

# As ESPN ranks best college basketball transfers, one new Kansas player made the cut

BY GARY BEDORE  
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One of Kansas’ three additions through the NCAA’s transfer portal has been included on ESPN’s list of the top 100 players to change colleges for the upcoming 2025-26 college basketball season.

Tre White, a 6-foot-7, 210-pound senior guard/small forward who played at USC in 2022-23, Louisville in 2024-25, was accorded a No. 73 national ranking according to analyst Jeff Borzello.

“Bill Self is building a lineup around star freshman Darryn Peterson and returning big man Flory Bidunga filled with interchangeable wings, but White’s experience at the Power 5 level will likely mean he starts for the Jayhawks to open the season,” Borzello wrote earlier this week.

“White has now been a starter and consistent producer at three different schools: USC, Louisville and Illinois. Over the course of three years, he has averaged 10.5 points and 5.5 rebounds, while making just about 30% of his 3-point attempts.”

White last season averaged 10.5 points and 5.5 rebounds while playing 32 games (31 starts) for the Illini. He hit 114 of 225 shots for 50.7%. He was 23-of-70 from 3 for 32.9% and 84-of-102 from the free throw line for 82.4%. White logged 23.3 minutes per contest.

KU portal additions Melvin Council Jr. of St. Bonaventure and Jayden Dawson of Loyola-Chicago

were not included in ESPN’s top-100 list.

Some former KU players were included in the top 100.

- Tyon Grant-Foster, a 6-7 senior forward who played at KU in 2020-21, checked in at No. 62 in the rankings. He’s left Grand Canyon for Gonzaga. “Provided he is granted another year of eligibility, he could end up being the player (Gonzaga coach) Mark Few has needed on the wing,” Borzello wrote of the former Schlagle High standout. “Grant-Foster is one of the most talented scorers in the country, particularly if he’s fully healthy and returns to his 2023-24 form. Alongside Graham Ike and Braden Huff, he gives the Zags one of the nation’s best frontcourts.

“Grant-Foster did have injury issues, but his scoring saw a dramatic drop from the 20.1 points he averaged in 2023-24 to a 14.8 mark this past season, shooting just 23.2% from 3-point range. He still scored 23 points against Maryland in the NCAA Tournament.”

- AJ Storr, a 6-7 senior forward, who has departed KU for Mississippi, is ranked No. 63 by ESPN. He’s also played at St. John’s and Wisconsin. “Storr’s signing could age as a good value opportunity for Ole Miss. He’s the most proven scorer on the roster and should have plenty of chances to gain some confidence early in the season. With that said, Chris Beard and his staff are likely not done in the portal yet,” Borzello wrote. “Even after a bad season in Lawrence, it’s hard to

drop Storr from a top-5 transfer to outside of the top 100. Can he regain his offensive production at Wisconsin — or at least his shooting form at St. John’s? He averaged 6.1 points after going for 16.8 in 2023-24 at Wisconsin.”

- Rylan Griffen, a 6-6 senior guard, who has left KU for Texas A&M, is ranked No. 91 nationally by ESPN. “Griffen had a disappointing campaign at Kansas, but we saw him produce for Alabama in the SEC two seasons ago, and (new A&M coach) Bucky McMillan’s system could generate plenty of offense,” Borzello wrote. “With the late arrival of Pop Isaacs and the breakout potential of Mackenzie Mgbako, just how many shots will be up for grabs in College Station remains a question, but a bounce-back season should be in store for Griffen.

“Griffen averaged 11.2 points during his sophomore season at Alabama, making more than 39% of his 3-point attempts, but struggled in all facets of the game at Kansas this past season. He averaged 5.9 points and shot just 30.1% from behind the arc.”

PJ Haggerty, a 6-3 junior guard, who is transferring from Memphis to Kansas State, is ESPN’s No. 1-ranked transfer.

“Haggerty withdrew from the NBA draft, and after a handful of schools seemed to enter and exit his recruitment, he joined Jerome Tang’s roster in Manhattan, Kansas. From the perspective of continuing to produce at an in-

credibly high level, Kansas State is a great spot for Haggerty. He will have every opportunity to put up huge numbers and lead the Wildcats,” Borzello wrote.

“A massive boost to the portal late in the window, Haggerty was one of the best guards in the country in 2024-25. He was named AAC Player of the Year and a second-team All-American after averaging 21.7 points, 5.8 rebounds and 3.7 assists this past season.”

