



2024-25
ANNUAL
REPORT





ALL-STAFF MEETING



SHEAKLEY INDOOR PRACTICE FACILITY AND SHEAKLEY ATHLETICS PERFORMANCE CENTER RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY

A Letter from Director of Athletics John Cunningham

To our Bearcats community, partners, and supporters, thank you.

The 2024–25 academic year was one of incredible achievement for Cincinnati Athletics. More than just wins and milestones, it was a year shaped by the heart and grit of our student-athletes in competition, in the classroom and in the community.

Senior third baseman Kerrington Cross led our baseball team to the NCAA Tournament for just the second time since 1974, earning Big 12 Player of the Year and First Team All-America honors. In track and field, Justin Abrams, once a walk-on, became a First Team All-American. In the pool, Joleigh Crye made history with the highest NCAA swimming finish ever for a female Bearcat placing fourth in the 100 yard breaststroke.

From five Big 12 individual champions to a record 3.52 department-wide GPA, our student-athletes stepped up again and again. We extended our football program's NFL Draft streak to 10 straight years and saw our sports medicine team earn Big 12 Staff of the Year honors. Whether it was Ryan Ford's runner-up finish at the NCAA Atkins Golf Regional or the steady leadership of Jillian Hayes on the hardwood, this was a year to remember.

All of this momentum is more than anecdotal, it's foundational. It took patience, hard work and a belief that we could build something special here.

Which brings me to what now stands at the corner of Corry Boulevard: the Sheakley Indoor Practice Facility and Athletics Performance Center. After two years of construction, this best-in-class facility is open. Serving as the new home for our football program and offering cutting-edge resources for all 400+ student-athletes. It represents more than steel and turf; it reflects the vision, investment and persistence that defines our city and this department.

As we enter Year Three in the Big 12, we are no longer just adapting to the Power 4 level. We're thriving in it.

The foundation is set. The future is rising.
Let's continue to build together.



John Cunningham
Director of Athletics

ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Spring of 2025 marked the **34th consecutive** grading period for athletics at **3.0 or above**. Cincinnati set a **department-record 3.52 GPA** for the spring term, its fifth straight above a 3.4.

Eleven Cincinnati Athletics teams achieved **perfect Academic Progress Rate (APR) scores** in the latest NCAA report. APR provides a real-time measurement of a team’s academic success by tracking eligibility and progress toward graduation of each student-athlete on scholarship.

It marks **seven-straight years** of double-digit UC programs surpassing that mark. Five other teams accomplished the feat on the multi-year metric: Volleyball, Men’s Cross Country, Women’s Cross Country, Men’s Golf and Women’s Golf.

In addition to those with perfect scores, football (994) and men’s track and field (994) led all Big 12 schools on a multi-year basis, meaning **seven Bearcats programs boast the conference’s best multi-year APR in their respective sport**.

The athletics department through SASS and the Academy has created programming to support student-athletes and their journey as Bearcats to Go Pro. For the last three graduation periods (August 2024, December 2024, May 2025), 110 student-athletes graduated, including 21 of which completed a Master’s degree. At the time of graduation, 45 student-athletes secured/applied for full-time jobs, 21 are pursuing professional sports, 20 confirmed/finalized enrollment for graduate school, and 10 will return to UC to compete in the 2025-26 academic year.

In the last 10 years, of UC athletes who have exhausted their eligibility in their sport, 98% have left with at least an undergraduate degree.

Since 2000, 95% of UC student-athletes who exhausted their athletic eligibility have graduated with at least an undergraduate degree.

ACADEMIC SUCCESS BY THE NUMBERS

2024 FALL SEMESTER OVERALL GPA

3.48

2025 SPRING SEMESTER OVERALL GPA

3.52

UC TEAMS WITH PERFECT APR

11

CONSECUTIVE SEMESTERS WITH 3.0+

34

GRADUATES

110

CSC ACADEMIC ALL-DISTRICT SELECTIONS

32

FALL BIG 12 ALL-ACADEMIC TEAM

54

WINTER BIG 12 ALL-ACADEMIC TEAM

39

SPRING BIG 12 ALL-ACADEMIC TEAM

88



SPRING 2025 GRADUATION CEREMONY



SPRING 2025 GRADUATION CEREMONY



BEARCATS GO PRO



BEARCATS GO PRO



SPRING 2025 GRADUATION CEREMONY

CINCINNATI ALL-AMERICANS



MACAELA WALKER
SECOND TEAM ALL-AMERICAN
400M HURDLES



DONTAY CORLEONE
HONORABLE MENTION ALL-AMERICAN (PHIL STEELE)



RYAN RIECKMANN
SECOND TEAM ALL-AMERICAN
JAVELIN



FRED MOUDANI-LIKIBI
FIRST TEAM ALL-AMERICAN SHOT PUT (INDOOR)
FIRST TEAM ALL-AMERICAN SHOT PUT (OUTDOOR)



JOLEIGH CRYE
FIRST TEAM ALL-AMERICAN - 100 BREASTSTROKE*
*HIGHEST EVER FINISH BY A CINCINNATI WOMEN'S SWIMMER



AMANDA NGANDU NTUMBA
FIRST TEAM ALL-AMERICAN
DISCUS



JUSTIN ABRAMS
FIRST TEAM ALL-AMERICAN
INDOOR HEPTATHLON



LUKE KANDRA
SECOND TEAM ALL-AMERICAN (SPORTS ILLUSTRATED)
HONORABLE MENTION (COLLEGE FOOTBALL
NETWORK, PHIL STEELE)



ASTLEY DAVIS
SECOND TEAM ALL-AMERICAN
TRIPLE JUMP



JULIETTE LARACUENTE-HUEBNER
SECOND TEAM ALL-AMERICAN
HEPTATHLON



KERRINGTON CROSS
FIRST TEAM ALL-AMERICAN (PERFECT GAME)
THIRD TEAM ALL-AMERICAN (ABCA/RAWLINGS)
SECOND TEAM ALL-AMERICAN (DIBASEBALL)
COLLEGE BASEBALL FOUNDATION ALL-AMERICAN



ABBY KNOUFF
SECOND TEAM ALL-AMERICAN
POLE VAULT

STUDENT ATHLETE *SUCCESS*

Cincinnati Athletics garnered **64 All-Big 12 Honors** in the 2024-25 athletic season.

