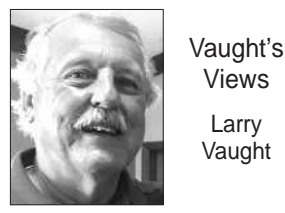


NBA dream helped keep Kam Williams at UK



Vaught's Views
Larry Vaught

Kam Williams' decision to stay at Kentucky for a second season with coach Mark Pope surprised some considering how many of his teammates entered the transfer portal after UK's 14-loss season. There was one important factor in Williams' decision to stay at Kentucky — and it was not money.

"Kam's dream is to play in the NBA. One of the best forums to make that happen is Kentucky. Kentucky has the best fanbase, great schedule, great exposure," said Greg Williams, Kam's father. "Kam also wants to play in the NCAA Tournament. It is not guaranteed but Kentucky is going to give you the opportunity to play at that level and that means more games to play."

"Certainly money is an aspect of the decision and money does get you an opportunity (to play). If you are paid more, you are going to play more to justify the money."

The 6-foot-8 Williams transferred from Tulane to Kentucky last season. He averaged 6.0 points and 2.1 rebounds per game while shooting 35.9 percent from 3-point range and 45 percent overall. He played in 24 games with seven starts but missed 13 games after breaking his foot in mid-January before returning for postseason play.

"He wanted to come back and play because he had been in the trenches since June fighting with those guys to get better," Greg Williams said. "(Otega) Oweh and (Denzel) Aberdeen are great teammates and pushed him to be the best he could be."

Kam Williams insisted he wanted to stay at Kentucky when the season ended. His father insisted he felt the same way.

"If Kam was about money, he would not have been at Ken-



Not knowing who will be on Kentucky's 2026-27 roster did not worry Kam Williams when he made his decision to stay at Kentucky for a second year. (Vicky Graff Photo)

tucky. He was offered more last year and offered more this year to leave," Greg Williams said. "He likes Kentucky. He loves the fanbase and the coaches. Alvin Brooks was our main recruiter and we were sad he had to go but we understand the business aspect (of college basketball)."

Kam Williams also was not influenced by what teammates entered the transfer portal or who might or might not be joining UK's 2026-27 roster.

"You can't base your decision on anybody else being in the portal and you can't know anybody for trying to put himself in the best position. Is this (UK) a good spot for him? Yes. Does he hope Pope makes great decisions on next year's roster? Yes. Last year Kam knew where he wanted to be and made a quick decision to come to Kentucky. He did the same thing again."

"Last year when committed (to Kentucky) he did not know who would still be on the team or who would be here when he first got on board with Kentucky. He just knew Kentucky would try to fill a championship team and is confident the approach will be the same this year."

So what did Pope tell Kam Williams about his future at Kentucky after he averaged only 18 minutes per game last season?

"When they meet they generally tell you future plans and you base your decision on that. They (UK) told Kam they bought into him, thought he was a great choice to stay and were thinking about what they can do for him," Greg Williams said. "It was mutual for him to stay."

"When they want you, money is not a problem. It's not a hard negotiation. Once you have the conversation about what your role will be and once those things come together, you are good. Once the role is set, the money will work out."

Greg Williams said the stress on him versus the stress on his son during the decision making process was different.

"Kam is the player. He dealt with coaches, teammates, practices and the grind. He is in Kentucky. I am in Louisiana. He is hoping to get a better opportunity next year. He knows you are going to have 20,000 fans at home games and maybe 5,000 to 10,000 fans on the road which is crazy," Greg Williams said.

"The stress level for him was, do they want me back? Kentucky made it clear they wanted him with their plans and financial investment. He knew then he was coming back. He wants to be part of a good team. The goal is to get No. 9 (national championship) and try to select people



Brock Coffman appreciates what former NFL quarterback Chad Pennington did for him during his high school playing career at Sayre. (UK Athletics Photo)

to fit that mindset. "Michigan won (the national title) with five transfer starters. They thought we instead of me. They put the team in front of individual goals. If team gets hot you will be rewarded for the team's success"

"I wanted my son to be happy with his decision. Change is not always great but you can't always be afraid of change because it can be great. Kam was not afraid but feels comfortable with the situation at Kentucky and wants to be part of helping the team win No. 9."

One of the intriguing storylines from Kentucky's spring practice going into Saturday's Blue-White game is redshirt freshman receiver Brock Coffman.

Coffman grew up playing basketball and baseball. He did not play football until Sayre High School coach Chad Pennington, a former NFL quarterback, convinced him to play. He finished his prep career with 61 touchdown receptions, fourth most in the Kentucky High School Athletic Association record book and the most by any receiver in Lexington history. He scored his last three touchdowns in the 2024 Class A state championship game when Sayre beat Raceland 27-22 to win its first state title in any sport.

"I started playing

football my freshman year. Coach Pennington convinced my mom to let me play, and it just kind of took off from there," Coffman said. "He's a great guy. He's taught me a lot of fundamentals. He's taught me a lot of things outside of football too. Like how to be a greater man, and I feel like he's helped me develop into the person I am today. Helped me with connections on and off the field and just being a mentor."

Coffman grew up a Kentucky fan but Kentucky did not show a lot of interest to him even though he had 89 receptions for 1,387 yards and a state-leading 24 touchdowns his senior season and on defense had 67 tackles, five interceptions and four tackles for loss. He verbally committed to Ohio but got a scholarship offer from Louisville before national signing day. He redshirted in 2025 playing only against Eastern Kentucky and Kentucky.

He transferred to Kentucky and has drawn praise from coaches and teammates during spring practice.

Coffman believes playing multiple sports helped make him a better football player. He averaged 18.7 points and 7.4 rebounds per game his senior basketball season at Sayre after averaging 17.4 points and 7.5 rebounds per game as a junior.

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Quote of the Week:

"What a pleasure & honor it was to meet our new coach and speak to the players about what it took for my success. Thanks for having me at practice this week. The energy and controlled chaos were palpable. Can't wait for the real thing this fall."
—Former UK All-American receiver Derek Abney on social media after watching UK football spring practice.

Quote of the Week 2:

"I definitely take it as a compliment. I love to be the most aggressive player on the court, and I feel like it helps get me going in games. When maybe the offense isn't there, you can always get scrappy, get loose balls and all that. So I definitely take it as a compliment and kind of attribute it to my toughness and work ethic."

—UK women's basketball signee Savvy Swords on being called a savage by teammates and coaches.

Quote of the Week 3:

"I tried hard to get him when I was in Florida and he turned me down. I guess I had to take a job at Kentucky to get his butt to work with me. He's a really well respected guy. I've been impressed with how hard he coaches his guys and how he does everything with them. He's got a great relationship with those guys."

—Kentucky defensive coordinator Jay Bateman on defensive line coach Anwar Stewart.

Free Event

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#runningforsurvivors

5k run

Join us in raising awareness, supporting survivors, and standing against sexual violence in our community. Together, we run to empower and honor survivors of sexual violence for sexual assault awareness and prevention month.

Event info:

APRIL 18TH, 2026	CHECK IN: 101 N MAIN ST. GREENSBURG, KY	8:00AM CT. 9:00AM EST.
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Prizes:
1st Place Men's
1st Place Women's

Metals will also be awarded to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place runners

Register for free here

Free t-shirt included with event!

3rd annual

Lace Up for Limb Loss

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1 mile walk
2 Little Laps

For more information contact
Katie Henderson
(270) 405-1398

Green County School's track @ 9:00 cst

proceeds to benefit
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Camp No Limits
for children with limb loss and differences

<https://runsignup.com/Race/KY/Greensburg/LaceUpforLimbLoss>