SPORTS

MEN'S BASKETBALL: Bulldogs blow out Quinnipiac

BY BEN RAAB AND WALTER ROYAL
STAFF REPORTERS

HAMDEN — Yale lost one sharpshooter this offseason, but it might just have found another.

Sophomore wing Riley Fox '28 hit three straight threes in the first half against Quinnipiac as Yale (2–0, 0–0 Ivy) dominated the Bobcats (1–2, 0–0 MAAC) 97-60 on Tuesday night. The Connecticut native finished with 13 points on a perfect 5-for-5 shooting line, one of six Bulldogs to score in double figures against the Bobcats.

"The guys played together tonight, we had great contributions from everybody, I was pleased from top to bottom," Yale head coach James Jones said in an interview after the game.

The Bulldogs are seeking their third straight trip to March Madness this season despite losing two all-Ivy players -– Bez Mbeng '25, last year's Ivy player of the year, and John Poulakidas '25, who led the league in scoring with 19 points per game.

In their first two games, the Bulldogs have looked the part, albeit with a more balanced attack. The Tuesday night blowout win follows a 97–68 rout of Navy on the road in Friday night's season opener. The Elis have already climbed 37 spots in KenPom.com's Division I rankings — now sitting at No. 65 after beginning the year at No. 102.

The game started off with a Quinnipiac 5-0 lead, though the Bulldogs quickly fought back to knot the game at 15-15 after seven minutes of action. The teams traded blows for the next four minutes, but following a Keith McKnight layup to give the Bobcats a 25-24 lead, Yale ripped off a 29-4 run to close out the half. Quinnipiac conceded seven turnovers during the span, which was described by the Bobcats' ESPN+ broadcast team as "a clinic."

The second half was more of the same, with Yale slightly expanding its margin and working in more bench players. As a result, sophomore Jordan Brathwaite '28 scored a career-high 11 points, with nine coming in the second half.

First year Daniel Ogunyemi '29 scored four points in four minutes on the hardwood Tuesday night. Following his debut performance against Navy last Friday, when he scored five points in three minutes, Ogunyemi currently has a higher career point total than minutes played.

Against Quinnipiac, the team hit 10 of 18 total three-point attempts. Yale's defense also forced 17 turnovers, leading to just 60 points from the Bobcats.

Strength in the paint

The Bulldogs boast a physical, athletic frontcourt that should be their strength this season. Forwards Nick Townsend '26 and Isaac Celiscar '28 each scored 12 points and grabbed eight rebounds, while 6-foot-10 center Samson Aletan '27 added 13 points and three offensive boards.

Aletan, the highest-rated recruit in Yale history, was mostly a defensive presence during his first two seasons at Yale but flashed a more complete offensive game Tuesday night, throwing down several dunks and finishes around the rim.

"There's very few guys as big, strong and athletic as him in the country, much less our league. We're glad he's playing for us," Jones said of Aletan.

Casey Simmons '26 started on the wing in Yale's first two games — though he may soon face competition from Fox, who scored 24 in the season-opener against Navy and offers more threat from behind the arc.

Battle for the backcourt

Yale's biggest uncertainty this season lies at point guard, where Mbeng started the past three seasons. Trevor Mullin '27 has the role for now, scoring seven points Tuesday, while Devon Arlington '26 and Brathwaite have come off the bench. Mullin could face competition from Brathwaite, who knocked down two threes and brought energy to the second unit.

First-year guard Courtney Wallace '29 also impressed in limited time, looking aggressive on offense with an athletic drive to the basket and a three.

Yale will return home for its next two games, beginning with its home opener against Stony Brook on Saturday at 1 p.m. in John J. Lee Amphitheater.

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BEN RAAB / SENIOR PHOTOGRAPHER
Six Bulldogs scored in double figures as Yale cruised past the Bobcats 97–60 for its second straight win.

FIELD HOCKEY: Players, alumni celebrate first NCAA tournament bid



YALE ATHLETICS
Yale will play in its first ever NCAA tournament game on Friday afternoon.

BY AVA JENKINS
STAFF REPORTER

For the first time in program history, the Yale field hockey team is headed to the NCAA tournament — a milestone that has sparked excitement across generations of Bulldogs.

The No. 16 Bulldogs earned their historic bid Sunday night and will face defending national champion Northwestern on Friday at the University of Virginia. After a season that included Yale's first Ivy League tournament appearance and 12 wins — tied for the third-most in school history — players and alumni described the moment as both exciting and meaningful for the team.

