championships since joining Conference USA prior to the 2014 campaign.

In just her second season on The Hill, Matthews (6-0, middle hitter) was selected as both the AVCA South Region Player of the Year and Conference USA Player of the Year prior to landing AVCA Honorable Mention All-American honors. The Indianapolis, Ind., native spent more than two months leading all of NCAA Volleyball in hitting percentage and ranks first with a .448 clip, which sits second on WKUs' single-season list. Throughout the course of the season, Matthews earned four of the league's Offensive Player of the Week honors in addition to setting WKU’s single-match hitting percentage record at .882.

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After earning C-USA's Player of the Year honor, Matthews also collected C-USA Tournament MVP recognition after an outstanding showing in Houston.

An Ortonville, Mich., native, Briggs (5-10, outside hitter) made an immediate impact for the Lady Toppers and made her presence felt on the conference scene as well, claiming three of the first four Freshman of the Week accolades. She went on to finish the season even stronger, winning four of the final five honors. The Ortonville, Mich., native posted 14 double-double performances across the season, including one at both No. 17 Rice and No. 24 Louisville. Briggs started all 118 sets for the Tops this season as a six-rotation player and racked up 388 kills and 344 digs across the season while working at a .281 hitting clip. WKU's third-ever AVCA South Region Freshman of the Year, Briggs also earned a spot on C-USA's All-Tournament Team.

In addition to collecting AVCA South Region Freshman of the Year nod, Briggs was also named Conference USA’s Freshman of the Year.
Briggs and Matthews join a special group of Lady Topper greats who have been a part of USA Volleyball. In 2007, Megan Argabright (2005-08) was named to the USA Developmental team that travelled to Buenos Aires to compete against the Argentina National Team. Aquila Orr (2006-09) was a member of the USA Third Degree Team that traveled to Italy to compete during the summer of 2007. Ashley Potts (2010-13) was named an alternate for the USA Volleyball A2 National Team in 2013. Prior to her junior season on The Hill in 2017, Rachel Anderson (2015-18) earned a spot on the U.S. Collegiate National Team – Minneapolis Program.

**U.S. Collegiate National Team – Anaheim Roster**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Height</th>
<th>College Eligibility Remaining</th>
<th>Hometown</th>
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<td>M</td>
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<td>Lauren Barnes</td>
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<td>OPP</td>
<td>Purdue University</td>
<td>6-3</td>
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<td>M</td>
<td>Butler University</td>
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<td>Munciana VBC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carey Williams</td>
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<td>University of Portland</td>
<td>5-7</td>
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<td>Kahuku, Hawaii, Kaulukoa</td>
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WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / Friday, May 1, 2020
Volleyball / Contact: Jessica Leifheit, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

WKU VOLLEYBALL ANNOUNCES ADDITION OF CAMERON MOSLEY TO INCOMING CLASS

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – Head coach Travis Hudson has announced the addition of Manual High School’s Cameron Mosley to WKU Volleyball’s incoming class. A defensive specialist from just up the road in Louisville, Ky., Mosley will add depth to the Tops’ back line. Mosley joins fellow incoming freshmen Sam Canner and Shannon Keck as the newest additions to the Lady Topper program that has now produced 20 consecutive 20-win seasons.

CAMERON MOSLEY // LOUISVILLE, KY. // MANUAL H.S. // DEFENSIVE SPECIALIST

Cameron Mosley, a native of Louisville, Ky., began her high school career at Male High School before closing her prep days at Manual H.S. The defensive specialist was selected to the 2019 Region 7 All-Tournament Team during her senior campaign. Mosley helped Manual win the 25th District Championship in 2019 as the Lady Crimsons posted a 22-7 overall record.

Accomplished off the court as well, Mosley was a two-time selection to the Kentucky All-State Academic Team, with honors in both 2017 and 2018. She also earned a spot on the honor roll all four years of high school.

Mosley played her club ball with MAVA (Mid America Volleyball Association) for six years. Additionally, she was a dual-sport athlete for much of her life, playing 10 years of organized softball before opting to focus on volleyball.

Cameron is the daughter of Jeff and Becky Mosley and has an older sister, Caroline. She plans to major in exercise science on The Hill.

Why she chose WKU – “I chose Western Kentucky because of the family aspect. I’m so thankful to be a part of this amazing program and I can’t wait to get down to Bowling Green and get started!”