FOOTBALL

Luke Kandra **FIRST TEAM**
Dontay Corleone **FIRST TEAM**
Joe Royer **FIRST TEAM**
Mason Fletcher **HONORABLE MENTION**
Jared Bartlett **HONORABLE MENTION**
Jake Golday **HONORABLE MENTION**

VOLLEYBALL

Abby Walker **SECOND TEAM**
Faith Frame **ALL-ROOKIE TEAM**

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Jillian Hayes **THIRD TEAM**

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Jizzle James **HONORABLE MENTION**

SWIM AND DIVE

Kyle Bumgardner **FIRST TEAM** (400 IM)
Hunter Gubeno **FIRST TEAM** (200 BACK)
SECOND TEAM (100 BACK, 200 IM)
Ramez Diao **FIRST TEAM** (PLATFORM)
Will Claus **FIRST TEAM** (1 METER)
Joleigh Crye **FIRST TEAM** (100 BR, 100 FLY)
Libby Michel **FIRST TEAM** (400 IM)
Joe Swain **SECOND TEAM** (200 BACK)
Owen Chiles **SECOND TEAM** (200 IM)
Jessica Davis **SECOND TEAM** (50 FREE, 100 FREE, 200 FREE)
Lindi Worrell **SECOND TEAM** (100 BR)
Kate Mardis **SECOND TEAM** (100 FLY)
Libby Michel **SECOND TEAM** (200 IM)

LACROSSE

Lauren Ottensmeyer **ALL-BIG 12 TEAM**
Paige Selhorn **ALL-NEWCOMER TEAM**

BASEBALL

Kellen O'Connor **HONORABLE MENTION**
Nathan Taylor **HONORABLE MENTION**
Landyn Vidourek **HONORABLE MENTION**
Quinton Coats **ALL-FRESHMAN**
Jack Natili **SECOND TEAM**
Kerrington Cross **UNANIMOUS FIRST TEAM**
Kerrington Cross **PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

TRACK AND FIELD

OUTDOOR
Fred Moudani-Likibi **SHOT PUT**
Juliette Laracuente-Huebner **HEPTATHLON**
Robert Hart **LONG JUMP**
Justin Abrams **DECATHLON**
Korbin Spencer **SHOT PUT**
Joel Addo **HIGH JUMP**
Orry Willems **HAMMER THROW**
Ryan Rieckmann **JAVELIN**
Hannah Blood **HAMMER THROW**
Miranda Tcheutchoua **HAMMER THROW**
Astley Davis **TRIPLE JUMP**
Amanda Ngatandu Ntumba **DISCUS**
Amanda Ngatandu Ntumba **SHOT PUT**
Kya Epps **200M**
Macaela Walker **100M HURDLES**
Davenae Fagan **400M**
Jed Helker **1500M**
Claire Curtsinger **10,000M**
Macaela Walker **400M HURDLES**
Women's 4x100 Relay
Macaela Walker, Davane Fagan, Morgan Komolafe, Kya Epps

INDOOR
Juliette Laracuente-Huebner **PENTATHLON**
Justin Abrams **HEPTATHLON**
Astley Davis **TRIPLE JUMP**
Fred Moudani-Likibi **SHOT PUT**
Amanda Ngatandu Ntumba **SHOT PUT**
Abby Knouff **POLE VAULT**
Orry Willems **WEIGHT THROW**
Hannah Blood **WEIGHT THROW**
Kya Epps **60M**
Naquille Harris **60M**
Kya Epps **200M**
Davenae Fagan **400M**
Men's Distance Medley Relay
Calvin Kilgallon, Camden Beatty, Santino Ramos, Jed Helker

BIG 12 CHAMPIONS

Cincinnati crowned **five individual Big 12 champions** during the 2024-25 season, with historic performances across swimming & diving and track & field. Hunter Gubeno (200-yard backstroke) and Joleigh Crye (100-yard breaststroke) became the first Big 12 champions in Bearcats swimming & diving history. On the track, Juliette Laracuente-Huebner claimed the indoor pentathlon title, Astley Davis won the indoor triple jump, and Fred Moudani-Likibi captured gold in the outdoor shot put.



OLYMPIC SUCCESS

Cincinnati Athletics was proudly represented on the world stage at the 2024 Paris Olympics, led by remarkable performances from **silver medalists Annette Echikunwoke and Jordan Thompson**.

Annette Echikunwoke made history as the **first American woman to win an Olympic medal in the women's hammer throw**, earning silver in Paris. She became just the third Bearcat to medal in Olympic track and field, joining fellow UC legends Mary Wineberg (gold, 4x400 relay, 2008) and David Payne (silver, 110m hurdles, 2008).

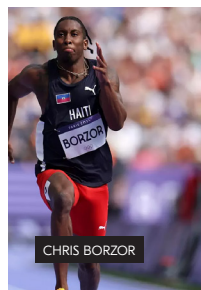
In volleyball, Jordan Thompson helped Team USA secure a silver medal, becoming the **first Bearcat to earn Olympic medals at multiple games**. She won gold at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

UC soccer alum **Vanessa Gilles** scored two game-winning goals for Team Canada, helping the squad advance to the quarterfinals.

In track and field, sprinters **Naquille Harris** (St. Kitts & Nevis) and **Chris Borzor** (Haiti) both won their heats and advanced to the first round of the 100m. Harris, who graduated this spring, also had the honor of serving as his country's flag bearer. Freshman diver **Ramez Diaa** competed in the 10m platform diving preliminaries representing Team Egypt.

Behind the scenes, **Lewis Johnson**, UC alumnus and James P. Kelly Hall of Famer, covered his 13th Olympics as a track and field reporter for NBC. Johnson, a former Bearcat walk-on and two-time team captain, set a school record in the 800-meter run in 1987 that still stands today.

