SPORTS

Women's crew wins third straight title at the Head of the Charles

BY SOPHIA LE
CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

The Yale women's crew team on Sunday claimed the varsity collegiate eights title for the third time in a row on the Charles River.

"That has never happened in the history of YWC," Will Porter, head coach of the women's crew team, wrote to the News. "Our club eight three peated as well."

The women's crew team entered one boat for the women's club eight and two boats for the women's championship eight. All three boats placed first in their respective events.

The Head of the Charles regatta came after a successful weekend for the Bulldogs at the Head of the Housatonic race. At the Head of the Housatonic, the women's teams swept the top four spots in the women's collegiate eight, defeating Fairfield University and Lehigh University. They also placed first in the women's openweight four.

They returned to water in Boston over the weekend with the same drive and passion, though the regatta did not come without its challenges.

Porter said the biggest obstacle at the Head of the Charles came during the Bulldogs' race against the Leander Club, which interfered with Yale's boat. Porter commended the expertise of coxswain Hope Galusha '26 for navigating the crew through the situation.

The men's lightweight and heavyweight teams also experienced several challenges at the Head of the Housatonic and Head of the Charles regattas.

At the Head of the Housatonic, the lightweight team's three boats in the openweight eight placed fifth, 12th and 13th. Their three entries found slightly more success in the openweight four, placing first, third and ninth. The four boats in the open weight pair placed in second, third, fourth and fifth.

The heavyweight's five entries in the openweight eight placed second, fourth, sixth, ninth and 14th.

On the Charles River over the weekend, both the heavyweight and lightweight crews didn't achieve much better results.

The men's lightweight team sent one lightweight eight to the Charles which placed eighth out of ten boats.

"Many miles to row before we put away our oars for the winter! The team has responded with courage to every challenge so far. I am proud of them for that. The fall racing has shown there are more challenges ahead," Andy Card, head coach of the men's lightweight team, wrote in an email.



YALE ATHLETICS

Yale's crew teams competed at the Head of the Charles regatta in Boston over the weekend.

The heavyweight team submitted two entries into the men's championship eights, which placed 13th and 22nd out of 30 boats.

"Fall racing is a great opportunity to compete and to get a checkpoint of boat speed relative to other teams," Benjamin Heathcote '26, the captain of the men's heavyweight team, said. "It's a useful section of the fall but ultimately is just a stepping stone to the dual season, the eastern sprints, the IRA and the all important Yale-Harvard regatta."

Heathcote said he is positive that winter training will prepare the heavyweight team for the spring season.

The Head of Charles is the world's largest three-day rowing competition and takes place in Cambridge.

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MEN'S TENNIS: Three Bulldogs qualify for singles, doubles championships



LIZA KAUFMAN, PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR

At the New England Regionals Tournament, three members of the tennis squad made it to the finals and qualified for future tournaments.

BY REMI CLARK-REDSTAR
STAFF REPORTER

Three members of the men's tennis team are preparing for big tournaments — Eric Li '26 and Ethan Chung '29 for the Intercollegiate Tennis Association's sectional championship and Vignesh Gogineni '26 for the NCAA singles championship.

To qualify, the Bulldogs earned hard-fought victories over several rivals at the New England Regionals Tournament between Oct. 9 and Oct. 13.

"Overall, we had a pretty good week with some great individual results," interim head coach Eduardo Ugalde wrote in an email. "We have been putting a lot of emphasis on becoming good competitors in practice and I think that definitely showed at the tournament."

Of more than 40 matches played, the Elis clawed out 16 singles victories and nine doubles victories against Harvard, Dartmouth, Cornell, Holy Cross and Sacred Heart.

On the singles side, the Bulldogs started with a bang. The team was undefeated on the first day, making it to the second round without losing a single singles player. The second day was the opposite, with only Gogineni making it to the quarterfinals.

Jim Ji '27 and Jason Shuler '27 did not go quietly, notching early victories against Stonehill (6–0, 6–2) and Brown (7–6, 6–4) before both falling to the Crimson. Gogenini powered through a tough draw with a straight sets blowout (6–1, 6–1) and a (7–5, 7–6) brawl against Harvard to make it to the finals. There, he was crowned co-champion, automatically qualifying him for the NCAA Individual Championships.

"I am very happy that Vignesh is going to NCAAs for a second year in a row," Ugalde wrote. "He has established himself as one of the top players in the country. He already had a great run at All Americans where he beat some top 10 players and he knows that he has the level to compete with them."

On the doubles courts, the Bulldogs enjoyed a particularly strong showing, with all their duos reaching the round of 16. Edward Liao '28 and Gogineni earned hard fought wins against Stonehill, Brown and Dartmouth, squashing opponents in 8–0, 8–4, and 8–5 matches respectively before falling to Bryant in a 9–8 nail-biter.