Also, Abdi Bashir, a 6-7 junior who is transferring from Monmouth to K-State is ranked No. 77 nationally. Nate Johnson, a 6-3 junior guard moving to KSU from Akron, is ranked No. 88. Sebastian Mack, a 6-3 junior guard headed to Missouri from UCLA, is ranked No. 94.

KU coach Bill Self recently commented on how recruiting has been going.

“We know what we need, and we’re still actively recruiting a couple of kids, which (there) are still some opportunities available for us to do so, primarily internationally,” Self said. “I just feel like with the international kids, it’s been a little bit slower in developing, because I think there’s still some options that they have to decide on, and they’re given more time to decide what they want to do, more so than what the American kids are.”

“I still think there’s an opportunity to recruit a big and then to give us more depth, and then a guard if he can really shoot.”

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DANIEL KUCIN JR. Imagn Images

Kansas City Royals shortstop Bobby Witt Jr. looks on before a game against the Baltimore Orioles at Oriole Park at Camden Yards on May 2.

## FROM PAGE 1B ROYALS

could feel needed to happen,” Witt said of the meeting. “And so me and Sal (Salvador Perez) talked about it a little bit yesterday. ... In life, you know when time’s right, and it was right.”

There were multiple Royals who addressed the team. For some guys, it gave a clear picture and perspective of what’s happening. The overarching theme was that the collective group needs to play better.

And just as important, that each player has each other’s back.

“Communication is key,” Lorenzen said. “That’s with any relationships that you have in life. If you have good communication, you are going to have a healthy relationship. And with us, we are good with communicating with one another. And through that, you hear different perspectives and you are kind of able to change your perspective if it’s not in a good spot.”

Several Royals affirmed they want to win. But those expectations have, at times, added pressure, which has turned into frustration. The Royals carried that elevated temperament home. It has lingered in the clubhouse during the losing skid: five games, all at home.

The hope is that the meeting will offer a clean slate.

“It’s been a little bit of everything,” Witt said. “Even when you are at home, you are thinking about it. You are at the field, you are thinking about it. So it’s just one of those things where it’s: ‘How do I get back to being myself?’”

Witt has struggled in recent games. In his last 30 games, Witt has hit .212 (25-for-118) with three home runs, 14 RBIs

and nine runs scored. He owns a .250 on-base percentage in that time.

Last season, Witt never hit lower than .275 during a given month. He was readily on base and in position to score runs. He accounted for 125 runs scored in 2024. Through 71 games, he has just 35 runs.

“For me, it’s been not good,” Witt said. “I gotta look at myself in the mirror and say, ‘What do I need to do?’ And I just need to get better. It starts from me. And honestly, that’s something where when I’m going, things are going better.”

Royals hitters also felt guilty for letting down the pitching staff. Pasquantino noted that hearing from the pitchers helped ease some pressure.

KC has been shut out eight times this season.

“The main piece is that everybody’s got each other’s backs from the starting lineup to the starting rotation to the bullpen,” Pasquantino said. “They made that evidently clear and that was kind of cool to hear because from an offensive standpoint, you feel like you are letting the other half of the team down. That’s where the pressure comes from. We are letting the team down.”

Pasquantino hopes that can clear the air in the clubhouse.

“I don’t know about you guys, but it felt like nobody enjoyed today,” Pasquantino said. “Just kind of quiet, even in the first inning, it’s just quiet. So tomorrow, that won’t be the case. We will be ready to roll, smiles on our faces and ready to win a ball game.”

And it could start on Father’s Day, followed by a road trip where families are invited along.

“We’ve got the family trip coming,” Pasquantino said, “so starting out on a win will be great.”

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# Royals drop 5th straight in shutout loss to A’s. What can be done to fix offense?

BY JAYLON THOMPSON  
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What once looked like a promising season is falling apart for the Kansas City Royals.

The Royals’ offense is nowhere to be found. On Saturday, the club posted three hits against Athletics left-hander Jacob Lopez. He tossed six shutout innings despite entering play with a 6.00 ERA.

There were opportunities to score. Maikel Garcia doubled to lead off the game but was left standing at second base. In the third inning, Garcia reached with a two-out single and Bobby Witt Jr., who celebrated his 25th birthday, followed with a walk.

The Royals (34-37) were set up. Lopez balked moments later as both runners moved up 90 feet in front of Vinnie Pasquantino.

Nothing came of the scoring chance. Pasquantino flew out to end the threat. The A’s (28-44) earned a 4-0 victory and a series win. The Royals have lost five straight games, all at home.