From medal-winning performances to inspiring stories across multiple sports, **Cincinnati's presence at the Paris Games highlighted the strength and reach of Bearcat Athletics worldwide.**



JORDAN THOMPSON
WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL TEAM USA
SILVER MEDALIST



ANNETTE ECHIKUNWOKE
WOMEN'S HAMMER THROW TEAM USA
SILVER MEDALIST



PARIS 2024
OLYMPICS

YEAR IN REVIEW

AUGUST 30 CROSS COUNTRY

Freshman Patrick Kiprop and junior Claire Curtsinger secure first-place finishes while notching course records at the Sam Bell Invitational.



SEPTEMBER 17 MEN'S GOLF

Ryan Ford claims the first tournament title of his stellar career at the Bearcat Invitational.



SEPTEMBER 22 SOCCER

Coley Sidloski scores game-winning goal vs. Kansas State in annual Play for 3 Game, which honors her late sister, Ally Sidloski.



OCTOBER 1 WOMEN'S GOLF

Team finishes second at Pat Bradley Invitational, sets program record in team score.



OCTOBER 19 FOOTBALL

Football defeats eventual Big 12 Champions Arizona State at home, 24-14.



NOVEMBER 7 VOLLEYBALL

Volleyball secures season sweep of West Virginia in front of 2,532 fans on Education Day.



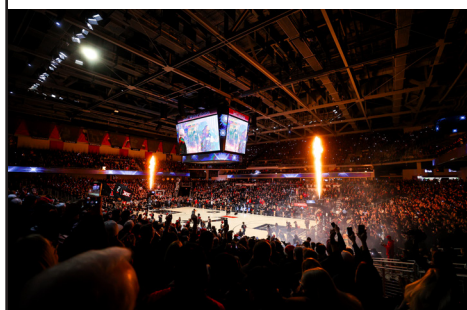
NOVEMBER 21 VOLLEYBALL

Volleyball takes down No. 24-ranked BYU in Provo.



DECEMBER 14 MEN'S BASKETBALL

Men's Basketball defeats crosstown rival Xavier in front of a sold out Fifth Third Arena crowd.



DECEMBER 15 WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Women's Basketball completes Crosstown Shootout sweep with road win at Xavier.



YEAR IN REVIEW

JANUARY 1

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Women's Basketball scores 23 straight points to open the fourth quarter, completes New Year's Day comeback win versus BYU.



JANUARY 18

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Women's Basketball rallies to defeat Colorado behind 27 points from Tineya Hylton.



FEBRUARY 14-16

BASEBALL

Baseball opens 2025 season with series win over No. 11-ranked Duke, resulting in first-ever DIBaseball ranking in program history.



FEBRUARY 25

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Men's Basketball uses electric second half to secure win over eventual Sweet 16 team BYU.



FEBRUARY 28-MARCH 1

SWIM & DIVE

Joleigh Crye claims Big 12 title in the 100-yard breaststroke and Hunter Gubeno becomes Big 12 champion in the 200-yard backstroke.



MARCH 1

TRACK & FIELD

Juliette Laracuenta-Huebner wins the pentathlon with 4,182 points (PB), and Astley Davis claims the triple-jump title at 15.79 m, both becoming Big 12 champs.



MARCH 14-15

TRACK & FIELD

Four student-athletes earn All-America honors at the NCAA Indoor Track & Field Championships.



MARCH 18

MEN'S GOLF

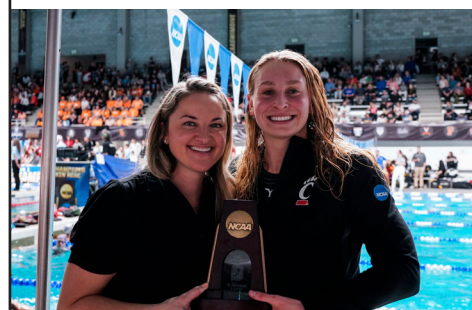
Men's Golf wins Johnnie-O team title in Georgia.



MARCH 19

SWIM & DIVE

Joleigh Crye places fourth in the 100-yard breaststroke at NCAA Championships, UC's highest-ever finish by a female swimmer at a national meet.



MARCH 22

TENNIS

Led by singles wins on Courts 1 and 2 by Zeynep Erman and Rozalia Gruszczynska and a doubles sweep, Tennis takes down Utah, 4-2, for its first Big 12 win of the season.



APRIL 12

LACROSSE

Lacrosse earns first Big 12 win with 19-15 victory over San Diego State.



APRIL 13

BASEBALL

Cincinnati native Kory Klingenberg walks off Arizona State with squeeze bunt to claim the series over the Sun Devils.



APRIL 16

WOMEN'S GOLF

Rim Imni sinks hole in one at Big 12 Women's Golf Championships.



MAY 3

BASEBALL

Kerrington Cross set a single-game school record with 10 RBI and tied the single-game school records for home runs (three) and total bases (14) in 18-14 win at No. 25-ranked Kansas.



MAY 12

MEN'S GOLF

Ryan Ford finishes runner up at NCAA Urbana Regional, best regional finish in program history.



MAY 16

TRACK & FIELD

Fred Moudani-Likibi wins the Big 12 outdoor shot put title.



MAY 31

BASEBALL

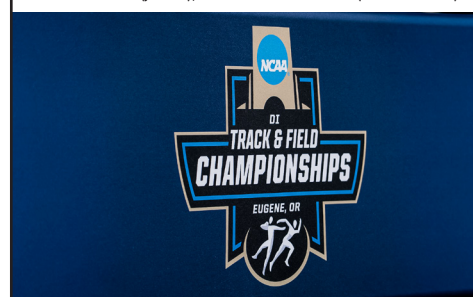
Baseball downs No. 2-seed Wake Forest, 11-6, in the Knoxville Regional.