"Making the tournament is incredible, it's everything the team has been working so hard towards and personally is an amazing addition to my senior season," captain Poppy Beales '26 wrote to the News. "We know we are facing a really high-quality team and it is going to be a battle, but we are training at a high tempo and being very intentional in our preparation."

Junior back Hettie Whittington '27 emphasized the significance of the achievement after several years of near-misses.

"Making the tournament means everything," Whittington wrote in a text message. "The past few seasons have come to quite abrupt and unsatisfying finishes, without any opportunity for us to play in the postseason."

Head coach Melissa Gonzalez credited her team's preparation and mindset throughout the year.

"It has taken a lot of sacrifice, discipline, resilience, humility, and tough training sessions," Gonzalez wrote to the News. "For them to achieve such an accomplishment is something to be proud of and something they'll remember for the rest of their lives. I couldn't be happier for the group."

The program's alumni community also shared in the celebration.

Jan Colarusso Seeley '82, a longtime supporter and former player, described the championship as a collective achievement for Yale field hockey.

"This season has been extra special, as the team reached goals never before achieved," Seeley wrote in an email. "When the team steps onto the pitch, they carry with them six decades of Yale Field Hockey players. I hope they can feel all that love and support, regardless of how the season turns out."

Luanna Summer '23 said she has enjoyed watching the team's growth from afar.

"I think it's been amazing watching them play this season and how much they've improved each year," Summer wrote to the News. "The coaching staff came in wanting to build a program that was not only at the top of the Ivy League but also nationally competitive — and everyone believed that would happen."

The Bulldogs (12–5, 4–3 Ivy) will face Northwestern on Friday at 2:30 p.m. in Charlottesville, Virginia. The game will be streamed live on ESPN+.

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SWIM AND DIVE: Bulldogs open season against Brown and Columbia

BY DAVIS ZONG
STAFF REPORTER

The Yale swim and dive team faces an exciting week ahead as they prepare to dive into back-to-back races against Brown and Columbia.

The men's team has a packed travel schedule for the weekend, heading first to Rhode Island for their season opener against Brown University on Thursday before facing Columbia University in New York on Saturday.

"With travel, hotels, different food and schedules there are a lot more variables to control when on the road," Noah Millard '26 wrote in an email. "I think this makes the competition much more similar to our championship meets like Ivies and NCAAs so it is a great practice run and makes the win much more special should that be the outcome."

Historically, both Brown and Columbia have been fierce competitors for the Elis. Yale holds a 3-2 overall advantage against Brown over the past five years, with all three victories coming at home. The Bulldogs are now chasing their first away win in Providence.

Columbia, meanwhile, holds a 4-1 edge over Yale. However, last year's dominant showing by the Bulldogs ended a four-year losing streak with a convincing 209-91 victory at home.

"We only get two opportunities over four years to go to the other universities, so it's always nice to go somewhere new, to hopefully win in their home and their pool," Konstantinos Zachariadis '27 said.

The women's team, meanwhile, is fresh off of a nail-biter of a meet against Brown, where the competition came down to the wire.

Captain Jessey Li '26 touched the wall first in both the 100 and 200-yard breaststroke events, Grace Wu '28 dominated the 1-meter dive with a score of 266.33 and Angela Wang '29 claimed her first individual collegiate event victory in the 200-yard butterfly. Despite earning eight event titles and seven individual wins, the Elis ultimately fell to the Bears, 140-160.

This Friday, the women's team will host Columbia University at the Kiphuth Exhibition Pool for their home opener. Historically, the Bulldogs have controlled the rivalry, coming out on top in all of their last five matchups.

"Columbia is always a great meet. For me, the excitement comes from performing as a team — hitting our best performances, supporting each other in every event and seeing how our training translates into real results," Li said.

Both Yale squads have been training intensely since the start of the year, practicing six days a week, often with double sessions, for about two to three hours each.

"Since September, the captains, Alex Hazlett and Jessey Li did a great job with setting the pace for the teams and being great both in and out of the water," Zachariadis said. "Our goal this year is to win, so from day one, it was just practice and hard work."

Even a few months into the season, swimmers on both teams describe a strong sense of community.

"Being a senior this year means I've had the privilege of watching the team grow and evolve over the past 4 years. People are humble and accept feedback, as well as feeling supported by all of those around them," Millard wrote.

Next week, the men's and women's teams will reunite at the Ohio Invitational on Nov. 18.

"Our team strength this year is our depth and our heart. People are showing up every single day — not just physically, but emotionally for each other. This team is hungry, united and really believes in what we can accomplish together," Li said.

The men's meet against Brown begins Thursday 5 p.m. in Rhode Island, while the women's race against Columbia starts Friday, 4 p.m. at the Kiphuth Exhibition Pool.

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