Hudson on Mosley – “Cam is a kid we are really excited about adding to our roster. The one area we felt uneasy about was our ball control depth and she certainly answers that question for our program. Cam is a tough kid and an extremely hard worker and her best volleyball is still ahead of her and I can’t wait to get in the gym with her and see her develop.”
BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – Recent WKU Volleyball graduate Emma Kowalkowski has been named one of 14 recipients of the 2020 Jim Castañeda Postgraduate Scholarship the Conference USA office announced on Thursday. The defensive specialist joins Rachel Engle, Sydney Engle and Rachel Anderson as a recipient of the prestigious honor following a tremendous career under the direction of head coach Travis Hudson.

A WKU Volleyball representative has earned the scholarship each of the last three years and four of the last five.

This is the 12th year that the scholarships have been presented in honor of Dr. Jim Castañeda, who served Rice University for 46 years as an educator, coach and faculty athletics representative before he passed away in November 2008. The conference annually awards the $4,000 postgraduate scholarships to graduates as selected by the C-USA faculty athletics representatives and approved by the Board of Directors.

Kowalkowski earned her undergraduate degree on The Hill this past spring after registering a cumulative 3.64 GPA while studying sport management with a minor in facility and event management.

A native of Lake Orion, Mich., Kowalkowski helped the Hilltoppers to three C-USA regular season and tournament championships during her career at WKU. Across her four seasons, the Tops posted a combined record of 113-19 including a 52-4 mark in league matches.

Kowalkowski is as decorated on the court as she is off of it. Earning C-USA Commissioner's Honor Roll twice to go along with a Commissioner’s Academic Medal honor. Additionally, the Michigan native landed on the WKU President’s List five times and the Dean’s List two more semesters.

During her four-year career in the Red and White, Kowalkowski played in every set of every match of her WKU career. Across 472 sets played, Kowalkowski racked up 1,017 digs, 2.15 digs per set, 165 assists, 110 aces and 121.0 total points.

Outside of the classroom and the court, Kowalkowski keeps herself plenty busy with volunteering and participating in various organizations. She's a WKU SAAC member in addition to being a board member for the Sport Management Club.

In the community, Kowalkowski has volunteered for numerous outings with Habitat For Humanity. She's also heavily involved in WKU’s United Way Day of Caring every summer. She also lend a hand while gaining experience as a volunteer at the 2019 NFL Draft in Nashville, Tenn. this past spring. Kowalkowski has also spent her past three winter breaks interning with the Quick Lane Bowl at Ford Field in Detroit, Mich.
2020 Jim Castañeda Postgraduate Scholarship Recipients
Carson Pace, Charlotte Softball
Sigourney Karme, Florida Atlantic Volleyball
Alexa Bryant, FIU Women’s Swimming
Ethan Reed, Louisiana Tech Football
D’Andre Knight, Marshall Baseball
Tanner Owens, Middle Tennessee Men’s Golf
Logan Bruffett, North Texas Women’s Soccer
Anna Davis, Old Dominion Lacrosse
Adolfo Carvalho, Rice Men’s Track & Field/CC
Alexander Nelms, Southern Miss Baseball
Natalia Presedo, UAB Women’s Soccer
Briana Arellano, UTEP Volleyball
Jordyn Lacy, UTSA Women’s Soccer
Emma Kowalkowski, WKU Volleyball
LEXINGTON, Ky. – For the 14th-consecutive season, WKU Volleyball has been recognized as a recipient of the AVCA Team Academic Award for its work in the classroom throughout the 2019-20 school year, the association announced Monday. With a cumulative GPA of 3.514, the Lady Toppers have earned the Team Academic Award for the 18th time since 1999.

“I’m very proud of our group for their continued academic achievement,” head coach Travis Hudson shared. “Maybe this year even more than most with all of the obstacles they have faced with the pandemic in the spring. This continues to reaffirm that although our players are great athletes, they remain very academically focused.”

The award, which was initiated in the 1992-93 academic year, honors collegiate and high school volleyball teams that displayed excellence in the classroom during the school year by maintaining at least a 3.30 cumulative team grade-point average on a 4.0 scale or a 4.10 cumulative team GPA on a 5.0 scale.

Since the 2000-01 season, the number of recipients has increased every single year but two. Since the award’s inception in 1993, the amount of award winners has increased from 62 to its current number of 1,313.

In total, 227 Division I women's teams were honored with WKU representing one of nine Conference USA programs on the list including: Charlotte, Louisiana Tech, Middle Tennessee, North Texas, Old Dominion, Rice, Southern Miss and UTEP in addition to the Red and White.

