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‘I’m very excited about what our lineup looks like’

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Women’s ice hockey searches for second straight ECAC Championship

By **EMILY MARQUIS**
Associate Sports Editor

After one of the most successful seasons in program history, reigning ECAC Champion Quinnipiac women’s ice hockey returns to the ice with one mission in mind: return to the mountaintop. After bowing out to the top-seeded University of Wisconsin Badgers last season, the Bobcats are chasing a return to the NCAA Tournament.

“Having that experience on such a big stage, it really just sets the tone for the years to come,” junior forward Taylor Brueske said. “We want to be in that position again, and we want to be able to have success there.”

With the new season comes a combination of that championship squad and a collection of new faces that all need to integrate for the upcoming title chase.

Let’s take a look at how each position group is affected.

OFFENSE

Senior forward Kahlen Lamarche was at the forefront of the Bobcats’ scoring for nearly all of the 2025-26 season. Her 42 goals set the new franchise single-season mark, securing her not only the co-team Most Valuable Player award, but All-ECAC First Team and All-ECAC Forward of the Year Finalist honors.

Lamarche also became the first player in program history to finish in the top 10 of Patty Kazmaier Award voting. Quinnipiac’s top scorer accounted for just over 30% of the team’s 137 goals on the season, as well as adding 22 more assists.

It’s a scoring presence that the Bobcats will need in the upcoming season. Besides Lamarche, Quinnipiac’s other two top-scoring forwards, Laurence Frenette ‘26 and Emerson Jarvis ‘26, are playing professionally, leaving two holes in the top-six.

Although Lamarche, Frenette and Jarvis shared a line to begin last season, by the ECAC Tournament, head coach Cass Turner had reshuffled the lines, with players like junior forwards Bryn Prier, Avery Bairos and Brueske gaining new opportunities and contributing to

an offense that finished top-five in the NCAA last season.

“I’m excited, because I think I can’t tell you right now what our lineup is gonna shake out to look like, because it is so competitive,” Turner said.

Turner’s excitement extends to the five incoming forwards the Bobcats are taking on ahead of the new season, including three freshmen.

“I’ve been so impressed with all of them,” Brueske said. “I’m super excited to see them all contribute in their own way.”

DEFENSE

Quinnipiac’s defensive unit from last season was one of the strongest in the ECAC, allowing the fewest goals per game of any team in the conference at 1.66. The unit will face two key departures heading into the new season.

“Obviously big shoes to fill with (defenders Mia Lopata ‘26 and Zoe Uens ‘26) graduating this year,” defender and junior captain Makayla Watson said. “They were just two awesome defensemen that were so reliable for us.”

A pair of freshmen from Quebec, Canada, defenders Rosalie Breton and Clara-Mai Van Houtte-Cachero look to step up into that role for the Bobcats. Breton spent the 2025-26 season with the Cegep Limoilou Titans of the Ligue de hockey collegiale du Quebec (QCHL), leading all skaters in points with 10 goals and 36 assists in 30 games played. Another former QCHL player, Van Houtte-Cachero led all defenders in points at John Abbot College with nine goals and 20 assists in 29 games.

“I think that’s the great thing when you bring in really strong and talented players,” Turner said. “They’re both ‘06 birth years, so you know technically that puts them at the same age as all of our juniors. So they’re older, more mature, they’ve put a lot of time and effort into their game.”

This will be the second time the defenders shared the ice, as both skaters played at the 2023 National Women’s Under-18 Championship for Team Quebec. Breton has also played for Team Canada at the 2024 IIHF Under-18 World Championships.

“(They) are both very good, and I’m excited to see what they can do this year as well,” Watson said. “It’s definitely competitive back there for the defensemen.”

Another addition, graduate student defender Ellie Gauvin, rounds out the newcomers for the defense. The former Brown Bear missed the entirety of the 2025-26 season, but has logged four goals and eight assists in 64 collegiate contests.

With other key defensive pieces, such as senior captain Brynne West and juniors Aynsley D’Ottavio and Ella Sennick returning to the ice for the Bobcats, Quinnipiac’s defense looks to repeat the strong performance that powered the team to a championship.

GOALTENDING

At the heart of the Bobcats’ success

last season was the breakout of junior goaltender Felicia Frank. After spending her freshman season backing up Kaley Doyle ‘25, Frank made a name for herself last season. The Bobcats’ starter by every definition of the term, Frank broke the single-season save program record, making 1,035 saves in 41 games played.

Named the team’s co-Most Valuable Player and Defensive Player of the Year, Frank swept ECAC awards in 2026, taking home All-ECAC First Team and ECAC Hockey Goaltender of the Year honors, as well as finalist nods for ECAC Hockey Player of the Year. She allowed just one goal in the ECAC Championship against Yale, earning the Most Outstanding Player of the 2026 ECAC Hockey Tournament honors.

Ranked in the top five in shutouts, goals-against average and save percentage while being first in wins, Frank’s success was at the core of the Bobcats success last season and will be another key to Quinnipiac returning to the top of the ECAC.

However, the Bobcats will need to wait for Frank to return to that starting role.

“Felicia had an injury in the later part of last season, so she won’t be playing to start our year,” Turner said. “Its going to be challenging to not have her in our lineup, but for us, we know we have great depth at the goaltending position.”

In her absence, the Bobcats will look to a pair of young goaltenders. Sophomore Casey Clausen, who served as the fourth-string to Calli Hogarth ‘26 and Tatum Blacker ‘26 last season, as well as freshman Natalia Dilbone, who spent time with Team USA Under-18 for the World Juniors prior to joining the Bobcats.

The No. 6 Bobcats will begin their season with seven non-conference contests, including three weekend series against Hockey East opponents, repeating the three opponents Quinnipiac faced last year with the University of Maine, Providence College and Northeastern University, before opening up conference play against the Union Garnet Chargers on the road.

However, before the regular season gets underway, Quinnipiac’s first test back from the break will come against the University of Connecticut for an exhibition matchup Saturday, Sept. 19. Puck drop from Storrs, Connecticut, is set for 3 p.m.



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