

Sooner Shorts



Sooner teams have scaled the rarest of athletic heights. In July, OU was named the 2015-16 Best in College Sports by CBS Sports. Six OU teams finished in their respective final fours, with football earning its ninth Big 12 title and a spot in the College Football Playoff. Men's basketball made its fifth Final Four appearance, but it was OU's "wild card" teams that brought home the CBS Sports win, with national titles in men's and women's gymnastics and softball. To sweeten the season, former OU basketball player Buddy Hield and pitcher Paige Parker were named the Big 12 Athletes of the Year. This marks the first time the Sooners swept the award and eighth time an OU player was named as an Athlete of the Year.



Hall of Famer

The Women's Basketball Hall of Fame welcomed OU head coach Sherri Coale to its membership in June. Coale has led the Sooners to three Final Fours and won 10 Big 12 championships during her celebrated, two-decade career. She has been named Big 12 Coach of the Year four times and taken her teams to 17 consecutive NCAA Tournament appearances. That represents the fifth-longest current streak in the nation.

Pocket Payout

Cell phones have become a major classroom distraction for students and the height of frustration for professors. That's why the new "Pocket Points" app is gaining OU fans. Students who open the app and lock their phones earn Pocket Points redeemable for discounts at local shops and restaurants. The app is available on iTunes and Google Play and makes squashing the impulse to check your phone pay for itself.



Grabbing the Bronze

OU men's gymnastics head coach Mark Williams led the U.S. Olympic team, which featured former OU standouts Jake Dalton, Alex Naddour and Olympic team captain Chris Brooks. Naddour, shown here competing for OU, took home the bronze medal for his performance on the pommel horse.



OU Athletics



Ribbon-cutting in Arezzo

In June, following nearly seven years of renovations, the University of Oklahoma in Arezzo inaugurated the Kathleen and Francis Rooney Family Residential Learning Center with a ribbon-cutting ceremony in the garden of the renovated Santa Chiara Monastery. The beautifully restored site serves as the university's flagship international study center. Highlights of the center include classrooms, seminar and conference rooms with 17th- and 18th-century frescoes; an upper and lower library; a courtyard; student and faculty suites; a full-service kitchen and cafeteria; a loggia offering panoramic views of Arezzo and the province; as well as a Tuscan garden. Each semester, the facility is able to accommodate up to 48 university students to serve as their home in Italy during their study abroad experience.

“Rovie McRoverface” and a team of OU School of Aerospace and Mechanical Engineering students scored big on the simulated surface of Mars during NASA's 2016 Revolutionary Aerospace Systems Concept –Academic Linkage Exploration Robo-Ops Competition. Rovie was inspired by a 1970s Russian rover and has a bendable spin and cone-shaped wheels perfect for trundling over Mars' rocky landscape. The rover was put to the test at NASA's Houston headquarters, while part of OU's team provided mission control from Norman. “The rover from Oklahoma smashed all previous records by 50 percent,” says NASA's Pat Troutman. “It had a flawless performance and has opened a new paradigm for teleoperated rovers.”



The robotics team from the University of Oklahoma includes, from left, Dr. David Miller, Dane Schoelen, Kevin Cotrone and Nathan Justus.

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