



“Every time we go on the court, the number one goal is to protect home — do it for the fans and do it for the team.”

NICK TOWNSEND '26

MEN'S SOCCER: Bulldogs rank seventh in Ivy League poll



YALE ATHLETICS

After weeks of preseason summer training, the men's soccer team will play its first game against Fairfield on Friday.

BY DAVIS ZONG AND LIZA KAUFMAN
STAFF REPORTERS

The men's soccer team wants to kick off its fall season on a high note, despite a dismal preseason ranking. In the Ivy League preseason poll, the Bulldogs were ranked seventh of eight teams, but the team has taken its placement as an opportunity to embrace an underdog mentality. “When we saw the rank, we said ‘good,’” forward Joseph Farouz '27 said in a phone interview. “We love to have a chip on our shoulder to have people to prove wrong.” Last season, the Bulldogs' season ended early after a series of tough games against strong competition. The year before, they clinched the title in the inaugural Ivy League Soccer Tournament.

Now, the Elis hope to bounce back and reclaim a position at the top of the league. To start, the men's soccer team will play seven non-conference games. Throughout the year, they will also play four teams that concluded the 2024 season with a top-30 national ranking, including three Ivies: Penn, No. 18, Cornell, No. 26 and Princeton, No. 27. Despite their daunting schedule, the Bulldogs remain optimistic. And for defender Nick Miller '27, the preseason poll has little bearing on how he views the team's chances for the season. “We don't pay an inordinate amount of time or attention to preseason rankings because we're more concerned with how we finish the year,” Miller said.

With key seniors graduating and eight new players joining the squad, including one transfer student and one international student, the team's roster will look different this year. To fill out the center of the field, head coach Kylie Stannard has recruited a pair of midfielders, Billy Altirs '29, whose two brothers played soccer for Dartmouth and Penn, and Nathan Harmon '29. “Nate has played every position in the central and wide midfield positions,” Stannard told Yale Athletics. “He is a technical player that wants to attack and play forward first, but also has the mentality to work and compete defensively.” The team also welcomed three new defenders: John Henry

Hampel '29, Caleb Layton '29 and a junior transfer from Duke, Andrew Myerson '27. On the offensive side, Stannard and the team have tracked Sebi Roy '29 for the past couple of years, due to his physicality and strength. Another forward, Angelo Zhu '29, comes to New Haven after playing in Canada. To protect the net, Stannard has brought on Josh Linebaugh '29, who he said has the potential to be “one of the top GKs in the Ivy League.” After the departure of star goalkeeper Chris Edwards '25, Linebaugh may see substantial playing time. Reflecting on the new additions to the team, Farouz is especially excited about the power coming to the offense. “They've settled right in,” Farouz, a forward himself, said of Roy and Zhu. “The culture has really accepted them right away as important players on our squad, so I'm really excited for those two to have an impact on the attack in front.”

The men's soccer team has also hired new assistant coaches. In the spring, Stannard brought on Brad Camp from Colorado Christian University and later tapped Nick Taljan from Kenyon College to serve as new assistant coaches for the 2025 season. “They're both really young and hungry coaches and they want to go out and attack games and kind of take games by the scruff of the neck, which is really really refreshing energy,” Farouz said. The Bulldogs will open their season against the Sacred Heart Pioneers this Friday in Fairfield, Conn.

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FOOTBALL: Coach's son transfers to play for Yale



YALE ATHLETICS

After a redshirt year at South Carolina, recruit Dante Reno '28 is playing for the Bulldogs under head coach Tony Reno.

BY BRODY GILKISON
STAFF REPORTER

Yale's football team is turning into a family affair. Dante Reno '28 in June announced his commitment to play football at Yale under head coach Tony Reno, his father. In the spring, the quarterback declared his intention to enter the transfer portal following a red-shirt year at South Carolina. After sitting behind a future Heisman favorite, LaNorris Sellers, Dante Reno decided to explore other opportunities with three years of eligibility left. Dante Reno's father, Tony Reno, has been the head coach of the Yale football team since 2014 and has won four Ivy League titles during his tenure.

“He's a defensive guy, so it's gonna be a little interesting sometimes,” Dante Reno said of his father on the “Off the Leash” podcast with Mason Shipp '26. “But I think it'll be very fun, and we both want to win, so that's really what matters.” As a high schooler, Reno played his sophomore and junior seasons at the Loomis Chaffee School in Windsor, Conn., before moving on to the Cheshire Academy, where he picked up over 30 Division I Power 4 offers as an All-American.

