Asia Lampe
April 14
Upgrades To WSSU Athletics

Winston Salem State University's athletic department has been making major upgrades since the spring of 2022 to better the biggest contributing factor of the university, athletics.

At WSSU, the athletic department staff has been working to create an environment that feels like a home for these athletes. Their department depends on the success of these athletes. "This entire department is only here because of the student-athletes, so I need to make sure they feel good in what they are playing in and what they call home," said April Reed, Assistant Director of Operations and Equipment.

Upgrades in the department happen every year. Teams are given a budget for equipment each year that may fluctuate depending on what year it is. There are annual upgrades like shoes but every two to four years they have major upgrades like uniforms.

Annual upgrades include footwear, weight room shirts and shorts, and helmets depending on if there is a regulation change. Footwear is one of the biggest purchases for the athletic department especially for the sport of track and field. "I have a roster of 40 athletes and they need two to three pairs of shoes per year which ends up costing almost $10,000," said Antonio Wells, Head Women's and Men's Track and Field & Cross County Coach.

The football team is the most expensive sport in the department by far. Uniforms are $600 per athlete and helmets are $309 per helmet. Once that is multiplied by the 100 man roster, it can cost about $60,000. Although only 55 people travel you must cover the practice team as well.

The biggest recent upgrade for the athletic department is the new logo. They added the full body to the ram head. The ram head represents the athletic department and the full body that was announced in 2022 represents the student body. The logo head is used for uniforms and other clothing items that the athletic department gives their athletes.

The weight room in the field house and Whitaker received new floors in 2022 along with new weight room benches. The trainer room is also getting upgraded in Whitaker by being expanded into a bigger room. The training room in the field house will be for track, football, and tennis while the training room in Whitaker will be for basketball, softball and golf.

The newest upgrade is the hiring of new offensive coordinator, Chris Barnette. "One of my goals is to make sure everyone has a position coach. My boys need someone who is going to grow and help them develop as a player, student and as a young man," said Robert Massey.

Whitaker and Gaines Gym are the focal point for this year's major upgrades. There are new LED lights, repainting of walls, wrapping the doors with the logo, and repainting railings on the

bleachers. They also painted the new ram head onto the floor over Christmas break. “I’m going above and beyond and I won’t have one place looking better then the next,”said April Reed.

Gaines and Whitaker will have new scoreboards and video boards when fall semester rolls around. The bathrooms will be redone in Gaines, the lockers will be repainted, and they are creating a lounge room for athletes. “So this summer I will be dedicated to making sure when the student athletes return they are able to see it’s like day and night,” said April Reed.

Recruitment is the reason these upgrades are being made. When recruits come to tour the campus they want to see a department that they can call home. They also want to look good and feel good in the environment which will only happen if the department keeps elevating athletics.

There have been many upgrades and there are many more to come. These upgrades can range from $3,000 to $150,000.

Future upgrades include the purchase of Civitan park to make it the home Track and Field stadium and the creation of a softball field on campus. They are also looking at options to buy Bowman Gray Stadium. The future is bright for Winston Salem State Athletics.

Robert Massey
Head football coach
Athletic department
336-750-8888
masseyr@wssu.edu

Antonio Wells
Head Cross Country/ Track and field head Coach
Athletic department
wellsas@wssu.edu
336-750-8921

Kenny Harbor
Head Strength and Conditioning Coach
Athletic department
harborkt@wssu.edu
336-750-8875

Nia Mosley
Assistant Athletic Trainer
Athletic department
mosleyna@wssu.edu

336-750-2597

Etienne Thomas
Director of Athletics
Athletic department
directorofathletics@wssu.edu
336-750-2141

April Reid
Assistant Athletics Director for Operations and Equipment
Athletic department
reidan@wssu.edu
336-750-2159