Bobcats fall to Badgers 6-0 in NCAA Regional Final

By EMILY MARQUIS
Associate Sports Editor

MADISON, Wis. — If fans' lasting memory of the 2025-26 Quinnipiac women's ice hockey team is a 6-0 loss to Wisconsin in the NCAA Tournament Regional Round Final, then they were never Bobcat fans at all.

Because as difficult as a shutout loss is to swallow, this Bobcat team was something special.

Losing to one of the best teams in the nation in their packed home barn doesn't change that.

Coming into the contest, there was no doubt the Bobcats understood the stakes. A non-conference opponent hasn't won a game in LaBahn Arena in multiple seasons. Four Olympic gold medal winners decorate the Wisconsin roster, and 1980 men's ice hockey gold medal winner and legendary head coach Mark Johnson stands sternly behind the bench.

It's daunting.

The stands at LaBahn Arena were a sea of Badger red and white, with a single three-row section of Bobcat blue and gold. Eight national championship banners are a shadow over the ice. The fan energy in the arena rivals that of a professional team.

It would be so easy for the Bobcats to roll over.

But they didn't. Far from it.

Starting from the Bobcats' biggest strength, throughout both the regular season and their playoff run: the goaltending.

"(Sophomore goaltender Felicia Frank has been) leading us to some of our biggest wins this year," sophomore forward Taylor Brueske said. "She put her best effort forward today, played an unreal game and kept us as close as it was."

Frank recorded a career-high in saves against the Badgers, with 45, continuing to add to her resume as one of the top goalies in the NCAA. The Falkoping, Sweden native was getting peppered from all sides, with nine Badgers recording five or more shots on goal in the contest.

"We were fortunate enough to get enough by her," Johnson said. "You never know who's going to win on any given night."

Her double digit saves in each period of the contest help to add to the new Quinnipiac single-season saves record. Frank finishes the season with 1,035 saves.

With the final score as lopsided as it was, it would be easy to dismiss the Bobcats' defense as putting in a subpar performance. That was far from the case. Quinnipiac's 15 blocks and countless stick checks in the defensive zone were drowned out by the final score.

"I thought we did what we wanted to do at times, in terms of making some of their really skilled, patient players uncomfortable," Quinnipiac head coach Cass Turner said. "But when you have four lines of that, you know at some point, it just got a little bit tough for us."

Even with the good defensive effort, the pure volume of shots spread amongst the scorers made it next to impossible for the Bobcats to even clear the zone. Wisconsin was quick to every puck and seemed to know where the Bobcats were passing the puck before it even left their stick.

That puck possession made all the difference for Wisconsin. The Bobcats chased the Badgers and the puck at every turn, and that started in the face-off dot. Quinnipiac only managed to win 39.2% of its faceoffs, with the majority of the draws occurring in the defensive zone.

"It was really good, it was probably our best face-off percentage of the season," Johnson said. "Instead of having to chase the puck, now you can make some plays…and let some of these kids do what they're capable of doing."

That's exactly what Wisconsin did from nearly the opening puck drop. Each of its top six forwards recorded at least a point in the contest, with alternate captain junior forward Kelly Gorbatenko leading the way with a hat trick. Five Badger defenders also recorded a point on the afternoon.

When the No. 2 team in the country is on and finding the back of the net, there's only so much any defense, including the Bobcats, can do.

"I think they put a great game on the ice, and unfortunately, we just couldn't bounce back today," Turner said.

But for the Bobcats, this season was far from a failure, and the future is bright. After winning the first ECAC Championship for the squad in a decade, Turner has high hopes for the future of the program.

"When I think back to the recruiting class that we were able to recruit when we won the last ECAC Championship, it was our strongest in program history," Turner said. "I think, you know, coming off of this, it's really going to put us in a position to be where we want to be, which is in the top two of the ECAC every year."

As for the seniors, it's a bitter goodbye for a leadership group that has meant so much for the program.

"This group of seniors and leaders that we had, especially this year, was unmatched and definitely will go down as one of the greatest leadership groups I've ever played under," sophomore defenseman Makayla Watson said.

This team was a special one, and this final game to end the season doesn't change that.

"This is the most fun I've had coaching in my entire career," Turner said. "This was just a really fun year, and a really special group."

Tricia Fabbri announces retirement after 31 years

By CLAIRE FRANKLAND
Sports Editor

Quinnipiac women's basketball head coach Tricia Fabbri announced her retirement following the conclusion of the 2025-26 season, per Quinnipiac Athletics' X account Monday morning.

Fabbri has served as head coach for the Bobcats for 31 years, leading the Bobcats to five conference championships and five NCAA Tournament appearances in her three-decade run.

"Thirty-one years ago, I accepted an offer from Burt Kahn to become the first full-time coach of the women's basketball program at Quinnipiac. Simply put, it has been the best decision of my life," Fabbri said to Quinnipiac Athletics. "The people, my coaching staff and, most importantly, the young women that I've been fortunate enough to coach have made my life fulfilling beyond my wildest expectations."

Fabbri will retire as the winningest coach in program history, with 570 wins as of publication, also making her the second winningest coach in Quinnipiac Athletics history, behind men's ice hockey head coach Rand Pecknold, with 692.



