FROM THE FRONT

"Our hope is not yet lost, The hope that is two-thousand years old."
HATIKVAH NAFTALI HERZ IMBER

Bulldogs beat Harvard, Princeton to secure NCAA berth

FIELD HOCKEY FROM PAGE 1

Before the Ivy League adopted a tournament system for field hockey in 2023, the Bulldogs were crowned Ivy League champions by regular-season record in 1980 and 2011.

"I am so proud of every single person for putting in incredible work to keep us in the game and force overtime," Emma Mueller '29 wrote in a text message to the News. "We knew making the final wasn't enough if we didn't bring a trophy back to New Haven."

Less than a week after narrowly falling to the Crimson 1-2 in overtime, the Elis returned to Cambridge hungry for a victory over their rival and delivered.

The Elis started the game off strong by drawing first blood. In the 23rd minute, a penalty corner from Chiara Picciafuoco '28 found the stick of Carys Isherwood '29, allowing for Issy Baileff '28 to rocket in a goal. In the 44th minute, Yale extended its lead to 2-0 with a goal by Maddie Leathem '30 off of a rebound. The Crimson answered right back four minutes later with a goal of their own in the 48th to trim the deficit to one, but the Bulldogs were able to hold the lead for the remaining 12 minutes.

As the buzzer sounded, the Bulldogs rushed the field in celebration of their upset victory over one of the nation's top teams.

With the win, Yale not only snapped Harvard's perfect 7-0 conference record and handed the Crimson their second loss of the season, but it also marked the Bulldogs' first-ever win against Harvard since September 12, 2012.

On Sunday, Princeton started the game off strong and carried the lead for 52 minutes.

The Tigers struck first, potting a goal with 2:12 left in the first quarter. The Tigers dominated offensively, with 10 shots compared to none by Yale. Goalkeeper Amelie Schwarzkopf '29, who has been a brick wall all season, stood tall in the net, but an awkward rebound in front of the goal allowed Pru Lindsey to score.

The second and third quarters were a stalemate as both teams tried to gain momentum.

In the fourth quarter, Princeton extended their lead to 2-0 after another save by Schwarzkopf fell in front of the goal. The Bulldogs were unable to clear the ball, and Tiger Molly Nye pushed it in during the 46th minute.

With 14 minutes left to go, down 2-0 in the championship, all hope seemed lost for Yale.

However, with eight minutes remaining, midfielder Victoria Collee '28 scored on the first Bulldog shot of the game. After Emilia Puddicombe '30 turned the ball over, she sent it to Collee, who dribbled through the Tiger defense and fired a shot off of Princeton's goalkeeper. Yale had momentum, and Princeton began playing on their heels.

Four minutes later, in the 56th minute, Yale took control, generating its first corner of the game. Picciafuoco inserted the ball to back Isherwood for a stick stop, leaving the ball for Baileff to fire a shot past the Princeton goalkeeper for the equalizer.

With neither team able to pull ahead in the final four minutes, the game entered a golden-goal 15-minute overtime.

Princeton applied heavy offensive pressure, earning three straight corners. Schwarzkopf denied every Tiger shot, including a last-minute save that sent the game into a shootout — a Bulldog specialty this season.

In the shootout, Schwarzkopf was lights out. She saved the first Princeton shot, followed by a Kaitlyn Chang '28 juke-out to score, 1-0 Yale. After another save by Schwarzkopf and a miss by Yale, Princeton scored to tie the shootout at 1-1.

Piacciafuoco answered with a goal of her own, giving Yale a 2-1 lead with two shots to go. After a save by Schwarzkopf to start the fourth round, senior back and captain Hettie Whittington '27 drove left and finished with her backhand to secure a Yale victory 3-1 in the shootout.

Whittington commented on the team's mentality.

"At that point, two-nil down, absolutely nothing left to lose, so we knew we had to go forward, we knew we were a gritty team," she said in an interview on ESPN. "When we went the second goal down, it didn't even impact us one bit. If anything, we had even less to lose, so it was even easier to go forward."

Schwarzkopf was a brick wall in net the whole weekend, earning her the Ivy League Tournament's Most Outstanding Player. She recorded 12 saves on Sunday, in addition to the seven on Friday. She has played every minute for Yale this season.

In an interview on ESPN, head coach Melissa Gonzalez lauded the team and their commitment in the comeback victory.

"We were able to really believe and keep chipping away and be opportunistic with the opportunities we created," she said. "Sometimes it just goes in the back of the net, and it went in the back of the net for us today."

She also praised Schwarzkopf's gameplay.

"Amelie is one of those players that just elevates in high-stress situations," she said. "She wants to work incredibly hard."

The Bulldogs now have 14 wins this season, second-most in school history and only one away from tying 1998's 15-win watermark.

They will find out their first-round opponent during the NCAA selection ceremony at 10 p.m. tonight.