A full list of team winners can be viewed [HERE](#).
WKU VOLLEYBALL TO OPEN 2020-21 SEASON AGAINST MERCER ON OCT. 3

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – WKU Volleyball will finally get to open its 2020-21 campaign on Saturday, Oct. 3, with a home match against Mercer. The match will not be open to the public but will be streamed for free on HSSN’s Facebook page.

“We’re really excited to have the opportunity to play a match,” WKU Volleyball head coach Travis Hudson opened. “It’s been almost 10 months since our kids have had an opportunity to play and hopefully this gives them a chance to throw the jersey on and do what they love, which is to compete and represent that WKU across their chest.”

First serve against Mercer is slated for noon CT, and will mark the fourth-ever meeting between the sides. WKU leads the all-time series 2-1, including a win in the most recent meeting that took place in Bowling Green during the 2005 campaign.

The match will count towards the team’s 2020-21 season record and will be the Hilltoppers’ first action against another team since December 6, 2019. The team was just getting underway in its spring schedule when everything was shut down due to COVID-19 in March. With student-athletes back on campus this fall, the team has been able to hold a pair of Red and White scrimmages on the E.A. Diddle Arena main court but the squad’s trio of newcomers will make their debuts on Oct. 3.

If additional fall matches are added, they will be announced as plans are finalized.
WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / Friday, Oct. 2, 2020
Volleyball / Contact: Jessica Leifheit

SATURDAY MATCH AGAINST MERCER CANCELED

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – Due to COVID-19 related issues, Mercer has canceled Saturday’s season-opening match for WKU Volleyball. The programs are working together in an attempt to reschedule the contest for this fall.

If additional fall matches are added, they will be announced as plans are finalized.
COACH HUDSON INDUCTED INTO WKU HALL OF DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI IN 2020 CLASS

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – WKU Volleyball veteran head coach Travis Hudson, along with John Asher and Dr. Jack Britt as members of the 29th induction class to Western Kentucky University’s Hall of Distinguished Alumni on Friday, October 9.

While the event will be private, anyone interested in watching can live stream the event on the WKU Alumni Association’s Facebook page or on YouTube. The ceremony is scheduled to begin at noon CT.

A 1994 graduate of WKU, Hudson earned a degree in business management with a marketing emphasis. A year later, the Bee Spring, Ky., native was named the head coach of the WKU Volleyball program, making him the youngest head coach in the nation at the time. Prior to taking the reins, Hudson had worked with the program since the early 1990s, serving as an assistant coach for three years and was interim head coach on two occasions.

His first team finished with a 7-26 record and the next two teams went 18-17 and 9-22. Then in 1998, the team posted a 26-10 record and has never finished below .500 since, as Hudson has built WKU into a championship-caliber program that has appeared in 12 NCAA Tournaments since 2002.

Hudson’s Hilltoppers earned 10 Sun Belt Conference regular-season championships and five conference tournament championships. Since joining Conference USA in 2014, WKU Volleyball has won five of six possible regular season and tournament championships.

In 2018, WKU Volleyball posted its 19th straight 20-win season, and Hudson earned his 600th win as head coach. In 2019 the team made history again by reaching the 30-win mark for the eighth time in 10 seasons and earning the No. 15 national seed. More than 9,500 fans attended the first-ever NCAA Volleyball Tournament matches held in Diddle Arena. WKU closed with a 32-2 record to secure the team's best-ever season winning percentage of .941.

After the 2019 season, Hudson was named the AVCA South Region Coach of the Year for the sixth time of his career and won conference Coach of the Year honors for the eighth time.

WKU's success on and off the court has been a labor of love for Hudson, dating back to his days as a student at WKU. Prior to assuming the head coaching duties for the Lady Toppers in 1995, he served as an assistant coach for two years with Mark Hardaway, who left The Hill to take the head coaching position at Evansville, and one campaign under Jeff Hulsmeyer, former head coach at Purdue. Hudson also served as WKU’s interim head coach on two occasions, once after Hulsmeyer left for Arkansas State in 1991 and again in the spring of 1995 following the departure of Hardaway. Later that year, Hudson was named the head coach at WKU where he has amassed an overall record of 642-15 since.