JUNE 14

TRACK & FIELD

Track notched a program record five All-America honorees during the 2025 NCAA Outdoor Championships. Amanda Ngandu Ntumba (discus), Juliette Laracuenta-Huebner (heptathlon), Fred Moudani-Likibi (shot put), Ryan Rieckmann (javelin), Macaela Walker (400m hurdles)



POINTS OF PRIDE

KERRINGTON CROSS COMPLETES REMARKABLE SEASON

Cross, who was named the **Big 12 Player of the Year**, recently capped an incredible 2025 season. He hit **.396 with 12 home runs, 50 RBI, 65 runs scored, 50 walks, a .647 slugging percentage, and a .526 on-base percentage**. His .526 OBP is the **second-highest ever in a season by a UC player**, and his **batting average is the eighth-highest**.

Cross ended his career ranking **third all-time in school history in runs scored (221), fourth in hits (260), fourth in home runs (41), fourth in triples (11), fifth in RBI (170), third in total bases (444), third in walks (153), and fifth in stolen bases (62)**. His 219 career games played rank eighth all-time.

He earned national recognition following a standout season, becoming the **program's first All-American in nearly a decade**. He was named a First Team All-American by Perfect Game and a Third Team All-American by ABCA/Rawlings. Cross is the **10th All-American in UC Baseball history** and added First Team All-Region honors from ABCA/Rawlings — the Bearcats' fifth all-region selection since 2021.

Cross was a First Team All-Big 12 honoree this season, his third all-conference nod as a Bearcat. He became the **seventh player in school history to earn at least three all-conference honors**.

One of the best third basemen in the country, Cross was a Golden Spikes Award and Dick Howser Trophy semifinalist and was DIBaseball's No. 1-ranked third baseman in the publications latest position rankings on May 7.

Cross graduated with his bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from UC.

A graphic celebrating Kerrington Cross as a KC AT UC player. It features a large 'C' logo and the text 'KC AT UC'. The Cincinnati Bearcat logo is at the top.

2025 STATS		CAREER STATS	
.396 [^]	15 SB	RANK	STAT
12 HR	.526 OBP [*]	3	RUNS SCORED (221)
50 RBI	.647 SLG%	3	TOTAL BASES (444)
65 R		3	WALKS (154)
		4	HITS (260)
		4	HOME RUNS (41)
		4	TRIPLES (11)
		5	RBI (170)
		T-5	STOLEN BASES (62)

^{*}2nd HIGHEST IN A SINGLE SEASON
[^]8th HIGHEST IN A SINGLE SEASON

BASEBALL ADVANCES TO THE NCAA TOURNAMENT

The 2025 season was one for the record books for Cincinnati Baseball. The Bearcats finished **33-26** — their most wins since 2008 and the **fifth-highest single-season total in program history**. UC earned its seventh NCAA Tournament appearance and **first at-large bid since 1974**, capping off a memorable campaign that included a **school-record six wins over Top 25 opponents** and six Big 12 series victories, including against NCAA Tournament teams Kansas, Arizona State, Oklahoma State, and Kansas State.

The Bearcats also set new **single-season program records with 496 strikeouts and 134 stolen bases**. Individually, Cincinnati collected six All-Big 12 honors and was headlined by Big 12 Player of the Year Kerrington Cross — just the fifth conference player of the year in school history. With 65 wins over the last two seasons, the program continues to **rise and redefine its standard of success**.



POINTS OF PRIDE



RYAN FORD SECURES REGIONAL RUNNER UP

Cincinnati junior Ryan Ford delivered the **best NCAA regional finish in program history** this spring, tying for second at the NCAA Urbana Regional. He earned an individual bid to the regional meet after a standout season for the Bearcats.

It marked the **program's fourth-straight year in the postseason**, the best streak in school history. The prior three instances saw the first-ever team appearance, at the Las Vegas Regional in 2023, while Sam Jean qualified as an individual in Columbus in 2022 and Ty Gingerich in West Lafayette in 2024.

BIG 12 SPORTS MEDICINE STAFF OF THE YEAR

Cincinnati Athletics collected the Big 12 Sports Medicine Staff of the Year, as voted on by conference peers. The recognition, UC's first as a member of the Big 12, highlights the department's commitment to providing best-in-class care for its student-athletes.

The honor recognizes the efforts of the entire sports medicine team, which includes 13 athletic trainers, a physical therapist and two PT residents. The staff is led by Senior Associate AD of Sports Medicine Aaron Himmler and overseen by Chief of Staff Brad Pike.



JOHN WILLIAMS DRAFTED TO THE NFL

Cincinnati football offensive lineman John Williams was selected in the 2025 NFL Draft on Saturday, April 26 by the Green Bay Packers in the seventh round (No. 250 overall).

Williams' selection extends the Bearcats' draft streak to 10 consecutive years, dating back to 2016. His selection marks the sixth time ever that a Cincinnati player has been drafted by the Packers, and he is the first Green Bay draftee from UC since Josiah Deguara (third round) in 2020.



JOLEIGH CRYE'S HISTORIC SWIM

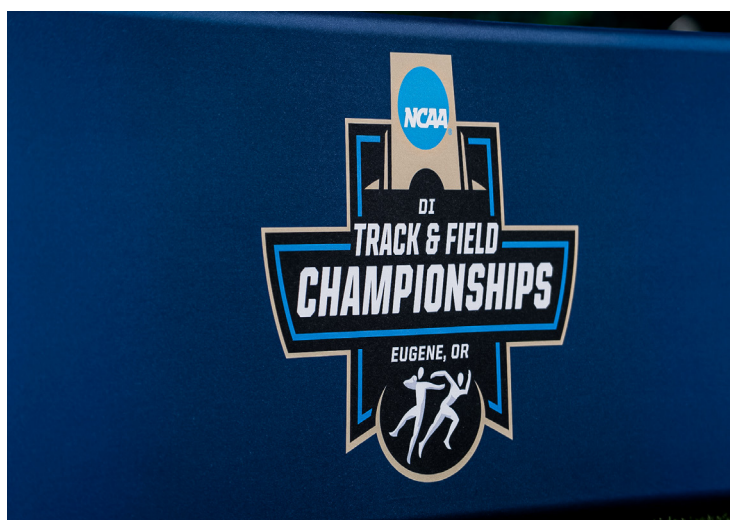
Junior Joleigh Crye placed fourth nationally in the 100-yard breaststroke en route to First Team All-America honors and the best NCAA female swimming finish in school history.

