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"Our biggest challenge on the table from the defensive end is gonna be handling their posts, and we work on getting around a lot"
DALILA ESHE WOMEN'S BASKETBALL HEAD COACH

Yale preserves perfect start ahead of Quinnipiac heavyweight matchup

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

BY GIAN LOMBEYDA
CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

The Yale women's basketball team (4–0, 0–0 Ivy) beat the Rider University Broncs (1–2, 0–0 MAAC) 65-47 on Saturday to continue its perfect start to the season at home.

Coming off three wins, including a 71-67 overtime road win over Loyola University Maryland (1–2, 0–0 Patriot League), the Bulldogs sought to defend their home court. Yale led for the entirety of the game, flaunting newfound long-range shooting capability while relying on a consistent defense.

The team will look to showcase this shooting against its toughest opponent yet when the team travels up Whitney Avenue to face Quinnipiac University (2–3, 0–0 MAAC) on Monday before facing the University of New Hampshire (3–2, 0–0 AEC) two days later.

"Being able to find their confidence and their three-ball is going to go a long ways for us this season," coach Dalila Eshe said in an interview after the game. "So any game that we have an opportunity, where they're starting to feel good from the three-point line — it's a great day."

The Bulldogs came out strong, going seven for 16 — a 43.8 percent conversion performance — on three-pointers against Rider, their best by far this season.

Lea Vukic '30 led the charge with an impressive three triples in her 19-point, six-rebound performance, which earned her the team-bestowed "Dog" award for a player that's "gritty, tough" and "the one that scores at a high clip," according to Eshe.

"She's so much fun to watch," Eshe said of Vukic, "and she has such a passion for the game that she kind of puts on the floor, and people can see it."

After the match, the player credited her performance both to her confidence fulfilling multiple roles on the court and to her chemistry with the team.

"Anytime when they have to make some adjustments, I can adjust real easily, I can handle the ball, I can assist, I can pass, I can rebound," Vukic said in an interview after the game.



TANNER BATTLE / CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

The Bulldogs stayed hot in their Division I home opener, rolling to a 65-47 result to extend their win streak to four. The team's stamina will be tested in a quick turnaround to play local rivals Quinnipiac on Monday and New Hampshire on Wednesday.

While a couple of offensive foul calls prevented her from surpassing 20 points for the second time this season after marking 22 in the season opener, Vukic shined on Saturday.

When asked about scoring her second-highest number of points this season, she said, "well, I'm sad that it's only 19."

Vukic wasn't the only star on Saturday. Every player stepped up and showed out on the night. Luisa Vydrova '27 and Helena Keane '30 both reached double figures in points, while Dora Kastl '29 had a resounding 11 rebounds, four assists and three steals on the night.

"She's a room protector," Eshe said of Kastl, "so anytime anybody missed an assignment, slipped, got by them, she was there to kind of clean up the rim, which is huge. She's a special one to have on the roster."

Praising Kastl's "basketball IQ," Eshe noted that the player received Yale's second team recognition of the night — the "Y Factor" award, given to key contributors whose work may not always appear in the numbers, although Kastl's did against Rider.

The Bulldogs will need their full roster to continue putting up quality performances, with two quick-fire games lined up within the five days following Saturday's win.

On Monday, Yale will travel north to face local rival Quinnipiac, a team that has won four out of its last five meetings with Yale and is consistently at the top of its conference.

While results have not always gone in favor of the Quinnipiac Bobcats lately, they will be riding some momentum into Monday's game after a solid 58-47 home win against Boston University (1–3, 0–0 Patriot League) on Saturday.

Bobcat first-year Alanna Benoit hit 14 points in the game, and junior Elle Snyder garnered an eye-watering 15 rebounds. Snyder has hit 10 or more rebounds every game so far this season, adding multiple points along the way as one of many elite Bobcat contributors.

"Our biggest challenge on the table from the defensive end is gonna be handling their posts, and we work on getting around a lot," Eshe said. "Being really, really active with their post players and making sure that they don't get anything easy."

After playing up in Hamden, the Bulldogs will return home to face another solid Division I opponent in the New Hampshire Wildcats on Wednesday before a six-day break.

Yale has not played New Hampshire since taking a win in the 2016-17 season. The Wildcats are coming off a match against a Division I team in which they pushed 45 percent to 50 percent conversion in both three-pointers and overall field goals.

