

SPORTS

Poulakidas makes NBA debut for Dallas Mavericks, playing 14 minutes

MEN’S BASKETBALL

BY WALTER ROYAL
STAFF REPORTER

John Poulakidas '25 made his NBA debut on Tuesday evening, playing for the Dallas Mavericks against the Charlotte Hornets. In his 14 minutes and 28 seconds on the court, he grabbed five rebounds and dished two assists. The Mavericks announced on Sunday that Poulakidas signed a two-way contract, meaning that he will split his time between the NBA team and its G-League affiliate. Before signing with Dallas, Poulakidas shot 45 percent from three and scored 12.5 points per game in the G-League for the San Diego Clippers.

Against the Hornets on Tuesday, Poulakidas took the floor to start the second quarter, and the Mavericks immediately erased their 23-31 deficit with a 10-2 run. While a first bucket eluded him, his plus-minus of -7 was the

second best on the team in the 27-point loss.

Poulakidas is just the third Yale since 2003 to play in basketball's most prestigious professional league. Miye Oni '19, the cousin of current Bulldog power forward Daniel Ogunyemi '29, was the last to come directly from Yale. Danny Wolf, who transferred to Michigan following his sophomore season at Yale, was selected 27th overall by the Brooklyn Nets in the 2026 NBA draft.

The Mavericks, who currently rank 27th in the league in three-point percentage and 29th in free-throw percentage, have just four healthy guards on their roster with Kyrie Irving out for the season. After releasing Tyus Jones and converting Ryan Nembhard's two-way contract to a full-time deal, Dallas had an open two-way slot to give to Poulakidas.

Following his senior season at Yale, when Poulakidas led the Ivy League in scoring, he went undrafted and signed an Exhibit 10 deal with the Los Angeles Clippers. While he was

subsequently waived, that type of contract has a provision for G-League affiliation. The guard was designated as a G-League affiliate of the Clippers, allowing him to play for the San Diego Clippers, the minor league club for the Los Angeles team.

G-League affiliates are free agents. Any NBA, Euroleague, National Basketball League or otherwise professional team may offer a contract to an affiliated player, who would have no obligation to deny the offer.

The lack of exclusivity is what allowed Poulakidas to sign with Dallas, but his new contract is less flexible. Unless he is waived, Poulakidas will be with the Mavericks organization for the rest of the season.

For a full season contract, a player may play up to 50 games for the major league club, and receive a salary equal to half the rookie minimum, according to the NBA's collective bargaining agreement. In the 2025-2026 season, a two-way player would earn \$636,435 for a full season. If this contract is signed partway through the



YALE ATHLETICS
The former All-Ivy League sharpshooter made his NBA debut on Tuesday in a 90-117 loss to the Charlotte Hornets.

season, both the salary and game limit are prorated. Poulakidas' contract thus allows for up to 12 games on the Dallas Mavericks and a \$153,622 salary.

Dallas will play the Orlando Magic on Thursday and the Boston Celtics on Friday. Poulakidas wears No. 1 for Dallas.

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Bulldogs to host Princeton, honor three seniors in final home game

MEN’S BASKETBALL

BY BRODY GILKISON
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The Yale men's basketball team (22-5, 10-3 Ivy) is set to host the Princeton Tigers (9-19, 5-8 Ivy) on Saturday for the team's final home game of the season.

Having already clinched the regular season Ivy League championship, the game will be a chance for one final tuneup before the team heads north to Ithaca, New York, with hopes of punching their ticket to March Madness for the third straight year.

While this weekend's game holds no significance for conference seeding, which was finalized last weekend, the events leading up to the game may be the highlight of the day. Three seniors — guard Devon Arlington '26, forward Casey Simmons '26 and team captain Nick Townsend '26 — will be honored on the court alongside their families.

"I'm really grateful and blessed to have been part of this team and to attend a place like Yale," Arlington

wrote to the News. "It's been an amazing experience the past four years, and I couldn't have done it without my teammates, coaches, family, and everyone who's supported me along the way."

Last spring, the senior class of John Poulakidas '25, Bez Mbeng '25, Jack Molloy '25 and Teo Rice '25 set the school record for most wins as a class, having won 85 games in four years. Now, this senior class will own the new record, having won 87 games already, with plenty of opportunities ahead of them to increase that number.

In this the class of 2026's first season, the Bulldogs fell to Princeton in the Ivy League championship and were left out of the Big Dance. Since then, Yale has advanced to the NCAA tournament each of the past two seasons and is currently the favorite to represent the Ivy League once more this year.

"We're excited to play Princeton at home since we lost to them," Simmons said, referring to a January game in which the Bulldogs fell, 60-76. "We're trying to make the necessary strides towards winning the Ivy tournament so we can



LIZA KAUFMAN, PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR
After the men's basketball team already clinched its second consecutive Ivy League championship, three seniors will be recognized before a matchup with Princeton on Saturday.

make it back to the NCAA tournament. And beating Princeton on our senior night is the first step."

Yale tips off against Princeton at 2 p.m. on Saturday at the John J. Lee Amphitheater.

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Bulldogs to face Princeton in final regular-season game

WOMEN’S BASKETBALL

BY TANNER BATTLE
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YALE ATHLETICS
The women's basketball team will travel down to Princeton to play its last game of the regular season on Saturday.

an improvement from their last matchup, when the margin was 27 points.

Yale outscored Columbia in the first quarter 16-12 but could not hold the lead after that in the second quarter. The Lions extended their margin in the third quarter, outscoring the Bulldogs by 18 points. The Elis were unable to make up the deficit in the fourth quarter.

In the Bulldogs' last faceoff against the Tigers, they lost to Princeton, 50-76, due to a below-average scoring night by Ciniya Moore '28 and Capstraw.

Princeton has the top-scoring offense in the Ivy League, averaging 73 points per game, while Yale averages 58 points per game. The Bulldogs will need to try to keep the Tigers' offense at bay and have an above-average scoring night in order to pull out a win.

While the Elis have had an underwhelming season in Ivy League play, they have a chance to get redemption against the league's top team. However, this game will be even more difficult, considering that Princeton will have home-court advantage over Yale.

Yale will play Princeton at 2 p.m. on Saturday in Princeton.

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