Crye led five Big 12 individual champions in swimming and track & field, which also included fellow swimmer Hunter Gubeno (200 backstroke) and track and field stars: Juliette Larcuente Hubener (indoor heptathlon), Astley Davis (indoor triple jump) and Fred Mobani-Likibi (outdoor shot put).

NCAA TRACK AND FIELD HISTORY

The University of Cincinnati track and field program made history with a record five All-America honorees during the 2025 NCAA Outdoor Championships. It surpassed any previous single-season total of individual All-Americans in the program's indoor or outdoor track and field history.

- Amanda Ngandu Ntumba (discus)
- Juliette Laracuenta-Huebner (heptathlon)
- Fred Moudani-Likibi (shot put)
- Ryan Rieckmann (javelin)
- Macaela Walker (400m hurdles)



CROSTOWN SHOOTOUT SWEEP

Cincinnati completed a Crosstown Shootout sweep, with both basketball programs securing rivalry wins over Xavier.

The men's team earned a gritty 68-65 victory at Fifth Third Arena, while the women delivered a 60-48 win on the road at the Cintas Center.

BEARCATS *BEYOND*



JOHN WILLIAMS - GREEN BAY PACKERS

Senior left tackle John Williams extended Cincinnati football's streak to 10 consecutive years with at least one NFL Draft pick when he was selected by the Green Bay Packers on April 26.



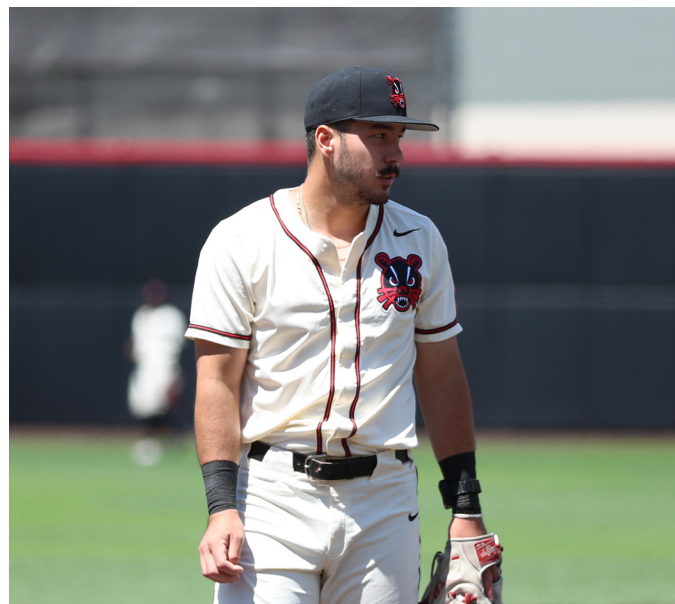
ABBY WALKER - COLUMBUS FURY

Women's volleyball player Abby Walker was selected 32nd overall by the Columbus Fury in the 2024 PVF Collegiate Draft. Walker joins a growing group of Bearcats making their mark professionally, including Jordan Thompson with LOVB Houston and Elissa Alcantara competing in Italy's top league.



LANDYN VIDOUREK - LOS ANGELES DODGERS

Cincinnati's Landyn Vidourek was selected by the Los Angeles Dodgers in the third round of the 2025 MLB Draft on Sunday, July 13. The 104th overall pick, Vidourek is the 52nd player in program history to hear his name called in the MLB Draft, and the fourth Bearcat to be picked in the top ten rounds since 2020.



KERRINGTON CROSS - SAN DIEGO PADRES

Cincinnati's Kerrington Cross was selected by the San Diego Padres in the seventh round of the 2025 MLB Draft on Monday, July 14. The 220th overall pick in the draft, Cross is the second Bearcat to be drafted this year, joining teammate Landyn Vidourek was selected in the third round by the Los Angeles Dodgers on Sunday night.

HALL OF FAME

The University of Cincinnati **James P. Kelly Athletics Hall of Fame** was established in 1976 to honor and pay tribute to the individuals and teams who have made outstanding contributions in the field of intercollegiate athletics. They helped bring **recognition, honor, distinction and excellence to the UC and its athletics programs through participation, support or interest.**

The **2024 James P. Kelly UC Athletics Hall of Fame Class** featured a trio of Olympians from the Paris Games, two first-team All-America football standouts, one of the greatest scorers in Bearcats basketball history, and arguably the top men's soccer player to ever represent Cincinnati.



JORDAN THOMPSON

Thompson, who won silver at the 2024 Paris Olympics and gold at Tokyo 2021, played at UC from 2015-19. She was a three-time unanimous AAC Player of the Year and two-time AVCA All-American. Thompson led UC to its best-ever season in 2019, earning AVCA First Team All-America honors and finishing seventh in NCAA history in kills.



ANNETTE ECHIKUNWOKE

Echikunwoke won silver in the hammer throw at the 2024 Paris Olympics, becoming the first American woman to medal in the event. A seven-time AAC champion and four-time First Team All-American, she holds two UC throwing records. Echikunwoke also won the 2017 NCAA Indoor weight throw title and remains one of UC's most decorated track athletes.



MARDY GILYARD

Gilyard was a dynamic force in 2008-09, leading UC to back-to-back BIG EAST titles and BCS bowls. Twice BIG EAST Special Teams Player of the Year, he finished ninth in 2009 Heisman voting. He set multiple school records including receptions (204) and all-purpose yards (5,904). Drafted in 2010, Gilyard played for the Rams, Eagles, and Jets in the NFL.



OMAR CUMMINGS

Cummings starred at UC from 2005-06, earning unanimous first-team all-conference honors and NSCAA First Team All-America in 2006. He scored 13 goals and 16 assists, including two goals vs. No. 5 UConn. Professionally, Cummings tallied 42 MLS goals over eight seasons and earned 35 caps with Jamaica, scoring seven international goals, including the 2009 Gold Cup winner vs. El Salvador.



