

Bobcats hit the transfer portal

By **COOPER WOODWARD**
Associate Sports Editor

With the conclusion of the Quinnipiac women's ice hockey and men's and women's basketball seasons, the transfer portal has officially opened, with four Bobcats across the ice and the hardwood entering the portal.

ICE HOCKEY

Starting on the Ice, freshman forward Ruby Rauk entered the portal on March 24. The Minnetonka, Minnesota native appeared in 32 games for the Bobcats, recording a pair of goals and a pair of assists.

Freshman forward Ella Pasqua was the other Bobcat to enter the portal, failing to record a point in five appearances.

The portal is scheduled to close April 6. Men's ice hockey's portal is set to open April 11 for 15 days.

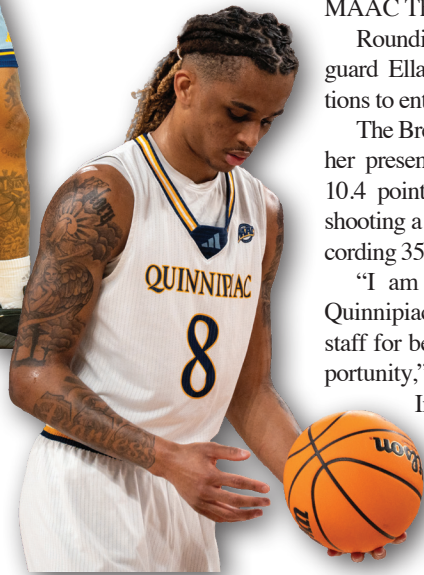


BASKETBALL

Switching over to the hardwood, sophomore guard Jaden Zimmerman announced his entrance to the transfer portal. The Bronx, N.Y. native had a breakout year this past season, averaging 15 points per game while shooting 37% from the field and recording 65 rebounds in 26 appearances.

Sophomore forward Grant Randall will also enter the transfer portal, announcing his plans to do so on March 27.

The Queens, N.Y. native had a breakout year in his



sophomore campaign, averaging 11.4 points and 6.6 rebounds per game, starting all but one game this season. In the Bobcats' final game of the season against Marist in the MAAC Quarterfinals on March 7, Randall exploded for a 28-point and 15 rebound double-double, converting a career-high five three-point field goals.

On the women's side, two Bobcats will enter the portal.

Junior forward Anna Foley announced her plans to enter the transfer portal when it opens on April 6, as posted to her agent Brandon Clay's Instagram.

The Andover, Mass. native had a solid year in her junior campaign, averaging 10 points and 5.5 rebounds per game while recording 187 rebounds and a team leading 36 blocks across 34 games. Foley was also named to the All-MAAC Third Team.

Rounding out the selections is freshman guard Ella Ryan, who announced her intentions to enter the portal March 26.

The Brentwood, Tennessee native made her presence felt in year one, averaging 10.4 points and 4.1 rebounds per game, shooting a team leading 41% from three and recording 353 total points across 34 games played.

"I am incredibly grateful for my time at Quinnipiac and for Coach Fabbri and the entire staff for believing in me and giving me this opportunity," she said in a statement posted to her Instagram. "With the recent changes, I feel it's important to explore my options while keeping an open mind on the future."

The basketball transfer portal opens April 7, and closes April 21.



'We're doing this no matter what'

Veteran Bobcat leadership turning the tide of Quinnipiac softball

By **CAYDEN STEWART**
Staff Writer

The 2026 Quinnipiac softball season is shaping up to be the one Bobcat fans have been waiting 14 years for. The reason for that specific number? That's how long it's been since the Bobcats have finished a season with a winning record.

Even so, the team has shown noticeable progress in recent years and looks to improve upon an appearance in last year's MAAC Tournament, where they were the No. 7 seed.

This season's squad is powered by a dominant offense hitting a combined .323, good to place them first in the MAAC in that category. Senior infielder Sofia Vega has been the driving force behind the Bobcats' success at the plate, leading the team in nearly every offensive metric, including batting average, slugging percentage, on-base percentage and on-base plus slugging.

"The keys to my success have been believing in myself and my confidence," Vega said. "I just focus on the little details and believe in the player that I know I am."

Along with her confidence, Vega also emphasized leadership with this year's squad.

"Our upperclassmen drilled it into our heads that we're doing this no matter what," Vega said. "We're going to be one of the top teams."

The addition of assistant coach Xen Penny has also been a driving force behind the Bobcats sudden offensive surge. Penny is among the new faces on the roster and he comes with professional experience under his belt.

As a hitting coach with the Arizona Diamondbacks' organization, Penny helped de-

velop the next generation of MLB players with both Low-A and High-A experience.

Thus far, Penny has vastly improved the Bobcat batting order, which finished with the second-lowest batting average and on-base percentage in the MAAC at the conclusion of last season.

With head coach Hillary Smith at the helm, Quinnipiac has an even bigger advantage in the coaching department, as she has already been a part of championship winning teams in the past.

Before spending two years as head

coach at Florida

International University, Smith was a decorated assistant coach at the University of Central Florida.

While there, she won back-to-back American Athletic Conference regular season championships, as well as the 2015 AAC Tournament Championship.

"How the team drills

and what your leaders are like are super important," Smith said, reflecting on the similarities shown between this Bobcat squad and her past championship-winning teams.

"Sometimes I'll be at practice and I don't even need to say anything. When it comes to defensive things and correcting each other, they know what to say and they hold each other to the standard."

Further, Smith's UCF pitching staff boasted the lowest ERA in the nation in 2015 at 0.93, which bodes well for this year's group.

Even while seeing four pitchers depart the team from last year's staff, the lone returner, sophomore pitcher Shannon Kendall, has proven to be a very reliable option.

As a whole, the Quinnipiac pitching staff has allowed the second-fewest home runs and fourth-fewest walks in the MAAC, as

well as earning the second-most wins. "The seniors that were in front of me definitely groomed me very well and took me under their wing," Kendall said. "I feel like I fall into (Sydney Horan's) footsteps with being that big-rolled pitcher and being a heavy drop-ball pitcher like she was."

Kendall also emphasized the importance of having such a strong batting order behind her. "As a pitcher, that makes me feel more comfortable going into innings knowing that even if we are down, our offensive side can bring us back," Kendall said.

This was evident March 24 when the Bobcats came back from down 7-3 in the fifth inning to beat Merrimack and clinch a series sweep. Junior catcher Riley Potter, who has also had a very strong season, recorded three RBIs as the Bobcats scored eight runs in the final two innings.

The Bobcats still have a tough road to the MAAC playoffs, having yet to face off with the Fairfield Stags and Marist Red Foxes.

Quinnipiac faces Fairfield April 7 on the road for an afternoon doubleheader. The Stags swept the Bobcats at home last season, setting up a great chance to make up ground from where they were in last year's MAAC standings.

Further, the Marist Red Foxes enter as the defending MAAC Champions. Expect their weekend showdown with the Bobcats here in Hamden, April 18 and 19, to include some of the games of the year.

Even so, with the impressive improvements made to this year's roster, the Bobcats are poised for a run come the MAAC playoffs.



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