A featured clinician, Hudson has developed a reputation as one of the best coaches in the game. He has directed and staffed various volleyball camps both at the collegiate and high school levels throughout the region, including the WKU Volleyball Camp that he founded in the summer of 2000. He has also spent time as a member of the polling committee for AVCA Top 25 rankings. In the summer of 2017, Hudson received a call from USA Volleyball, inviting the veteran head coach to the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs to help guide the USA Women’s Junior National Training Team (WJNTT). Hudson accepted and worked with the squad gearing up for the 2017 FIVB Volleyball Women’s U20 World Championship. Following the 2018-19 school year, Hudson worked with USA Volleyball for the second time. For a week in late June, Hudson traveled to Anaheim, Calif., to help coach the U.S. Women's Collegiate National Team.
Hudson’s love for WKU extends far beyond the volleyball program and athletics department as he’s spoken across campus for countless ceremonies including numerous freshman welcome convocations. Recognized in the community as well, Hudson has helped make WKU Volleyball a household name.

Hudson married the former Cindy Wiseman, a Lady Topper Volleyball alum, who would go on to graduate from the University of Louisville’s School of Allied Health with a degree in physical therapy. Travis and Cindy have two sons, Tyler and Andrew. Tyler is currently a freshman on The Hill.
WKU VOLLEYBALL ANNOUNCES SEASON-OPENER AGAINST UAB ON NOV. 7

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – After having what was supposed to finally be its season-opening match canceled, WKU Volleyball will now look to play its first contest of the 2020-21 season against UAB on Saturday, Nov. 7. The match will count towards both teams’ records but not as a conference tilt.

The match will not be open to the public but will be streamed for free on HSSN’s Facebook page.

First serve against UAB is slated for 11 a.m. CT, and will be followed by a pair of exhibition matches involving Middle Tennessee. Following the Tops’ outing against the Blazers, UAB and Middle Tennessee will face off in an exhibition at 2:30 p.m. WKU will take the court again at 4:30 p.m. for an exhibition with the Blue Raiders.

These contests will conclude fall competition for WKU Volleyball.

NOV. 7 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS
11 a.m. – WKU vs. UAB match (stream)
2:30 p.m. – UAB vs. Middle Tennessee exhibition (no stream)
4:30 p.m. – WKU vs. Middle Tennessee exhibition (no stream)
WKU VOLLEYBALL SET TO OPEN SEASON AGAINST UAB

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – WKU Volleyball will finally open its 2020 campaign this weekend as UAB visits E.A. Diddle Arena for an 11 a.m. CT contest on Saturday, Nov. 7. While the match will be the season opener for both UAB and the Hilltoppers, it will not count towards the teams’ conference record. The match will be streamed for free on Facebook Live but will not be open to the public.

In addition to the Red and White’s 11 a.m. season opener, WKU will also host a pair of exhibitions on Saturday. First, UAB and Middle Tennessee will square off at 2:30 p.m. before the Tops round out the day with an exhibition against MTSU at 4:30 p.m.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS
11 a.m. CT – WKU vs. UAB | Livestats | Facebook Live stream
Exhibitions
2:30 p.m. – UAB vs. Middle Tennessee | Livestats
4:30 p.m. – WKU vs. Middle Tennessee | Livestats

UAB posted a 12-15 record in 2019 including a pair of three-set losses to WKU. This year, new head coach Betsy Freeburg will lead nine returning letterwinners and six newcomers. UAB leads the all-time series against WKU, 23-12.

WKU claimed all three matches against Middle Tennessee last season, ending the Blue Raiders’ campaign with a sweep in the first round of the Conference USA Volleyball Tournament from Houston, Texas. The postseason appearance was the first for MTSU since joining C-USA.

This 2020 season-opening match comes on what would have originally been Senior Weekend for WKU Volleyball’s five seniors. Instead, the Hilltopper veterans will compete this coming spring and will be granted a waiver by the NCAA for another season of eligibility.

A trio of WKU rookies will look to finally make their debuts this weekend as Sam Canner, Shannon Keck and Cameron Mosley have been hard at work in the red and white since arriving on The Hill.

These contests will conclude fall competition for WKU. The team will release the 2021 spring schedule when it’s completed.
BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – Over 11 months after their final match of the 2019 season and a canceled 2020 season-opening match, WKU Volleyball finally got its season underway a 3-0 sweep of UAB. The Hilltoppers worked at a .351 hitting clip while holding the Blazers to a .182 average.

“It sure is nice to be back out there playing,” head coach Travis Hudson opened. “We’re really happy for this opportunity and can’t say enough good things about what Todd Stewart and our administration has done to get us to the point that we could actually compete and play. It means so much to our kids. It’s absolutely something that will make us better moving forward.”