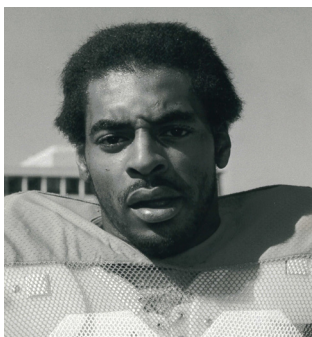
SEAN KILPATRICK

Kilpatrick scored 2,145 points (2nd all-time at UC) and earned AP First Team All-America honors in 2013-14. He holds school records for career games played (140) and three-pointers made (313). Kilpatrick led UC to four NCAA bids, including a Sweet 16. He played four NBA seasons averaging 10.3 points per game.



VANESSA GILLES

Gilles won Olympic gold with Team Canada in 2021 and competed in her second Olympics in 2024. The UC defender led the 2015 AAC Tournament champs, earning Defensive Player of the Year honors in 2017. She scored 17 career goals, including key game-winners at the Paris Games, and logged the most minutes by a non-goalskeeper in program history.



MIKE WOODS

Woods was UC's first consensus First Team All-American in 1977 and team MVP in 1976. A two-time captain, he was a 1978 second-round NFL draft pick by the Colts. His NFL career ended after a 1982 shooting left him paralyzed. Woods spent 27 years as a quadriplegic and passed away in 2009.

THE KELCE *LEGACY*

Travis and Jason Kelce were named to **ESPN's NFL All Quarter Century Team** — a well-deserved recognition for two of the best to come through Cincinnati. UC was the **only Big 12 program with two players selected**, a testament to the impact the Kelce brothers have made at the next level: Travis as one of the NFL's most dynamic and productive tight ends, and Jason as a longtime anchor of the Eagles' offensive line.

A **former walk-on linebacker** for the Bearcats, Jason Kelce played for Cincinnati from 2006 to 2010, earning All-BIG EAST honors as an offensive lineman twice. He played for head coaches Mark Dantonio, Brian Kelly and Butch Jones, helping lead UC to the **2008 Orange Bowl** and **2009 Sugar Bowl**. He was the **Scout Team Defensive MVP** in 2006 before moving to offensive line and starting three seasons from 2008 to 2010.

Jason Kelce **retired from the NFL in 2024** after 13 years as the center and team leader for the Philadelphia Eagles. Jason Kelce was a **six-time All-Pro** and **seven-time Pro Bowler**. He **won Super Bowl LII in 2018** and appeared in another, facing his brother, Travis, in Super Bowl LVII in 2023.

Travis Kelce is already **arguably the greatest tight end in NFL history** with **three Super Bowl victories** – the **most ever by a Bearcat**. He set the **record for career catches** in the Super Bowl LIX, bringing his total to **35 receptions over five Super Bowl appearances** and surpassing Jerry Rice's previous record of 33. He has gone to **10 consecutive Pro Bowls**. A Bearcat from 2008 to 2012, Travis Kelce had a breakout redshirt senior season, recording 45 receptions for 723 yards and eight touchdowns.

He has remained deeply connected to his alma mater, establishing the 87 and Running Endowment for Student-Athlete Health and Wellness in 2022. This endowment **supports all 400+ UC student-athletes** by funding the Cincinnati Athletics Sports Psychology and Counseling Department, **ensuring they have permanent access to the mental health care** and resources needed to stay strong, confident, and resilient.



CINCINNATI IS THE ONLY BIG 12 TEAM
WITH 2 SELECTIONS



TRAVIS KELCE



JASON KELCE

NIL IMPACT

Cincinnati is uniquely positioned to thrive in this more regulated NIL landscape, with **eight Fortune 500 companies** headquartered in the region and a strong network of local businesses that can **engage with UC student-athletes through compliant, transparent partnerships**.

Cincinnati continues to be recognized as a **national leader in the NIL space**. UC was named the **Best Institutional NIL Department** at the 2024 NIL Summit, and Director of NIL & Innovation Eddie Taylor was recently honored as **NIL Educator of the Year** at AthleteCon. Bearcats across multiple programs have earned standout opportunities, including Juliette Laracuente-Huebner becoming the **first Bearcat to sign an NIL deal with Nike**, and Gabrielle Guenther being selected for the **exclusive NCAA x META Empower 3.0 program**.

Cincinnati's NIL efforts go **well beyond surface-level branding**. The department has facilitated **357 personal branding meetings** and hosted **six dedicated NIL workshops and events**. Unique to UC, the Bearcats have placed **two student-athletes in full-time roles** through NIL deals and created **custom job shadowing experiences** for five others in partnership with TQL and PepsiCo — **a model which is the first of its kind**.

Businesses interested in pursuing NIL partnerships with Bearcats student-athletes should contact Taylor at eddie.taylor@uc.edu for more information.



NIL BY THE NUMBERS

INCREASE IN NIL DEALS FROM JULY 1, 2021
TO NOW

113.2%

CINCINNATI ATHLETES WITH THE CHANCE
TO ENGAGE WITH NIL ACTIVITIES

100%

Director of Athletics **John Cunningham** played a key role in shaping the future of college athletics as **a member of the House Settlement Implementation Committee**, where he served on the subcommittee that partnered with Deloitte to **help define and formalize the national NIL process**—work that will directly support Cincinnati's efforts to **thrive in this new model of student-athlete compensation**.

SHEAKLEY INDOOR PRACTICE FACILITY AND ATHLETICS PERFORMANCE CENTER

The University of Cincinnati cut the ribbon on the Sheakley Indoor Practice Facility and Athletics Performance Center, culminating a two-year construction process for the **\$134-million, 210,000-square-foot complex** that will redefine the student-athlete experience at UC.

The transformative project, made possible through the **extraordinary generosity of Larry and Rhonda Sheakley**, marks a major milestone in the Bearcats' continued rise in the Big 12 and on the national stage.

