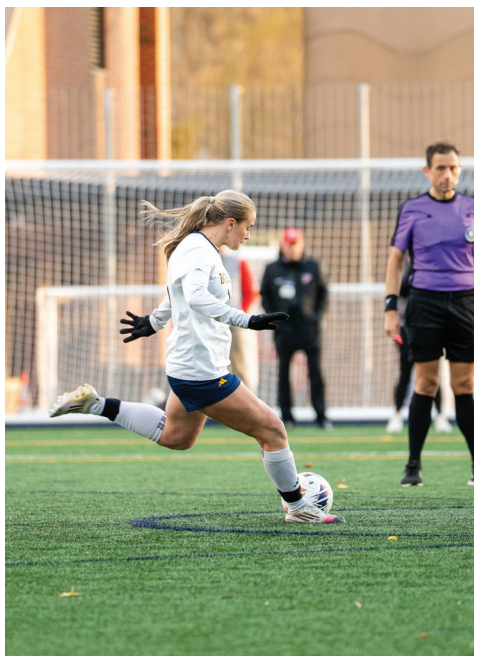
Shot by shot: women's soccer takes the Metro Championship in penalty shootout

By COOPER WOODWARD
Sports Editor

It's a chilly Sunday afternoon in Hamden, where one of the newest and most competitive in-conference rivalries is writing its final chapter.

No. 1 Quinnipiac women's soccer has had a near-perfect second half of its season. The Bobcats haven't lost since Sept. 28 against Manhattan and hadn't let up a goal in over a month coming into the contest. No. 3 Fairfield rode the wave of high volume offense to yet another deep run in the conference tournament, having bested Marist in the quarterfinal, while putting a beatdown on Niagara to get back to the conference championship against Quinnipiac for the third time in four seasons.



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Junior defender Catherine Graves takes her penalty in the Metro championship against Fairfield Nov. 15.

Fairfield dominated the first half, as an early goal from sophomore Stag forward Amelie Stewart gave Fairfield the lead for the following 57 minutes of play. But it was the difference maker in the squads' first matchup Oct. 21, freshman midfielder Tatum O'Brien, who buried the equalizer.

Twenty minutes of overtime have come and gone. Both goalkeepers showed off their skills to get the game to the most entertaining two words in soccer: penalty kicks.

The last time the Bobcats were in penalties was against Canisius in the 2025 MAAC Tournament, which ended their season on home turf. This time around, Quinnipiac was looking to write a different ending to its campaign through that same medium.

"We've been prepping all season for this big moment, for these big games," junior goalkeeper Olivia Jarvis said. "Visualizing that we were going to lift the trophy at the end of the game was what kept me going, staying motivated."

Both squads break their huddles and line up at midfield, arm in arm facing the south goal. Quinnipiac junior defender Catherine Graves lines up first opposite sophomore Stag goalkeeper Marilyn Dixon.

The lefty charges towards the penalty dot in five steps, winds back and launches the ball to the upper right corner of the net past a diving Dixon. Bobcats lead 1-0.

Fairfield graduate student forward Charlyse Berry makes the next trot to the dot to face Jarvis, who is having the game of her life. The Columbia transfer takes three steps and launched a right-footed shot at Jarvis, who reads it perfectly and makes the diving save.

Sophomore forward Skye Cuscuna takes the next stroll to the penalty box. The University of Massachusetts Amherst transfer missed a handful of games due to injury and is about to take the biggest shot of her life. Cuscuna, pauses a handful of steps shy of the 18-yard line, makes her run and buries the ball past an outstretched Dixon.

A fired up Cuscuna heads back to midfield, passing the next Stag shooter in senior forward Ella Pisani. Jarvis jumps and loosens up, as the Wrentham, Massachusetts native gets set. Pisani aims right and Jarvis makes another perfect read, saving another Stag penalty to bring the Bobcats one step forward.

"She redeemed herself," head coach Dave Clarke said.

Momentum firmly in the hands of Quinnipiac, Clarke trots out a third straight lefty in senior forward Racquel Alexander for the third Bobcat penalty. Alexander hasn't recorded a point all year, and after recording five minutes of action in overtime, steps up to keep Quinnipiac perfect.

In contrast to Cuscuna and Graves, Alexander went left. Dixon guessed correctly, but the ball still found the back of the net and the Bobcats were officially one save away from returning to the NCAA Tournament for the first time since 2023.

Standing in the way is the Stags leading scorer and the first Bobcat to beat Jarvis in almost six weeks of game action in Stewart. If anyone was going to keep the Stags alive it was going to be her.

With their season on the line, Stewart side steps her run-up and lunges to the ball. Jarvis dives right, but it doesn't matter as Stewart skies the ball over the net and bedlam ensues. Quinnipiac bolts from midfield to the penalty box, swarming Jarvis and celebrating their first conference championship since 2023.



