



## Men’s basketball attendance averages eight times higher than women’s

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Attendance at Razorback men’s basketball home games has been eight times higher on average than at women’s home basketball games over the past 10 years.

At the end of the 2018-19 season, the total number of people who attended the men’s team’s home games was 275,012, and the women’s team saw a total of 41,469 -- almost seven-times lower but still the highest attendance the women’s team has seen in the past 10 years.

The 2018-19 season saw a big jump in attendance compared to the 2017-2018 season, which drew 26,824 attendees for the women’s basketball team.

During the 2017-18 season, which was the first season for current head coach Mike Neighbors, the women’s basketball team had a record

of 13-18, which was one of the lowest of the last 10 years. So far in the 2019-20 season, the women’s team has garnered a crowd of 13,183 people as of Nov. 30. There are 19 total home games scheduled for this season, but the team has only played seven. They are on track for another popular season, with anticipated crowds of around 36,000 for the season if attendance continues on the same trend.

The women’s team had one of their most successful seasons of the decade in the 2019-20 season with a record of 22-15. It was their most successful season since the 2010-11 season with a record of 22-12.

Men’s basketball games have had an attendance of 80,176 this season, as of Nov. 30.

Attendance at men’s basketball games peaked in the 2014-15 season when the team was under former coach Mike Anderson. The team drew a crowd of 283,485 people across the season and had an overall record of 27-9 that season, which remains their most



**Sadie Rucker Staff Photographer**

Jeantal Cylla, a freshman, greets fans Nov. 5 during the Razorbacks’ win against Rice University

successful record of the decade followed closely by the 2016-17 season with a record of 26-10.

By comparison, Auburn University, which is a school

of similar size to the UofA, had an attendance total of 138,650 people at men’s basketball games during the 2018-19 season. Women’s basketball

games drew a crowd of 27,259.

At the University of Mississippi, 125,061 people attended men’s basketball games in the 2018-19 season

while 33,117 attended women’s games.

Razorback Athletics officials were not available for comment.

## UA athlete livens up athletic trips with YouTube videos

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A cross country and track runner posts videos showing off her free UA gear and showcasing her life as a student-athlete on her YouTube channel, which has more than 2,000 subscribers as of Dec. 3.

Abby Gray, a senior who is majoring in journalism, has been making YouTube videos for three years, sometimes featuring other student-athletes, especially while traveling to competitions, she said. She was inspired to make her YouTube channel because of a Youtuber and runner in Oregon who runs the 3,000-meter event, Emma Abrahamson, who has over 61,000 subscribers.

Carina Viljoen, a senior, is one of Gray’s teammates and has been watching Gray’s

YouTube videos since she started making them, Viljoen said.

“She’ll film the parts where it’s boring, in our opinions, like at the airport,” Viljoen said. “But bringing a camera to that and showing the inside life of an athlete is interesting even if it’s boring for us. It adds a little fun to the trips.”

Viljoen likes Gray’s videos because they capture the moments they spend together and make dull moments fun when traveling as a team, she said.

“I think it’s a good thing to keep everyone loose and not stressed out for the trip,” Gray said.

Balancing school work, track and cross country meets and her YouTube channel is difficult to manage, but school always comes first, Gray said.

Gray makes gear haul videos in her home and films on the go at cross country meets. Gray travels to meets



**Heidi Kirk Staff Photographer**

Abby Gray (left) and Maddy Reed (right) finish the Women’s Collegiate 5k on Oct. 5 at the 2019 Chile Pepper Festival.

every other week during the in-season of cross country, which lasts from August-November.

“It’s pretty hard making videos after I’ve been working on school and traveling, balancing that is a little difficult,” Gray said.

Gray tries to edit her videos when she is traveling on the plane or the bus, but usually tries to finish her school work first, she said.

Gray uses a Canon PowerShot G7 X digital camera to film her videos because it is small and easy to film while she is on the go, she said.

Gray’s favorite place that she has traveled to with her team is in Seattle or Palo Alto, California, she said. She posted a video Aug. 22 titled “RUNNING IN EUROPE | paris, rome, barcelona, and more!” in which she traveled to Europe with her family.

Gray realized the reach of her YouTube channel on a 2018 trip to Boulder,

Colorado, where she met a fan of her channel while running on a trail with one of her teammates. The interaction with the fan, a freshman in high school, put Gray’s subscriber count in perspective for her, she said.

“A lot of times, you can look at the view count as a number, but it’s actual people behind the number,” Gray said.

Student-athletes are not eligible to make money off of their publicity, reputation or personal following that was gained because of their athletics, according to Arkansas Athletics.

However, after Gray graduates, she hopes for her channel to grow enough that she might be able to make money off it, she said.

“I think if I can keep everything up and find my own niche in the audience, I want to try,” Gray said. “Maybe it could turn into something bigger, and I could pursue it then.”

## Football game attendance suffers during Chad Morris’ seasons

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Razorback Football home game attendance decreased by 12.3% this season, featuring the lowest attended game since 2001 with only 52,256 attendees.

With the Razorback Football team finishing the 2019 season with a 2-10 record, some attendees were surprised to see a nearly empty student section at most games, including UA alumni Erik Walther, who said he went to all but two home games.

“Even at the beginning of the year when (the Razorback Football team) was not that bad, there were not many students. Even if there were, they would be gone by halftime,” Walther said.

Although football makes up a large portion of the athletic program’s revenue, it is not the only source, said Kevin Trainor, chief public relations officer for Razorback Athletics.

Ticket sales make up 31% of the Razorback Athletics 2019-20 budget.

By having partnerships with SEC apparel providers and Razorback foundation donations, the Razorback Athletics program is among the few programs in the nation to be self-sufficient, Trainor said.



**Sadie Rucker Staff Photographer**

33,961 tickets were distributed Nov. 29 during the Razorbacks’ game against Missouri, which is about 63% of the capacity of War Memorial Stadium.

In past seasons, with former head coach Bobby Petrino, the Razorbacks went 11-2 all season with a 6-2 record in the SEC in 2011. Average game attendance for the 2011 season was 19.8% higher than during the 2019 season.

Fan attendance over the past ten years reached an all time high during the 2016 season

with former head coach Bret Bielema. The Razorbacks ended with a 7-6 season and with 26.7% more attendees than the 2019 season.

Turner Gillmore, a junior, usually left home games early, depending on the score of the game, he said. The only thing keeping Gillmore in the stands was a discount on concession

stand items given to attendees that was announced on the jumbotron by Razorback Athletics, he said.

For Gillmore, the overall lack of consistency in coaching roles and the team’s starting line-ups seems to be what is causing attendees like him to leave games early.

“It is hard to get behind a

team and hope that they will be better when it changes every week,” Gillmore said.

Walther thinks Hunter Yurachek, vice chancellor and director of the Razorback Athletics, has proved that he is trying to improve the program by hiring Eric Musselman as head coach of the basketball team. The best way for fans to

show support of the football next season is by giving the new head coach a chance to prove himself, he said.

Trainor thinks ticket sales from other athletic events, such as basketball, gymnastics and baseball, could supplement the money not made from football game ticket sales this season.