Bobcats bounced from WBIT, fall 81-69 to Stanford

By COOPER WOODWARD
Associate Sports Editor

STANFORD, Calif. — After 162 days, 28 wins and over 10,000 miles traveled, Quinnipiac women's basketball 2025-26 season has officially ended. It's the unfortunate reality that all collegiate teams must face. It's season will not last forever.

For Quinnipiac, its exit comes at the hands of the Stanford Cardinal as the home squad handled the Bobcats 81-69.

"A hard fought game," head coach Tricia Fabbri said. "We just would not go away."

Coming into the contest, the Bobcats knew that it was going to be a tall order to take down Stanford. The Cardinal are filled with players who have been nothing short of great within the Atlantic Coast Conference. To keep its hopes of victory alive, Quinnipiac needed to keep offensive pace with Stanford.

For the most part, it did.

The first quarter of action saw the Bobcats trade blows left and right. Quinnipiac graduate student guard Jackie Grisdale started the game off with a pair of made free throws. Stanford junior guard Chloe Clardy answered immediately after with a jumper. Bobcat junior guard Karson Martin buried a three to gain some distance. Cardinal freshman forward Alexandra Eschymer put in a layup to keep it close.

Bobcat basket, Cardinal basket. Rinse and repeat until the clock hit zero on the first quarter. When the second kicked off, Stanford began to prove exactly why it was the two seed.

The Cardinal would go on an 8-2 run to start the quarter, finishing the half with 27 points. It was the single largest quarter point total given up by Quinnipiac all season.



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While the defense was having an uncharacteristically off night, the offense stepped up in a big way. As they have all year, the tandem of senior forward Ella O'Donnell and junior forward Anna Foley dominated in the post, scoring all of Quinnipiac's 17 points in the second quarter. The offensive effort kept the game from getting too far out of hand, as the Cardinal held an eight point lead.

"It's been kind of an up and down year for me," Foley said.

That was until the second half kicked off and Stanford began to dismantle the Bobcat attack.

Press defense has been very effective against a high paced offense like Quinnipiac. If you take away the speed from a scheme, teams have great success. In the third quarter, Stanford instituted a press and held the Bobcats to their lowest point total of the game. The press was so effective that Quinnipiac went four straight possessions without a converted field goal.

To say the offense struggled would be an understatement.

With the season on the line, the Bobcats knew they needed a better fourth quarter if they were to pull off an upset. But those offensive struggles that plagued Quinnipiac in the third continued into the fourth. This time around, it was turnover after turnover that squandered any chance of momentum the Bobcats had.

The Bobcats' final offensive effort came in the closing minutes of the game. Foley chucks up a three which falls. 68-63 Stanford. Quinnipiac gets a stop and O'Donnell goes to the line. She buries the first free throw and the second hits right off the rim and into the hands of Martin.

Martin attempts a cross court pass to Grisdale which is intercepted by Clardy. She takes it to the rim and extends the Cardinal lead. After a plethora of fouls to bleed the clock, Grisdale knocks down her 238th and final three pointer of her illustrious Bobcat career. But the offensive effort from the three-time captain was too little too late. The final horn rang and the Bobcats season officially came to a close.

This final horn has some extra meaning behind it. Firstly, the graduating class of senior guard Sydney Ryan, Grisdale and O'Donnell have officially concluded their careers in a Bobcat uniform.

"It doesn't feel real," Grisdale said. "To have a chance to get a fifth year with this team. I'm so grateful."

The graduating class aren't the only departers in 2026. Fabbri will be exiting the sideline after 31 years.

"Honestly, it feels like there's going to be another practice or another game," Fabbri said.

There's a lot of moving pieces this offseason. A lot of unpredctability. Instead of a team focusing on their first ever postseason tournament victory and another year in the MAAC Championship, the team is being forced to imagine a reality without their leader by their side.

It will be a long road ahead in the coming months, but the team is ready to sustain the success built for 31 years.

With the transfer portal reshaping college athletics, one Bobcat chose to stay

Amarri Monroe redefining program loyalty in the NCAA

By JAMES NOLAN
Staff Writer

The four-year senior is a dying breed, and that's not new information. In NCAA men's college basketball, there were fewer than 30 seniors in power conferences who spent all four years playing at one university. The Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference had only eight of its 58 men's basketball seniors not make use of the transfer portal.

"It's a shame," Quinnipiac head coach Tom Pecora said, following it's season-ending loss to Marist in the conference quarter-finals. "This crazy basketball world we live in, there will be a lot of moving parts. Who's staying? Who's going?"

Pecora's Bobcats are one of six MAAC schools not to feature even one four-year senior. All three graduating seniors at Quinnipiac came out of the transfer portal: the guard pair of Asim Jones Jr. (Florida International) and Ronell Giles Jr. (Saint Francis).

Monroe may have come out of the transfer portal, spending his first collegiate season at Wofford College in South Carolina, but do not get it twisted. He is part of the old guard, brimming with loyalty and program dedication.

After landing in Hamden, he made an immediate impact. That goes without saying. He led his team to two MAAC regular-season titles and earned MAAC Player of the Year at the conclusion of the 2024-25 season.

