

SPORTS

Spike reflects shifting recruiting patterns across Ivy League

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of documents, and provided my parents’ tax reports for financial aid. It was definitely a long process, but in the end it was all worth it.”

Connecticut sports attorney Richard Kent emphasized in a phone interview that while Yale will continue to prioritize recruiting high school athletes, transfer students are increasingly part of the conversation.

“There’s no way on Earth that Yale or other Ivy League schools are going to spend the preponderance, or even a large part, of their recruiting time on portal kids. But they’re going to be more welcoming of such kids and they’re going to be spending more time seeking those kids out,” he said.

This fall, Team 152 welcomed 23 new players in the Class of 2029 and rounded out their recruiting cycle with four transfers. With that number up from zero last year, it is clear head coach Tony Reno and his staff made it a new priority to bring in seasoned collegiate players.

Adjusting to Yale life

Transitioning to a new university, especially an Ivy League institution, also presents challenges. For Myerson, that meant joining a junior class where most students already have established friend groups.

“It’s my responsibility to be outgoing — to meet people in my classes

and around campus,” he said.

Some transfers told the News they felt they were missing out on core elements of the Yale first-year experience — from living on Old Campus to first-year counselor, or FroCo, groups — that help build community and belonging among members of the class.

For Vydrova, transferring to an Ivy League school introduced the tension of balancing her adjustment to a new team while adapting to Yale’s academic rigor. At UTEP, life for student-athletes revolved around their sports, but when she stepped on campus in New Haven, she quickly realized life at Yale was much different.

“At Yale, there are many student-athletes, so it’s not something that sets you apart. Professors expect you to keep up with academics no matter what, and it’s your responsibility to be excellent in both sports and academics,” she wrote to the News. “I actually like it this way because it’s more challenging and pushes me to grow in both areas.”

Institutional and team support

While the transition can be an adjustment, Yale provides many resources for students navigating their new responsibilities.

In a statement to the News, Yale Athletics spokesperson Colleen Murphy emphasized the department’s commitment to supporting transfer athletes.

“We seek individuals who not only possess the talent and dedication to compete at a high level, but who also embody the academic standards, character, and values that define our institution,” Murphy wrote. “Transfer student-athletes utilize the same resources available to all transfer students at Yale, ensuring they are fully supported throughout the transition process.”

For athletes like Myerson and Sobecki, teammates have made the transition easier, providing both an instant support system and a sense of belonging.

“It was a blessing to step on campus and already have 28 best friends on the team,” Myerson said.

When Sobecki stepped onto the field for the first time at the hallowed Yale Bowl, in lock step with his new teammates and coaches, he instantly knew he had made the right decision to become a Bulldog, he said. The pedigree of Yale Athletics and the culture fostered by Coach Reno were immediately clear.

He told the News that donning the Blue and White for the first time was a moment he would never forget.

“I felt like I was a part of the team and family as soon as I showed up on campus for summer session, and my coaches and teammates made me feel at home right away,” Sobecki wrote to the News.

With a larger transfer class this



LIZA KAUFMAN / PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR

fall, Yale Athletics and its teams will continue to adapt to a changing college sports landscape where the transfer portal has become a central feature of some student-athletes’ careers.

Tommy Gannon contributed reporting.

Contact **LIZA KAUFMAN** at liza.kaufman@yale.edu.

VOLLEYBALL: Bulldogs send Huskies back to the doghouse



YALE ATHLETICS

The women’s volleyball team beat UConn in five sets on Friday before crushing Northeastern on Saturday.

BY RACHEL MAK
STAFF REPORTER

The women’s volleyball team (2–3, 0–0 Ivy) triumphed over the University of Connecticut (7–1, 0–0 Big East) and Northeastern (4–4, 0–0 CAA) in an early-season homestand at the John J. Lee Amphitheater over the weekend.

On Friday, the Bulldogs won a tight back-and-forth game against UConn that went to five sets. After losing the first set 25–18, Yale bounced back and took the momentum in the second set with a 27–25 win. Although UConn refused to let up and took the third set, the Bulldogs edged them out in the fourth and ended the game with a fifth set score of 15–7.