In 2022, the scouting analyst Gabe Brooks with 247 Sports wrote that Reno had a “strong arm with quick release” and was capable of “accurate throwing on the move.” Ranked the 36th-best signal caller in his high school class, he chose to play in the SEC at South Carolina. A year later, as a high-three-star recruit in the portal, Reno shook things up when he decided to play in the Ivy League. Reno is the highest-ranked incoming Ivy League transfer of 2025. Typically, many four and five-star recruits choose to play in what is known as the “Power 4” conferences — the Big Ten, SEC, ACC and Big 12. Much of Yale's roster is filled with two- and three-star recruits. When asked by the Athletic about what factored into his decision to commit to Yale, Reno said he was excited about reconnecting with high school teammates in the area, being closer to home and having the opportunity to compete in the Football Championship Sub-division playoffs, in which the Ivy League will participate for the first time this year. Dante Reno did not respond to the News' questions about his situation. Tony Reno did not respond to an emailed request for comment. As the team heads into the 2025 season, Reno joins two senior quarterbacks, Marshall Howe '26 and Brogan McCaughey '26. Those three players will continue to battle for the starting position until the season kick-off on Sept. 20 against Holy Cross.

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MEN'S BASKETBALL: Yale announces schedule, set to play Alabama

BY LIZA KAUFMAN
STAFF REPORTER

The men's basketball team announced its schedule Tuesday, which includes a high stakes game against a formidable Alabama squad. After last season's historic campaign, which included a nation-leading 13-game winning streak and a second consecutive Ivy Tournament championship, the Bulldogs want to maintain their Ivy League dominance while also attempting to take down strong non-conference foes. For team captain Nick Townsend '26, the season represents both opportunity and responsibility. He emphasized that past accomplishments don't guarantee future success. “We have to go out there and prove ourselves again,” Townsend said in a phone interview. “Especially in Ivy play, when you've had success like this program has, every team is coming for you.” The new schedule includes an opening-night clash at Navy, a trip to the U.S. Virgin Islands for the Paradise Jam tournament, a December showcase at the Basketball Hall of Fame Classic tournament and a high-profile road test against Alabama — a top SEC program with a 14th-place preseason ranking by CBS Sports. To cut through the tough schedule, the players hope to build on last year's momentum, which concluded with a devastating 71-80 loss to Texas A&M in the first round of March Madness. But this year, the



YALE ATHLETICS

The back-to-back Ivy League champions hope to maintain their momentum against Ivy foes and other high-profile opponents.

team is missing key players, including reigning Ivy League player of the year Bez Mbeng '25 and perimeter sharpshooter John Poulakidas '25, who both signed with NBA teams during the summer. The early-season Paradise Jam tournament, which is played in November, will be a critical early-season test for the Elis, center Samson Aletan '27 said in a phone interview. “There's some good teams in there like Akron and Charleston,” he said. “We know how good our team can be, but we know we could do so much more. We have the talent to potentially make a March Madness run, not just make it there.” Several Bulldogs also pointed to the Dec. 29 game in Tusca-

loosa, Ala., as one of the most anticipated games of the season. For Aletan, the game provides Yale the chance to take down a top collegiate program. Playing Alabama — or any Power Five opponent, for that matter — will be “a huge test” for the team, Aletan said. Forward Isaac Celiscar '28 agreed that the Alabama game will give the team a chance to prove themselves on a national stage. Back in 2024, the Bulldogs took down Alabama's top rival, Auburn, in a stunning March Madness upset. “Of course Alabama is a big game. We don't usually get those kinds of opportunities,” Celiscar said in a phone interview. “But I'm also looking forward to games

we lost last year, like Rhode Island and UIC. We want to get those back.” Looking ahead, the Elis also hope to defend home court, where they did not lose once last season. Townsend pinpointed home dominance as a central part of the team's identity. “It's everything for the team,” Townsend said. “Every time we go on the court, the number one goal is to protect home — do it for the fans and do it for the team.” The Bulldogs will host Stony Brook on Nov. 15 for their home opener before beginning Ivy League play at Brown on Jan. 5.

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STAT OF THE WEEK

JOJO DENEGRI'S '29 FIRST COLLEGIATE GOAL PROPELLED THE YALE WOMEN'S SOCCER TEAM TO A 1-0 VICTORY IN THEIR OPENING GAME OF THE 2025 SEASON.