TYLER MIGNAULT/CHRONICLE

Quinnipiac women's basketball head coach Tricia Fabbri is set to retire after leading the program to five conference championships and five NCAA Tournament bids.

Inconsistency killed the Cats

How cold offensive streaks ended Quinnipiac men's basketball's season

By COOPER WOODWARD
Associate Sports Editor

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. — Losing is never easy. Losing in the final seconds of your conference tournament is an even harder pill to swallow.

That was the story of the 2025-26 Quinnipiac men's basketball team.

As its season ended in a 77-75 shootout with the Marist Red Foxes in the MAAC Quarterfinals.

The loss now marks the third straight season the Bobcats have been bounced from the postseason without an appearance in the championship game. In their 2024 loss to St. Peter's, it was the poor defense that allowed a buzzer beater to fall and send them home.

In 2025 against Iona, it was the lack of physicality that caused an end to their Cinderella season.

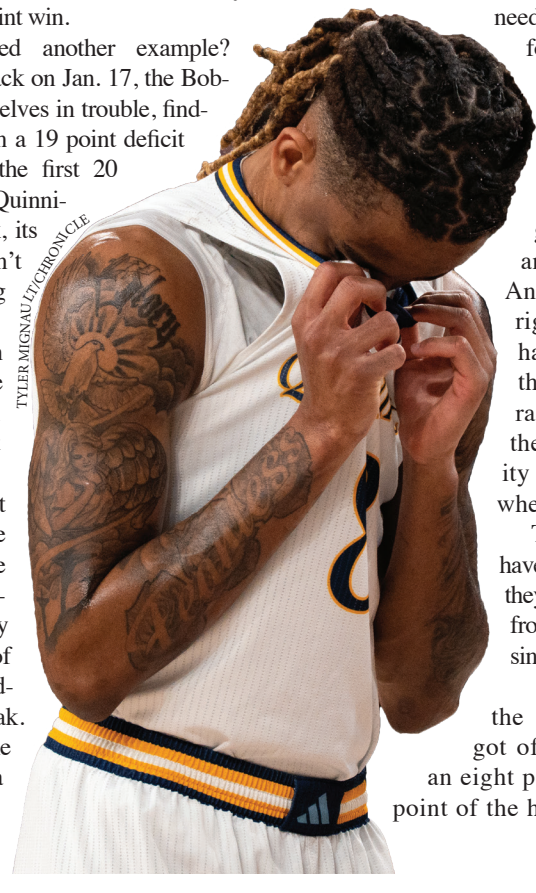
In 2026 against Marist, it was their inconsistencies on both sides of the ball that sent the Bobcats back to Hamden empty handed.

"We never really learned how to smell blood," head coach Tom Pecora said.

Failing to put its opponent out of the game has been the story of the season for Quinnipiac. In each of the Bobcats' nine losses since Jan. 2, Quinnipiac has been forced to either play on the back foot or play catch-up.

Against Sacred Heart on Jan. 30, the Bobcats held a three point lead after the first half. In the second half, the Pioneers were able to climb back into the game and outscore the Bobcats by 10 in route to a nine point win.

Do you need another example? Against Merrimack on Jan. 17, the Bobcats found themselves in trouble, finding themselves in a 19 point deficit by the end of the first 20 minutes. While Quinnipiac fought back, its efforts still weren't enough, falling 81-73.



TYLER MIGNAULT/CHRONICLE

Even when they won, the Bobcats still had to fight tooth and nail.

In their first matchup vs the Niagara Purple Eagles, the Bobcats were firmly in control of the game heading into the break. But as the game went on, Niagara came closer and closer to erasing their lead, doing so in the final minutes of the half. But when they needed him most, sophomore forward Grant Randall drilled a three pointer with seconds on the clock, sealing their win.

Having a player like Randall who can hit a game winning dagger on any given night is great. Any coach or player in their right mind would want to have a guy like that on their side. But what separates the good teams from the great teams is the ability to bury their opponent when they have the chance.

This Bobcat squad did not have that, which is exactly why they faced their earliest exit from the MAAC Tournament since 2022.

In their matchup against the Red Foxes, Quinnipiac got off to a hot start, holding an eight point lead by the halfway point of the half. But as they have all season, the Bobcats let Marist climb back into the game, leading to a ten point lead by the Red Foxes at the end of 20 minutes.

Quinnipiac, once again, was forced to play catch-up to stay in contention, and for the most part, they did.

Randall put the team on his back, netting 14 field goals, including nine threes, en route to a career high 28 points. But the game came down to the final seconds, as freshman guard Tai Turnage was blocked by senior forward Jaden Daughtry on the final shot of the game.

"We played a great 25 minutes, dug ourselves a hole and just couldn't dig ourselves out of it," Pecora said. "It's been an issue for us all year."

Once again, the Bobcats were forced to play catch-up. But this time around, the Red Foxes made them pay and sent them packing in the process.

While the 2025-26 season is over, lessons from this season will resonate with this program for the remainder of the Pecora era. To take home that coveted first MAAC Championship in program history, you need to play a full and complete 40 minutes of basketball.

Yet, due to their inconsistencies on both sides of the ball, Quinnipiac will have to wait another year to achieve its dreams of becoming MAAC Champions.