"The legacy that he's left here and the impact he's had is immeasurable," Pecora said. "It'll be something that will last in Quinnipiac basketball history forever, because he did the right thing."

The "right thing" he's referencing is the fact that Monroe didn't leave. He entered the transfer portal during the last two offseasons, and both times chose to stay in Hamden.

It wasn't for lack of interest. Monroe garnered plenty of lucrative offers from bigger programs. UConn, Kansas, Miami, just to name a few. He turned every one of them down and elected to return to the Bobcats.

Back on Feb. 26, in an interview with Assistant Professor of Journalism and Program Director of Sports Communictions Nick Pietruszkiewicz, Monroe was asked about the worst pitch he received in the portal.

"The very first call I got was 'What's your number?'," Monroe said. "That's not what you do, you can't outbid (for) me."

Part of Monroe's unique transfer portal experience was not that he returned to his school. It's that he did it at a discount.

"I wanted him to make the decision for the right reasons, and he did," Pecora said. "I think he set a precedent by turning down big money."

It remains to be seen if that precedent will have a trickle down effect on the Bobcat roster he leaves behind. Pecora was blunt about the uncertainty within the program heading into spring workouts.

"Jaden Zimmerman's been being pursued all season by other schools, Grant Randall goes up and puts up numbers like he did tonight, and his phone is going to light up," Pecora said.

Zimmerman and Randall are both sophomore guards who started for the Bobcats this season. As ever with the new, volatile world of college athletics, their return is far from a given, and Pecora knows the reality of the situation.

"It's a personal decision, and these young guys and their families have to make it," Pecora said. "Hopefully they make a smart one. And hopefully they go somewhere they can graduate."

It's always been 'student-athlete,' but recently, the changes to the transfer portal have affected more than just year-to-year school identity. They've begun to impact the rate at which the NCAA's student athlete contingent earns degrees.

"All of a sudden, everybody's pretty hush-hush about what graduation rates are looking like and what they're going to look like, with guys going to three different schools in four years," Pecora said. "I think we're moving in a really dangerous, bad direction with this whole thing."

NCAA Research published a report in November 2025 titled Trends in NCAA Division I Graduation Rates that gives a rundown of a variety of different breakdowns of its schools' GSR (graduation success rates).

One of the breakdowns was titled "GSR Trends of Division I Men's Basketball Players," which gave a line chart of GSR from 2002 through 2025. There is a noticeable drop from 2024 to 2025, but the exact percentage drop can't be deciphered, as the pure statistics are only listed for the first and final years on the chart.

"I think we're moving in a really dangerous, bad direction with this whole thing," Pecora said.

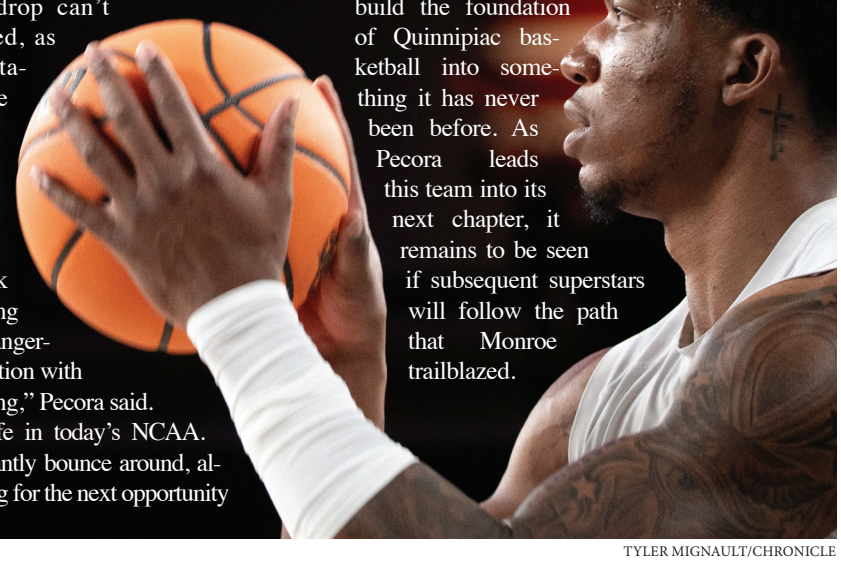
Such is life in today's NCAA. Players constantly bounce around, always searching for the next opportunity or promise of playing time. A star player returning to their mid-major school is uncommon, which is all the more reason for Monroe to be celebrated.

"I don't care how many points I score, I don't care about my jersey in the rafters," Monroe said to Pietruszkiewicz, before the end of the season. "I want to see a banner that says 'March Madness 2026' and I want people to say my name when they talk about the banner."

Maybe this wasn't his envisioned ending when he chose to come back to the Bobcats, but that does not invalidate his decision.

"I think that Amarri Monroe has a heart of gold," Pecora said. "The most selfish people on the planet are 20-year-old men… when you find young men that are mature enough to think of other people first, it's really a blessing."

Monroe blessed M&T Bank Arena with three stellar seasons of basketball. He stayed to build the foundation of Quinnipiac basketball into something it has never been before. As Pecora leads this team into its next chapter, it remains to be seen if subsequent superstars will follow the path that Monroe trailblazed.


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