“The energy in the dugout was great at the beginning of the game,” Royals manager Matt Quatraro said. “Everybody was ready to go and they worked hard to prepare for the game. It’s hard to keep a high energy level when you are going back to the dugout all of the time. You can’t run the bases, you’re not breaking up double plays, you are not going first to third.

“... There is frustration because they want to win, but it’s not a give-up attitude.”

It was the latest entry in



PETER AIKEN Imagn Images

Kansas City Royals starting pitcher Michael Lorenzen (24) throws a pitch in the first inning against the Athletics at Kauffman Stadium on Saturday.

the Royals’ 2025 story. The club has been haunted by missed opportunities and it’s affecting the entire lineup.

So what can be done?

Well, the Royals held a players-only meeting to address their concerns after the game. It was orchestrated by the team leaders to get things back on track.

“It was a little bit of something that you could feel that needed to happen,” Witt said. “Me and Sal (Salvador Perez) talked about it yesterday.”

Beyond that, the Royals have exhausted nearly all their options. The front office brought up top prospect Jac Caglianone. KC has demoted MJ Melendez and designated Hunter Renfroe for assignment for poor performance.

Drew Waters, Nick Loftin and John Rave have arrived in their stead. However, the trio hasn’t made a sizable impact.

The Royals have a .595 OPS (on-base plus slugging) with runners in scoring position. And they have a combined 46 home runs through 71 games.

Both metrics rank dead

last in the sport.

Can help be found outside the organization? The entire league knows the Royals need offensive help. As a result, there will be a hefty price tag for the Royals to acquire any potential difference makers.

The Royals could part with some of their top prospects. Guys like Blake Mitchell (No. 2), Carter Jensen (No. 3), Gavin Cross (No. 6) and Steven Zobac (No. 7) have a lot of promise.

The Royals would prefer to keep their top prospects, but the offensive concerns are too pressing. Last season, Royals general manager J.J. Picollo was aggressive in seeking relief help as he landed Lucas Erceg and Hunter Harvey.

A similar situation could occur in the coming weeks. The MLB trade deadline figures to be a busy time for the Royals.

At the current moment, the Royals sit 11 ½ games behind the Detroit Tigers in the American League Central. The club entered Saturday 2 ½ games back in the Wild Card race due to the recent slide.

“I think we are tired of losing,” Pasquantino said. “It’s as simple as that. Tired of losing and tired of not scoring runs.”

There are plenty of games remaining. The Royals could surge in the second half of the season and make a run. Right now, it’s clear the club needs better-producing bats and the current group to perform more consistently.

**MICHAEL LORENZEN KEEPS IT CLOSE**

It’s hard to find fault in Michael Lorenzen’s start. He was given no run support to work with against the A’s on Saturday afternoon.

Lorenzen surrendered a two-run homer to Max Muncy in the second inning. He later issued an RBI double to infielder Luis Urias.

“Overall, he goes six innings and gives up three runs,” Quatraro said. “Very competitive.”

It was enough to earn a quality start. Lorenzen allowed three runs in six innings and added three walks and four strikeouts.

“The leadoff walks are just unacceptable,” Lorenzen said. “Yeah, it just can’t happen, so we need to clean that up.”

The A’s had timely hits. They took advantage of the walks and didn’t squander a chance to put runs on the scoreboard.

Lopez didn’t need much help, either. He tied a career-high with nine strikeouts against the Royals at Kauffman Stadium. Garcia and Salvador Perez accounted for all three of the Royals’ hits.

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## Legals

### Change of Name

To whom it may concern: Notice is hereby given that by an order of the Circuit Court of the County of Jackson County, Missouri, Division No. 29, Case No. 2516-FC04142 made entered on the record on May 29, 2025, the name of Talia Mae Brizendine was changed to Talia Mae Cullen Brizendine. IPL0240033 Jun 10,16,23 2025

### Legals & Public Notices

#### BIDS ACCEPTED

The City of KCMO will receive Bids by 2:00 PM, on 7/8/2025 at KCMO City Hall, 1st Floor 102W, Kansas City, MO 64106 for Project: 89005596 BRO-R126002 Raytown Rd over Lumpkins Fork Bridge Replacement IPL0237495 Jun 12-13,15-20,22-23 2025

#### NOTICE

The City of KCMO will receive Bids by 2:00 PM, on 7/15/2025 at KCMO City Hall, 1st Floor 102W, Kansas City, MO 64106 for Project: 07P25058 KCFD Station No. 7 Gender Neutral Restroom Upgrades. IPL0239995 Jun 10-13,15-20 2025

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## Dogs

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