WKU will carry its 1-0 record into the spring campaign. The match was also the season-opener for UAB as the Blazers are now 0-1.

UAB owned just one lead in the match went it opened the day with a quick 2-0 lead on the Red and White. After five ties, with the last at 6-6, a Kayland Jackson kill gave the Tops the lead and they would never trail again. WKU would push ahead to a 23-13 lead with a Katie Isenbarger kill before Nadia Dieudonne would close the set with an ace a few points later at 25-14. In the first frame, WKU racked up 12 kills, five blocks and two aces.

Second set action saw WKU jump out to a quick 5-0 lead, a run that included Ashley Hood’s second ace of the match. She also registered an ace in the opening frame on her first serve of the season. WKU pushed out to a 10-4 advantage and another Dieudonne ace would make the lead 20-14 and force a UAB timeout. The Blazers would score three of the next four points out of the break before three-straight Avri Davis kills would give WKU a 24-17 advantage. After a UAB kill, Davis would close the set with her fifth kill of the frame.

Matthews opened the third and final frame with back-to-back kills before a UAB attack error would give the Hilltoppers a 3-0 lead. WKU would against hit double-digits with a 10-4 lead over the Blazers thanks to a block by Katie Isenbarger and Paige Briggs. UAB opted for a timeout trailing 16-9 and would begin closing the gap out of the stoppage. The Blazers powered all the way back to trail by just one at 23-22 before Matthews struck for kills on two of the last three points to secure the season-opening victory for WKU Volleyball.

“As far as how we played, it was exactly how I thought it would be,” Hudson continued. “It was rough around the edges at times but to be honest, we actually played pretty clean volleyball through two sets. Overall just happy for our players to have the opportunity.”

“I loved how we stayed together and even though we were struggling in the third set we still maintained that level of energy and we didn’t let up so we kept our foot on the gas the whole time and that was the really exciting part because that’s really important to maintain throughout the season next year,” Matthews added.

Matthews led WKU with 14 kills and a .571 hitting percentage in the victory. She would finish with five blocks assists and a dig as well.
“There are things [Lauren] does out there that are not things that you teach,” Hudson said of the junior. “I’d love to sit here and tell you that she is who she is because of the coach she has, but it’s just simply not true. She is a gifted kid and she has worked really hard.”

Briggs also recorded double-digit kills with 11 on 22 errorless swings for a .500 attack clip. The sophomore coupled that with 11 digs for her first double-double outing of the season and 16th of her career.

“It felt great to be back there and playing with our teammates, staying together and feeling like all this practice has amounted to something,” Briggs shared of the opportunity to play a match.

Dieudonne facilitated the Hilltopper offense to a .351 hitting percentage with 39 assists, six digs, two blocks and a kill. Davis made her first start in the Red and White and would finish with six kills, two digs and two blocks.

“I was super nervous on the court [about starting] but now it’s washed over and I feel more calm and I think we all did pretty well for playing our first match of the season,” Davis said about her first start and being back in action.
# Volleyball Box Score  
2020-21 WKU Volleyball  
UAB vs WKU (Nov 07, 2020 at Bowling Green, Ky.)

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## Team Attack By Set

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## Attack by Player

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## Team Attack By Set

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WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / Wednesday, Nov. 11, 2020
Volleyball / Contact: Jessica Leifheit

BAUER, BRANGERS AND COYLE SIGN NLI WITH WKU VOLLEYBALL

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – WKU Volleyball head coach Travis Hudson and his staff have announced the signing of three prep standouts to National Letters of Intent. The trio, comprised of Callie Bauer, Kelsey Brangers and Kenadee Coyle, will arrive on The Hill next fall ready to make an impact in the program.

“This group is going to help us in a lot of areas,” Hudson said of the trio of signees. “They’re filling a lot of needs depth-wise on our team, and I think all of them are future factors in our program. We’re excited; they’re really talented volleyball players and even better people, so we feel like they’ll fit our culture very well.”

“I think just potential is the word that comes to mind,” stated Hudson when asked what excites him most about the class. “None of them are necessarily necessarily finished products and that’s kind of always been one of the hallmarks for this program, is kids coming here and they develop, get better. The talent that these three bring in the door if that trend continues, where they walk in the door and work and continue to get better, then I think you’re going to see some really exciting players in those WKU uniforms down the line.”