"This facility represents the future of Cincinnati Athletics," said Director of Athletics John Cunningham. "It is more than concrete and steel, it's **a testament to vision, investment and persistence**. Since joining the Big 12 two years ago, we've been building. With the opening of this incredible facility, the foundation is set and the future for all our athletics programs and our student-athletes is on the rise. **Thanks to the Sheakleys and many other supporters, we are prepared to compete for championships on and off the field.**"

Larry and Rhonda Sheakley accompanied the football team on June 11 for a first-look walk-through of the facility prior to the ceremony. The Sheakleys were joined by University of Cincinnati President Neville Pinto, Cincinnati Director of Athletics John Cunningham, head football coach Scott Satterfield and fifth-year defensive tackle and team captain Dontay Corleone for the ceremonial ribbon cutting.

The University's Board of Trustees approved of the project in May 2022 and a groundbreaking ceremony was held in April 2023. "The inspirational giving and leadership of two special people, Larry and Rhonda Sheakley, has made our vision for our student-athletes a reality," Pinto said. "We are eternally grateful to the Sheakleys for their wisdom, advocacy, time, and unwavering support. They are joined by the many donors who have made the Sheakley Athletics Performance Center and the Sheakley Indoor Practice Facility possible."



HARD HAT WEDNESDAY

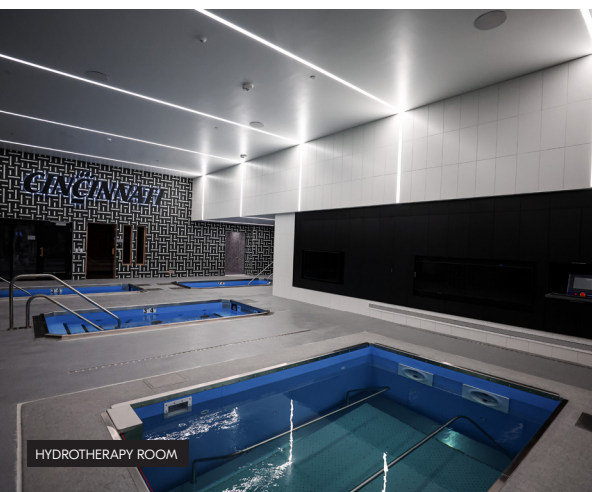
Hard Hat Wednesday is a video series from the Cincinnati Bearcats that documents the construction of the University's new Indoor Practice Facility and Performance Center.

Each episode gives fans an inside look at the progress, featuring site tours, design highlights, and key milestones. The series showcases how the facility will enhance training and performance for Bearcats athletes.





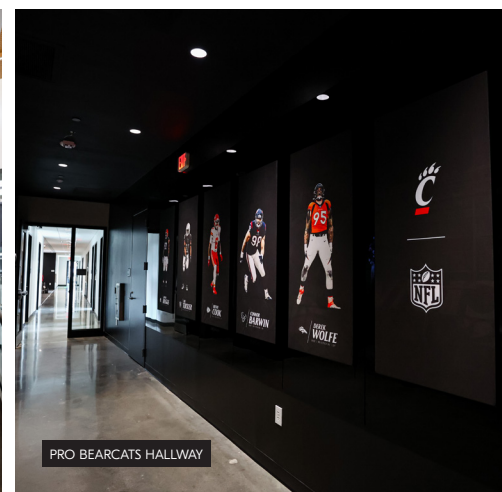
EAST EXTERIOR



HYDROTHERAPY ROOM



CFP CELEBRATION



PRO BEARCATS HALLWAY



LOCKER ROOM



HEAD COACH'S OFFICE



TEAM ROOM

CINCY SPORTS PARTNERS

This year, Cincinnati Athletics launched **Cincy Sports Partners (CSP)** — a bold step in **bringing multimedia rights representation in-house** and enhancing the University of Cincinnati's **engagement with fans, brands, and the broader Cincinnati community**.

Led by **President and Executive Senior Associate AD Ryan Holmes**, CSP hit the ground running. Holmes joined UC after 15 seasons with the Cincinnati Bengals, where he **led a top-ranked partnerships team and brokered major deals**, including the Paycor Stadium naming rights and Ohio's largest sports betting partnership.

Backed by a talented staff — Marc Brafman, Korbin Florer, Lionel Jackson, Josh King, and Jason Strine — CSP has quickly become **a driving force for innovation and engagement**.

CSP is focused on building partnerships across:

- Student-athlete NIL opportunities
- Creative fan activations
- Radio and media rights
- In-venue signage and branding
- Digital campaigns and storytelling

The launch of Cincy Sports Partners is **another milestone in a period of historic momentum for Bearcats Athletics**.



RYAN HOLMES

EXECUTIVE SR. ASSOCIATE AD
PRESIDENT, CINCY SPORTS PARTNERS



KORBIN FLORER

DIRECTOR OF PARTNERSHIP SERVICES



JOSH KING

MANAGER OF PARTNERSHIP SERVICES



MARC BRAFMAN

DIRECTOR, CORPORATE SPONSORSHIPS



LIONEL JACKSON

DIRECTOR, CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS



JASON STRINE

DIRECTOR, CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS

GO BEARCATS

Cincinnati Athletics continues to elevate its broadcasting and production efforts through a strong partnership with the **College-Conservatory of Music (CCM)** and an expanding in-house team. During the 2024-25 academic year, the department produced **95 ESPN+ broadcasts, five linear broadcasts (ESPN/2/U), and 84 video board productions** for UC teams.

Approximately **75% of ESPN+ crews are composed of CCM students**, who gain real-world experience through hands-on roles under the guidance of Professor Joe Brackman and Executive Producer Trevor Towle.

This year, the department added two new full-time staff positions — a producer and a second engineer — bringing the **full-time production staff to six**. In a major step forward, Athletics and CCM have partnered to **build a \$2.5 million control room** inside CCM, which will connect to the existing control room in Nippert Stadium. This new facility will **enable the production of linear football broadcasts** for ESPN and allow **two simultaneous broadcasts when events overlap**. CCM students will continue to work and learn in both control rooms, reinforcing **UC's commitment to providing elite production quality while developing the next generation of sports media professionals**.

The University of Cincinnati broadcast of the Crosstown Shootout between Xavier and UC was just **nominated for an Emmy Award for best Sports Production in the Ohio Valley** which includes all professional and collegiate sports productions in Ohio, Indiana, West Virginia, and Kentucky.