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Junior goalkeeper Olivia Jarvis makes a diving save in the Metro Championship game against Farifield Nov. 15.

Quinnipiac men's basketball: A statistical deep dive

By CAYDEN STEWART
Copy Editor

Come March Madness, millions will flock to the world of college basketball analytics to try and get an edge in their brackets. Avid college basketball fans can expect to hear the names of statisticians Ken Pomeroy, Bart Torvik and Evan Miyakawa quite often during the season, as the three are among the biggest names in all of sports analytics.

That said, many college basketball fans and general viewers don't know what a lot of these analytics provide to teams, including Quinnipiac men's basketball, or what the stats themselves even mean.

So, why not get a couple of months' head start, and in the process, take a look at what could set Quinnipiac apart in the Metro Conference standings this season.

Adjusted tempo, or the amount of possessions a given team has in the standard 40-minute game adjusted for game context, such as an opponent's pace of play, was one of Quinnipiac's strong points last season.

The Bobcats were tied for the 40th fastest adjusted tempo among all 365 Division I teams last season via Torvik's formula, leading some to queue them early as a possible March Madness Cinderella. This sentiment wasn't without strong backing either.

Since 2002, of the nine March Madness upsets featuring a No. 15 or 16 seed taking down a No. 1 or 2 seed, seven involved a No. 15 or 16 seed with an adjusted tempo faster than its opponent's by more than 50 spots, and five were separated by at least 180 spots.

Both No. 16 seeds to take down a No. 1 in NCAA history – Fairleigh Dickinson University in 2023 and the University of Maryland, Baltimore County in 2018 – were among the five to be separated by at least 180 spots.

This trend makes sense as teams who have a faster pace of play force their slower opponents to either become more effective in their fewer possessions or speed up, which typically lowers the team's efficiency.

This season, as of publication, the Bobcats boast the 89th fastest offense in the nation, even at a slightly faster pace of 71.9 possessions per 40 minutes compared to last year's 71.0. If it can keep the pace up, expect Quinnipiac to be dangerous come later in the season.

Another important stat for Bobcat fans to watch for is effective field goal percentage, a deviation from standard field goal percentage, or simply the percentage of shots a player made. Mastered by Torvik, effective field goal percentage makes three-point shots hold extra value, as in a perfect world, they're harder shots to make.

Quinnipiac ranked 310th in this metric last season, likely contributing to its quarterfinal loss in the MAAC Tournament at the hands of Marist University.

Last season, of the top-30 teams in effective field goal percentage, 19 made it to the national tournament, and 15 won at least one game in the tournament, including eventual national champion, the University of Michigan. The top-50 list included all of the Final Four teams, seven of the Elite Eight and teams like No. 12 seed High Point University, who pulled off noteworthy upsets.

This season, the Bobcats have improved in the rankings a bit, moving up to No. 244, as of publication, but are still seventh of the 13 Metro Conference teams in the metric.

Defense is also of the utmost importance, especially according to Pomeroy. In the "KenPom" era, starting in 2002, every national champion has ended the season in the top-22 of Pomeroy's adjusted defensive efficiency (adjD).

Adjusted defensive efficiency measures the number of points a team allows every 100 possessions, adjusted for the strength of the opposing offenses, as well as the time and location of the game.

The Bobcats are coming off their best defensive season by Pomeroy's standards since 2021, placing 148th in adjD. However, that ranking is poised to take a hit as the squad lost fifth-year forward Amarri Monroe, who holds the program's Division I record for career steals, steals per game, steal percentage and defensive win shares, to Syracuse University in the transfer portal.

Torvik's effective height is another overlooked stat which has correlated with team success in recent years. The official calculation of the metric is the minute-weighted height of a team's power forwards and centers. Simply put, Torvik focuses on the 40% of a game when the average height of a given team's players on the court is at its highest.

Last season, three of the Final Four teams placed in the top-25 in effective height, highlighted by the University of Michigan at No. 8. The 2025 national champion University of Florida also placed high, entering the tournament with the 11th most effective height that season.

The Bobcats had the 94th most effective height last year, but have fallen to 172nd, as of publication this season. Quinnipiac will have to make up for some lost height in its lineup, as the 6-foot-7 Monroe, 6-foot-9 junior forward Grant Randall, 7-foot junior forward Spence Wewe and others departed the squad.

In short, Quinnipiac is well managed under head coach Tom Pecora, and had the right tools to pull off an upset last season. Now, the Bobcats will have to claw back what was lost to the transfer portal last season, as six Bobcats left via the portal following the 2025-26 campaign.

Be sure to keep an eye out for Quinnipiac toward the top of these statistical leaderboards when the season enters its more pivotal period and the madness ensues.



TYLER MIGNAULT/CHRONICLE

Quinnipiac men's basketball athletes huddle up against Monmouth Nov. 12.