The Bulldogs are preparing for the long season ahead, with an enticing December trip to the West Coast to face Gonzaga University (2–3, 0–0 PAC12) on the horizon.

"Our big emphasis on non-conference is that every game we should be continuing to get better, and this is part of how we arrive in conference, a different team," Eshe said.

The Yale Bulldogs play the Quinnipiac Bobcats on Monday at 6:30 p.m. in Hamden before returning home to John J. Lee Amphitheater to face New Hampshire on Wednesday at 4:30 p.m.

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Men's and women's teams beat Dartmouth and Cornell at first home meet

SWIMMING AND DIVING

BY ELI RATNER AND VINCENT HUANG
STAFF REPORTER AND
CONTRIBUTING REPORTER



GARRETT CURTIS / PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR

Yale's men's and women's swimming and diving teams secured commanding victories at the weekend's Dartmouth-Cornell tri-meet in New Haven. Yale captured 21 combined event victories and two records were broken across the men's and women's teams.

Yale's swimming and diving teams returned to the Kiphuth Exhibition Pool over the weekend to pick up a pair of wins in their first home meet of the season.

Coming off the men's victory and women's defeat in their Ivy opener at Brown, both teams dominated home water against Dartmouth and Cornell. Led by multi-event winners Nick Finch '28, Arshak Hambardzumyan '28 and Jake Wang '28, the men's team took 12 event victories en route to a 195-104 victory over Dartmouth and a 185-114 win over Cornell. On the women's side, Yale was equally dominant, taking down Dartmouth and Cornell by scores of 190-109 and 178-121, respectively.

"I think we did a great job at keeping our energy up throughout the entire meet," Ethan Guo '29 wrote in a text message to the News. "Tri-meets are inherently a lot longer and our cheers were loud the entire session. I think the team's spirit was shown with how many alums we had in the stands cheering for us."

In the 200-yard medley relay, the men's quartet of Wang, Charlie Egeland '27, Elliot Lee '28 and Deniel Nankov '27 delivered the win with a time of 1:25.83.

Hambardzumyan opened Yale's individual event tally with a victory in the 1000-yard freestyle, which he followed with a win in the 500-yard freestyle. Finch won both the 50-yard freestyle and 100-yard butterfly races, breaking a Kiphuth record in the latter with his time of 45.72.

The 200-yard free went to Kavin Li '29, and Wang nabbed the 100-yard backstroke and 200-yard individual medley races for his pair of victories. Egeland took the win in the 100-yard breaststroke, and Lars Kuljus '28 prevailed in the 100-yard freestyle. Yale's team of Kuljus, Nenkov, Li and Lee rounded out the meet with another team event win in the 400-yard freestyle relay.

On the diving side, the Bulldogs swept the podium places on the one-meter board, as Brady Stanton '28 led Jackson Lipscomb '28 and Lewis Neilson '30 in an all-blue top three.

On the women's side, Yale's win was led by multi-event winners Siri Vanderlinden '30 and Devyn Sargent '28. The former set a team record time of 9:41.99 en route to victory in the 1000-yard freestyle before taking a second event win in the 100-yard butterfly in an unorthodox double. Sargent cruised to victory in the 100-yard backstroke and 200-yard breaststroke races. The 200-yard freestyle, 100-yard breaststroke, 100-yard freestyle and 500-yard freestyle events garnered Yale victories via Julia Ebli '29, Lucy Walker '27, Sophie Davies '30 and Ofek Adir '30, respectively. Yale's team of Vanderlinden, Davies, Ebli and Sara Plunkett '27 wrapped up a dominant Bulldog night with a victory in the 400-yard freestyle relay.

"The entire team had great energy and spirit which transferred into great performances. It felt great to get some good racing in before our midseason meet coming up," Mia Slowik '29 wrote in a text message to the News. "Racing at our home pool in front of our alumni was really special, their energy definitely carried us through the meet."

Karly Boles '29 also said the team felt supported by former swimmers and parents, adding that high energy in the pool helped the Bulldogs secure the win.

Yale's season will continue at the Ohio State Invitational this weekend.

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STAT OF THE DAY

YALE'S WOMEN BASKETBALL BEAT THE RIDER UNIVERSITY BRONCS 65-47 ON SATURDAY.