ESPN+ BY THE NUMBERS

UNIQUE VIEWERS

900K

TOTAL MINUTES WATCHED

47M

AVERAGE VIEWERS PER BROADCAST

11K

*AS OF JULY 7, 2024



THE ACADEMY

The UC Student-Athlete Development Academy provides INNOVATIVE, INTENTIONAL and IMPACTFUL programming to **enhance student-athletes' success at UC and advance our mission to see all of our #BearcatsGoPro.**

The Academy had an outstanding 2024-25 academic year, promoting **57 Academy-supported engagements** that include workshops, events, and athletic department services. They partnered with over **60 local and national employers, brands, and organizations to provide valuable resources and opportunities to our student-athletes** both during and after college. Their commitment to community impact was evident through **109 unique events, contributing over 2,300 hours of service.**

SAAC President Payton Hasse (Soccer) and Communications Executive Lauren Ann Barnes (Track & Field) represented the University of Cincinnati at the **SAAC Leadership Forum hosted at the Big 12 Conference headquarters in Irving, Texas.** During the forum, they engaged in leadership development sessions, participated in a job shadow experience with AT&T, and contributed to community impact with Ability Connection.

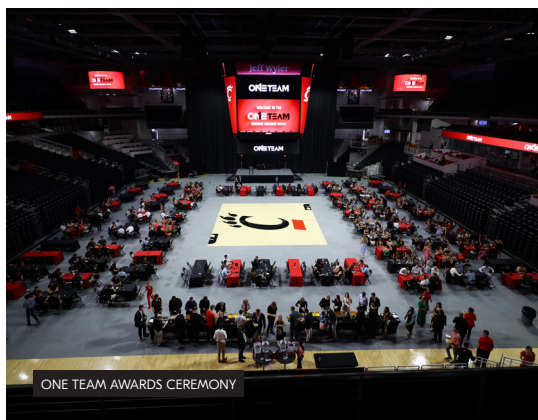
Callie Flanagan (Tennis) and Max Bergmann (Baseball) represented our program during the **Big 12 Career Tour in Irving, Texas.** In addition to engaging with top industry leaders through professional readiness workshops and panels, they made a meaningful impact at Mitchell Boulevard Elementary, supporting community impact efforts. The trip wrapped up with the honor of holding the American flag during the national anthem at the Big 12 Football Championship Game.

In year two of the Big 12 Beyond Borders Program, the University of Cincinnati will be represented on the global stage in Mexico City in July 2025 by Devon Cherry (Lacrosse).

UC student-athletes also made their mark at the 2024 Paris Olympics as Naquille Harris (Track & Field) represented both UC and Saint Kitts and Nevis in Track & Field and Ramez Diaa (Swimming & Diving) represented UC and Egypt in Olympic Diving.

112 student-athletes earn the Ally Sidloski Bearcats STRONG award for the 2024-25 academic year—STRONG in Mind, STRONG in Body, and STRONG in Character. Those 112 met the criteria for all three benchmarks.

Additionally, the UC Women's Basketball team showcased their talents internationally, competing in the Atlantic Slam tournament in Canada from November 22–24.



THE ACADEMY BY THE NUMBERS

ACADEMY-SUPPORTED ENGAGEMENTS

57

HOURS OF COMMUNITY IMPACT

2,324

COMMUNITY IMPACT THROUGH UNIQUE EVENTS

109

UCATS - UC FOUNDATION

Since 1979, UCATS (an acronym representing **University of Cincinnati Athletic Teams Scholarships**) has been the principal fundraising arm for UC Athletics. **Purpose-driven and relationship-centered**, UCATS provides a way for individuals, fans, alumni and corporate entities to help Bearcat student-athletes receive a quality education, while ensuring UC's tradition of academic and athletic excellence.

More than **5,000 active UCATS members** provide philanthropic support for 400+ student-athletes across 16 sports, with a **vast majority receiving financial aid from the athletics department to attend the University of Cincinnati**. On average, UC Athletics spends more \$79,756.16 per year to fund one in-state student-athlete scholarship. For out-of-state student-athletes, that cost increases to \$95,090.16.

Donations to UCATS include **philanthropic gifts**. Through the outstanding financial investment of each member, UCATS was able to generate more than \$33M in total contributions. **All contributions, both large and small, make it possible for UC Athletics to support Bearcat student-athletes with vital resources such as academic support, athletic training, sports medicine, and mental health services.** UCATS members have also been instrumental helping Cincy Reigns become one of the best NIL (Name, Image and Likeness) collectives in the country, while supporting the ongoing construction and renovation of the Indoor Practice Facility and the Armory Fieldhouse, respectively.

To elevate the men's basketball program, a dedicated group of donors known as the **Flight Club** was formed in 2022. Comprised of 15 households each giving a minimum of \$100,000 annually, the Flight Club was established to help the Bearcats **compete in the ever-evolving collegiate athletics landscape**. These impactful contributions are used to enhance the men's basketball program at a national level, **allowing the Bearcats to remain competitive in recruiting, development, and overall program resources.**

Additionally, we want to give special thanks to Larry and Rhonda Sheakley, Dave and Wendy Herche and Ed and Nina Paul for their transformational gifts to our athletics department and student-athletes this past year.

Thank you to every UCATS donor and season ticket holder for your support of UC Athletics!

UCATS BY THE NUMBERS

FUNDS RAISED IN FY25

\$33M+

DONORS

5,000+

\$100,000 GIFTS

40



DONOR STAIRS AT INDOOR PERFORMANCE CENTER



2024 MEN'S BASKETBALL TIP-OFF DINNER



2024-25 ANNUAL REPORT

The University of Cincinnati Annual Report is produced by the Bearcats Agency.

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Contributing Photography and Images by Isabella Marley, Steven Distel, Avah Crane, Ben Pennington, Maylea Salmon, Chris Cullum, Zac Swain, Daion Walker, Aiden Belanger, Biseta Bienvenu, Matthew Grabher, Keslar Bates, Abdoul Sow, Brooke Paciolla, Lamar Price and KJ Garmong.