Dylan Tsoi '27 and Schuler served up Bryant and Quinnipiac 8–2 and 8–3, with their exit from the tournament coming at the hands of Boston College, who beat them 8–6. Most stunning for Yale tennis fans was the finals run of Li and Chung, where they dismantled Harvard twice (8–7, 9–8), Quinnipiac (8–6), Buffalo (8–5) and Boston College (6–2, 6–4). Though they lost the final match to Cornell (6–4, 6–3), they still qualified for the ITA sectionals championship.

"The atmosphere was great. The guys were all supporting each other, each other's matches" Gogineni said. "A lot of our parents and friends came out a couple days so that definitely helped in terms of support and confidence."

The Bulldogs' next match will take place Friday at the Ivy League ITA Masters qualifying tournament in Philadelphia.

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MEN'S BASKETBALL: Two alumni to begin NBA rookie seasons

BY AUDREY KIM AND INEZ CHUIDIAN
CONTRIBUTING REPORTERS

The National Basketball Association had its tip off earlier this week, marking the start of two rookie campaigns by Yale basketball alumni: Bez Mbeng '25 and Danny Wolf, once a member of the class of 2026.

Wolf played for the Bulldogs for two seasons before transferring to Michigan for his junior year. He was a standout center for Yale his sophomore year, helping the men's basketball team win the Ivy League Championship and earn a spot in the NCAA March Madness playoffs, where Yale advanced to the second round after upsetting Auburn.

Following his junior season at the University of Michigan, Wolf declared for the 2025 NBA draft and was selected in the first round by the Brooklyn Nets as the 27th overall pick.

"You could certainly see that the IQ on the court was something that stood out for Danny," Justin Gallanty, a former ESPN play-by-play announcer, said in a phone interview. "But more than anything else, a guy who's seven feet who can bring the ball up the court, distribute to his teammates, shoot from the outside, operate on the inside, is something that is pretty unique in the game of basketball."

Gallanty said that Wolf started as a guard early in his basketball career but experienced a sudden growth spurt by the time he was suiting up for Yale. This gave Wolf a unique combination of traits: He had the skills required of a guard, but the build required of a power forward or center. His diverse skillset would set him up for success once he fully grew into his body.

With the Nets looking to rebuild and their coaches' intentions to get creative with Wolf's diverse skillset, Wolf is in a position to continue developing his unique playstyle and begin seeing the court more often, Gallanty said.

"If you look at the guy who's, according to most people, the best player in the NBA right now, Nikola Jokić for the Nuggets, he has a lot of the same skills that Danny brings to the table being a six-eleven, seven-foot guy who does the majority of the ball handling for his team," Gallanty said. "The sort of the things that Danny is able to do on the basketball court we've seen translate really well in the NBA."

Nets Head Coach Jordi Fernandez has said he is aware of the similarities between Wolf and Jokic and hopes to let Wolf explore his full potential as a nontraditional player. The experience Fernandez gained while coaching Jokic as an assistant to Nuggets head coach Mike Malone could prove key to facilitating Wolf's growth.

"Hopefully, he'll be somebody in the NBA that is similar to who he was in college, it was somebody who's not only really good himself, but also makes his teammates better," Gallanty said about Wolf's potential as both a solo and team player.

Mbeng — who played alongside Wolf for two years — is another former Bulldog star now transitioning to NBA life. As the 2025 Ivy League Player of the Year and the record-holder for most basketball steals in Yale history, Mbeng is a dynamic and physical player.

In his senior year, Mbeng led the Bulldogs to an Ivy League Championship while scoring double-figures 23 times and notching three 20-point games. Mbeng finished his college career with 1,189 points and 449 assists.

On Oct. 14, Mbeng signed with the Miami Heat.

"Getting signed to the Heat was an unbelievable feeling," Mbeng wrote to the News. "Being given the opportunity to develop my game, and knowing that they believe in me to be given this opportunity means so much — especially from one of the most storied franchises in NBA history."

Mbeng's signing this fall follows his summer stint with the Golden State Warriors, where he competed in the California Classic and NBA Summer League. Mbeng has spent most of his summer season in training camp.

"I was super thankful to be given the opportunity to be around such an inspiring environment." Mbeng wrote. "My time spent in Miami was amazing and I will be playing with their G league team to begin the year."

The G League is the NBA's development league where teams send players to improve skills and prepare for call-ups to the main roster. The Heat's G League team "The Sioux Falls Skyforce" competes alongside 31 other teams in the division.

Nick Townsend '26, a current senior on the Yale men's basketball team, described Mbeng as an athlete who "played with a special intensity."

"I'm definitely going to miss playing with him this year, but I can't wait to see what he accomplishes," Townsend said.

Mbeng credited his four years at Yale for shaping his mindset heading into the NBA.

"Yale helped me nurture my work ethic, and that is definitely something that I will carry over to prepare for the next level," Mbeng said.

Wolf and the Nets will next face off against the Cleveland Cavaliers on Oct. 24, and Mbeng can expect to make his G league debut at the Tip Off Tournament on Nov. 7.

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