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Yale Athletics
After knocking off top seed Harvard in the semifinals on Friday and snapping Princeton's nine-game win streak in a 3-2 shootout victory in the championship game, No. 4 seed Yale secured its first trophy since the league adopted the tournament system in 2023.

Bears beat Bulldogs at the Bowl for first time in 15 years

FOOTBALL FROM PAGE 1

was unable to get anything going through the air and was forced to punt yet again. This time, the Bulldogs' secondary was able to limit the damage through the air, and Brown was forced to punt.

As the Brown punter took the snap and attempted to boot the ball off, an overwhelming Yale punt-block team blocked his kick and the Bulldogs recovered the ball on the Brown 38-yard line.

Yale's offense came back out, attempting to score for the first time since their initial drive. The series started with a six-yard pickup by Djeumeni Kemeni, but a Reno incompletion and sack knocked the Bulldogs out of field goal range, and punter Reese Keeney '28 was called on once more.

Starting the drive at their own 20-yard line after a Keeney touchback, the Bears began with two straight runs. A false start backed Brown up five yards, giving them a third-and-long.

As Brown quarterback James Murphy dropped back to throw, the Yale pass rush quickly closed in on him and hit his arm as he flung the ball into the air, right into defensive back Billy Eastep's '28 arms. Eastep, with a step on the player he was originally guarding, took the ball right down the sideline, dodging defenders en route to the end zone for a pick-six. The score put the Bulldogs ahead 14-7.

The lead did not last for long. Murphy came back out onto the field, clearly unfazed by his previous errant throw, and immediately connected with receiver Trevor Foley. Foley, who caught the ball near the sideline, broke two tackles by Yale defensive backs and sprinted 73 yards to the end zone to tie the game up.

Yale's offense quickly fizzled out again and their fourth straight drive ended with a punt.

Murphy and co. started their next drive at their own 11-yard line. Again attacking the secondary, the Brown quarterback connected with Foley for a 41-yard field-flipper, and a handful of short completions set the Bears up in the red zone.

Yale's defense held their opponents to a field goal, giving Brown a 17-14 lead, which the Bears retained as the first half came to a close.

The third quarter saw a better performance from the Bulldog defense. Yale's offense leveraged a clean slate, and two drives resulting in field goals gave Team 153 a 20-17 advantage. On both drives, the Bulldogs had no problem moving down the field, but a combination of sacks and incompletions on late downs deep in Brown territory forced them to stall out and settle for three.

The Bears began the final quarter with the ball. After a quarter of mediocrity, Brown head coach James Perry went back to the first half's prevailing strategy. Two times in three plays, Murphy found his favorite target in Foley on the sideline, and both times, Foley was able to draw a pass interference penalty on cornerback Brandon Webster '26.

Two big penalties set the Bears up on the Yale 34-yard line, and two more completions from Murphy gave Brown a first down on the 16-yard line, threatening to score once again.

Murphy went right at Webster in the end zone, and a nice throw found Pearson Hill for a touchdown, giving Brown a 24-20 lead with 12 minutes to go.

Yale needed to score not only to win the game but also to keep their postseason hopes alive. Two straight three-and-outs were matched by two from Brown, and with less than five minutes to go, the Bulldogs were right back where they started.

A solid mix of runs and short passes helped get Yale to midfield, and a 12-yard Reno connection with Santiago set the Bulldogs up with a first down on the Brown 39-yard line with just under two minutes to go.

Still holding all three of their timeouts, Yale decided to run the ball with Djeumeni Kemeni, but he was only able to pick up two yards. Reno did not complete his next pass and, on third down, was forced to scramble for six yards to set up a fourth down and short with the game on the line.

There, head coach Kevin Cahill called his first timeout of the half, stopping the clock with 1:13 to go in the game and the ball on the Brown 31-yard line.

On the following play, where the Bulldogs desperately needed to pick up a first down, the coaching staff went with a run-pass option as the Bears loaded the box.

Sensing the Bears' plan to halt Djeumeni Kemeni, Reno decided to keep the ball himself and use his feet to pick up the first down. He was tackled at the line of scrimmage by Jack Middleton, effectively ending the game.

A few plays later, the clock hit zero as Brown pulled off its first win over Yale in over 10 years and its first win since 2011 at the Yale Bowl.

While the Bulldog defense played well, penalties spelled defeat for Yale on Saturday. Bulldog defenders often seemed to be in the right position but went just a tad too far with handfighting and physicality, resulting in costly penalties.

The Bulldogs will be back in action next Saturday when they host Princeton in their penultimate game. Senior Day ceremonies will be held at the Yale Bowl prior to the 12 p.m. kickoff.

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Liza Kaufman / Photography Editor
In a Saturday game, Brown snapped a 10-year drought against the Bulldogs with a come-from-behind win over Yale that marked their first in 15 years at the Yale Bowl. The result effectively ended the Bulldogs' postseason aspirations.