CALLIE BAUER // HUDSON, Mich. // HUDSON H.S. // SETTER

Callie Bauer, a native of Hudson, Mich., played her high school career at Hudson High School and is the two-time defending County Player of the Year in her area with the award yet to be given in 2020.

Just recently, Bauer and the Hudson Tigers clinched the district championships. Bauer averaged 26.33 kills per match through district play combined with 17.33 digs per match. In 2019 as a junior, Bauer led Hudson H.S. to a district and regional championship – the team’s first district championship since 1997.

Additionally, she was recognized on PrepDig’s top-10 2021 setters in Michigan list. Bauer earned first team MHSAA All-State selection as both a sophomore and junior. Bauer reeled in first team All-Region for the first three years of her prep career while also earning First Team All-County and All-League those seasons (2017-19) as well. Bauer has landed on the All-County Tournament Team all four years at Hudson H.S. As a sophomore, she earned a spot on the MaxPreps pre-season All-American prep volleyball team – a list comprised of just 37 names.

Bauer is set to graduate in December 2020 after earning seven varsity letters across her career at Hudson High School. The 5’11 setter also lettered in basketball as a freshman and sophomore in addition to track and field for a season.

Bauer is also a member of the National Honor Society and involved in her school’s student council along with earning a spot on the All-State Academic Team.

The daughter of Jim and Tricia Bauer, Callie has an older sibling, Caiden. She intends to major in graphic design during her time on The Hill.

WKU HERO GROWING UP – “I didn’t growing up, but the past few years, I’ve had great respect for Sophia Cerino – I loved her energy!”

WHY SHE CHOSE WKU – “WKU is a hidden gem that I was incredibly lucky to come across. The campus, community and program left a lasting impression on me when I visited and it would be an honor to play under the unbelievably invested coaching staff.”

HUDSON ON BAUER – “Callie is one of the most unique kids we’ve ever recruited here. We’re bringing her here as a setter, and she’s a very gifted player but is still pretty raw because she’s an outsider hitter for her high school team. Amazingly, I think she just went over 2,000 career kills and is a finalist for Miss Volleyball in the state of Michigan, which
is an incredible honor in that state. We think she has the raw potential to be one of the future elite setters in the country, and we’re really, really excited to get to work with her.”

**KELSEY BRANGERS // CECILIA, KY. // CENTRAL HARDIN H.S. // DEFENSIVE SPECIALIST**

Kelsey Brangers, a native of Cecilia, Ky., played her prep volleyball at Central Hardin H.S. and helped the Lady Bruins to three state tournament appearances including a trip to the Elite Eight in 2017. She took over the varsity libero spot in seventh grade and has played a total of seven seasons on the varsity squad. Brangers is a six-time District All-Tournament Team honoree, five-time Region All-Tournament Team selection and has been named First-Team All-State twice. The 5’4” passer was named her respective region’s Player of the Year in 2020 along with earning the Sophomore of the Year distinction in 2018.

Across her prep career, Brangers has racked up 363 aces, a 92.3 serve percentage, 2696 digs, 431 assists and 3799 service receptions. Brangers is a three-year Academic All-State honoree as well.

The daughter of Micky and Rebecca Brangers, Kelsey has two older siblings, Justin and Brittany. She intends to major in physical therapy upon her arrival on The Hill.

**WKU HERO GROWING UP – Alyssa Cavanaugh**

**WHY SHE CHOSE WKU –** “I enjoy the coaching staff and players along with their commitment to me at a young age. Coach Hudson’s commitment to WKU, his team and the community are very inspiring as well.”

**HUDSON ON BRANGERS –** “Kelsey is a kid that we’ve probably had our eye on longer than anybody we’ve ever signed here. She’s a kid that started coming to our team camp when she was still a middle schooler. If you look back, she was on the varsity team when she was in middle school, and she caught our eye with her natural feel for this game. We’ve obviously watched her develop over the years and have gotten to know her better and better. The game comes easy to her. She has great instincts, got great feel, and I think we’ll certainly add to the long legacy of really high liberos that we’ve had in our program.”

**KENADEE COYLE // BLOOMINGTON, IND. // BLOOMINGTON H.S. SOUTH // RIGHT SIDE HITTER**

Kenadee Coyle, a native of Bloomington, Ind., was a four-year volleyball letterwinner at Bloomington H.S. South. She departs as the school’s all-time kills (1047) and blocks leader.