The fifth set began with a 6–0 run, with freshman standout Ava Poinsett ’29 scoring four of the six points.

“We were able to get them out of system and score,” head coach Erin Appleman said. “A lot of energy went into that set.”

The Bulldogs refused to let UConn go on a run, winning the rally every time the Huskies got the serve and racking up kills from every position on the court.

“This weekend, we really focused on staying aggressive in all aspects of the game — serving, hitting, digging,” Betsy Goodenow ’27 wrote to the News. “I think that was the difference and what helped us to finish against UConn.”

Before Friday, the Bulldogs had lost both of the five-set matches they played so far this year.

On Saturday, Yale carried the energy from its first home win of the season and beat Northeastern three sets to none in a dominant performance. The Bulldogs held Northeastern to a .144 hitting percentage and had more team kills, aces and blocks.

In the Northeastern match, Yale found success because they were able to “maintain our high energy of play,” Appleman said.

The women’s volleyball team will head to San Diego on Thursday to square off against the University of San Diego (4–3, 0–0, WCC), UC San Diego (1–8, 0–0 Big West) and San Diego State (4–4, 0–0 Mountain West). The games are part of the Jack Talmadge Volleyball Classic.

Contact **RACHEL MAK** at rachel.mak@yale.edu.

Men’s rugby opens 150th season with a win over UConn

BY INEZ CHUIDIAN
STAFF REPORTER

The men’s rugby team took on the University of Connecticut in Mansfield for their season opener Saturday.

Both the Bulldogs, the rugby club’s first team, and the Blue dogs, their development team, took home wins in a promising start for the team.

The Bulldogs, captained by Falco Emery ’26 and Jack Stemerman ’26, opened the 80-minute game with a strong start. Aggressive offense from Bulldog forwards and backs challenged the Huskies.

By halftime, the Bulldogs were up 17–0.

Circulating the ball through the backline and conceding just two tries in the second half, the full time whistle blew with a final score of 24–12. Tobi Bamisaye ’29 scored the final try with a successful conversion kick by Declan Ratchford ’28.

The Blue dogs came home with a decisive 26–5 win over UConn. Last weekend, the Blue dogs had similar success with a 24–22 victory in a scrimmage over Vassar.

“The Blue dogs earned their win by stepping up and playing how they practice,” Blue dogs player Peter Burns ’28 wrote to the News. “They practiced our gameplan, fundamentals, and just wanted to play.”

In the fall, collegiate rugby teams traditionally play games with 15 players on each side. In the spring, they typically play faster-paced games with seven players on each side.

“Our men concentrate on 15-a-side rugby throughout both the fall and spring,” Craig Wilson, the director of rugby at Yale, wrote. “This allows us to keep all 40+ players engaged, develop our younger athletes and prepare them for the next fall season.”

With five seniors rostered this fall, this year’s team is significantly younger than the last. In the spring, 16 players graduated.

“That youth doesn’t dampen our expectations,” Wilson said. “We’re aiming for a winning season and want to make a serious run at the Liberty Conference title.”

The Liberty Conference operates under National Collegiate Rugby, a governing body for collegiate rugby programs in the United States.

This year, 2025, is also the 150th anniversary of Yale rugby. In the lead-up to this milestone, alumni events have been held across the country, and players have been presented with a commemorative uniform to mark the occasion. The celebrations will culminate in a Hall of Fame gala to honor distinguished figures in Yale rugby’s history.



YALE ATHLETICS

The men’s rugby team came home from the weekend with two wins, marking a strong start for their fall season.

“Rugby has a storied legacy at Yale, and we’re immensely proud of that tradition, but we also see it as inspiration to create our own legacy for the

future,” Wilson said.

On Saturday, the Bulldogs will take on Brown at home in their first official non-conference match of the season.

Contact **INEZ CHUIDIAN** at inezchristina.chuidian@yale.edu.