Coyle earned second team All-Conference honors as a freshman before hauling in first team recognition the next three seasons to cap off her career. She was tabbed an Indiana Junior Allstar followed by the Monroe County Player of the Year in 2020.

Outside of volleyball, Coyle is also involved in Dance Marathon and Peer Mediation at her school. In the classroom, the 6’1” lefty is an Academic All-State honoree.

The daughter of Neil and Amy Coyle, Kenadee has an older brother, Chance, who plays basketball at Southern Indiana where their father also played basketball. Coyle plans to major in biology on The Hill.

**WHY SHE CHOSE WKU –** “Coach Hudson and the team made me feel welcome and at home.”

**HUDSON ON COYLE -** “Kenadee is a kid that I think has major, major upside as a player, too. She has a physicality that we haven’t always had here on the right side. She’s a lefty like Sophia Cerino, but she’s a much more physical kid than Sophia was. I think Kenadee is going to be an incredible blocking presence for us as we continue to try to compete deeper and deeper into the NCAA Tournament. We understand that we have to be more physical and Kenadee is a big physical kid and really talented kid offensively. We think she’ll be a really impactful player on the right side for us.”
WKU VOLLEYBALL ANNOUNCES CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – As WKU Volleyball works to finalize the non-conference schedule for the 2020-21 season, its Conference USA slate is complete with 12 matches against squads from the league’s East Division.

While divisions have never been used in Conference USA Volleyball, they’ve been utilized for softball and football in years prior in addition to being added for other sports this year. WKU Volleyball also played in the East Division of the Sun Belt Conference, claiming at least a share of the division title 10 times.

Moving to this schedule format will significantly reduce the amount of travel during conference play, with the aim of minimizing the risks associated with COVID-19.

Joining WKU in the C-USA East Division are Charlotte, Florida Atlantic, FIU, Marshall, Middle Tennessee and Old Dominion. The Tops will open conference play in Diddle Arena on Sunday, Feb. 7 against Florida Atlantic. Twenty-four hours later, the sides will meet again on Monday, Feb. 8.

All six series will be played back-to-back days with first serve at the same time for both contests.

In addition to Florida Atlantic (Feb. 7-8), Charlotte (Feb. 21-22) and FIU (March 7-8) will also visit The Hill this season. WKU will travel to Old Dominion on Feb. 14-15 for the first-ever matches against the Monarchs. The Red and White’s second road trip will be to Huntington, W.Va., for matches on Feb. 28 and March 1 at Marshall. Travis Hudson and company will close the regular season with a trip south to Middle Tennessee on March 20-21.

Southern Miss will host the 2020-21 Conference USA Tournament from April 1-3 inside Reed Green Coliseum. The Golden Eagles last hosted the postseason event in 2014, WKU’s first year in the league. Postseason play will run as it has in years past with eight teams playing in a single-elimination format.

With the conference slate set, WKU may still add non-conference matches before C-USA play begins. WKU Volleyball will announce any additional contests for the 2020-21 season as they are finalized.

More information regarding season tickets, attendance and where the matches will be streamed will be announced closer to the beginning of the season.
WKU VOLLEYBALL ADDS LOCAL STANDOUT KATIE HOWARD TO INCOMING CLASS

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – WKU Volleyball head coach Travis Hudson and his staff have announced the addition of Greenwood High School standout, Katie Howard. The outside hitter will join the Hilltoppers’ explosive offense on The Hill next fall.

Howard adds more depth to a stacked class of signees joining Callie Bauer, Kelsey Brangers and Kenadee Coyle in the Tops’ latest recruiting class.

KATIE HOWARD // ALVATON, KY. // GREENWOOD H.S. // OUTSIDE HITTER

Howard, a hometown kid, played her high school career at Greenwood High School and is the two-time defending Region 4 Kentucky Volleyball Coaches Player of the Year and a two-time Region 4 Kentucky Volleyball Athletic Directors Association Player of the Year.

Recently, Howard and the Lady Gators clinched their fourth-straight district championship. Howard played 45 sets throughout the season, racking up 196 kills on 497 attempts, leading her team in both categories. Along with that, she averaged 4.4 kills per set and a .213 hitting percentage. This coming after her 2019 junior campaign where she played 89 sets, recording 394 kills on 917 attempts, averaging 4.4 kills and a .280 hitting percentage.

Additionally, she was a three-time Region 4 All-Tournament team member. As a sophomore, she was an All-State Honorable Mention. Junior and senior year she was recognized as a first team All-State member. Howard also played high school volleyball as an eighth grader and earned Honorable Mention for the All-State Academic team in 2016.

Howard is set to graduate in spring 2021 after earning seven varsity letters across her career at Greenwood. The 5’11” outside hitter also lettered in track and field for three seasons, in addition to the four she received playing varsity volleyball. Howard also was the team manager for the football and basketball teams at GHS and served as the Outdoors Club treasurer. She also participated in FCA and was a member of the OAR Club. Howard was an All-State Academic team honorable mention from 2016-19 and was awarded All-State Academic first team her senior year.

The daughter of Stacy and William Howard, Katie has two younger siblings, Lofton and Griffin. Katie is undecided on a major at this time.

WHY SHE CHOSE WKU – “It’s my family’s school. My mom and dad went to Western, my cousins, aunts and uncles went here, it’s home.”

HUDSON ON HOWARD – “I couldn’t be more excited to add Katie to our roster. There are a lot of things that make someone a great athlete, and although she is explosive and athletic, it’s her work ethic, competitiveness and determination that stand out to me the most. She is the kind of kid that WKU Volleyball has been built on and I know she will add to our culture both on and off the court for the next several years.”
WKU VOLLEYBALL LEGEND ALYSSA CAVANAUGH PASSES AWAY

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – WKU Volleyball legend Alyssa Cavanaugh passed away on Friday morning at Norton Hospital in Louisville, Kentucky. A four-time All-American during her career on The Hill from 2014-17, Cavanaugh is one of the most decorated players in WKU program history. She was 24.

“It is with profound sadness that we deal with the loss of Alyssa Cavanaugh,” WKU Volleyball head coach Travis Hudson opened. “She left a mark on WKU that very few athletes will ever make. She was a fearless competitor who achieved things personally, and helped our program achieve things as a team, that had never before been done on The Hill. WKU Volleyball is a program that is now respected on the national stage and Alyssa and her extraordinary competitiveness are a big reason why.”

“In this world, we cannot keep from dying, but we can make sure that we truly live and Alyssa did that in a big way,” Hudson continued. “She never lived in fear at any stage of her life: as a person, as an athlete and definitely not during her fight with cancer. Our thoughts and prayers are with the Cavanaugh family during this most difficult time. Alyssa will always be a symbol of what being a part of the WKU Volleyball family represents.”

“We are heartbroken to learn of Alyssa’s passing, and our thoughts and prayers are with the Cavanaugh family,” said Director of Athletics Todd Stewart. “One of the greatest players in the rich history of the WKU volleyball program, Alyssa’s dominating and clutch performances led our program to unprecedented heights. The positive attitude she maintained throughout her battle with Leukemia coupled with her incredible courage and determination served as an inspiration to countless people, many of whom she never met. She leaves an everlasting legacy.”

“Alyssa was a fighter on and off the court,” former teammate and roommate and current WKU Volleyball assistant coach Jessica Lucas shared. “She touched so many lives, especially mine. Today my heart hurts – it hurts for her family and friends, our teammates and the WKU community. She will forever hold a special place in my heart along with so many others’. We can find comfort knowing she’s no longer in pain.”

In their four seasons at WKU together, Cavanaugh and Lucas racked up 123 wins against just 17 losses and were part of the program’s first class to appear in the NCAA Tournament every year of their career. Cavanaugh, a 5’10” outside hitter from Louisville, Ky., graduated from WKU in May 2018 with a degree in recreation administration. She was a regular on the WKU Dean’s List and C-USA Commissioner’s Honor Roll for her work in the classroom.
Cavanaugh’s extensive list of accolades includes Conference USA’s Michael L. Slive Female Athlete of the Year (2017-18), AVCA Third-Team All-American – the first in program history (2017), four-time AVCA All-American, four-time C-USA first team All-Conference, two-time C-USA Player of the Year (2016 & 2017), first WKU player to earn three All-American honors in a single season (2016: AVCA, VolleyballMag.com, PrepVolleyball.com), and C-USA Freshman of the Year (2014). She ranks second in WKU Volleyball history with 1,816 career kills and third all-time with 3.78 kills per set across her career. In total, she played in 139 matches as a Hilltopper and appeared in 481 sets.

Following her graduation from WKU, Cavanaugh traveled overseas and competed in a professional tryout before being diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia on Sept. 5, 2018. She received a successful bone marrow transplant from her father, Eric, on Feb. 19, 2019.

Funeral arrangements for Cavanaugh are still being finalized but will be private to the family.