Mason Marcellus hits 100-point threshold

By AMANDA DRONZEK
Copy Editor

Quinnipiac men's ice hockey junior winger Mason Marcellus notched his 100th career point on Feb. 6 in a 9-1 drubbing against Brown University.

"I actually didn't know it was coming up," Marcellus said. "Once I scored, (freshman forward Ethan Wyttenbach) came back to the bench and was hugging me, and I was a little confused."

Had Marcellus known how close he was to the milestone, he might have celebrated more — and maybe even dabbed for his mother.

"She always wants me to dab when I score," he said. "That would've been the perfect one for me to dab for."

The assistant captain has had two consecutive 35+ point seasons and is headed toward a third with 28, as of publication.

During his rookie campaign, Marcellus led all ECAC freshmen with 0.92 goals per game and was Quinnipiac's most productive offensive player with a +34 rating, earning him 2024 ECAC All-Rookie honors.

Marcellus, undrafted, was invited to the Nashville Predators' development camp ahead of a career-best sophomore season.

The Greely, Ontario, native started all 38 games with an equal number of points, and led the Bobcats with 28 assists for an ECAC Second Team All-Conference nod.

In a season where Quinnipiac has just five losses and is ranked No. 5 in the country — it hasn't cracked the top tier since the 2023-24 preseason, where it was No. 3 following a national title — Marcellus remains a core veteran in a highly anticipated seventh straight NCAA Tournament berth.


TYLER MIGNAULT/CHRONICLE

'Change the narrative'

Quinnipiac men's lacrosse looks to rewrite the script in 2026

By EMILY MARQUIS
Associate Sports Editor

For any other team, winning just four games in a single season, and only three in conference play, would mean a year to forget.

However, when one of those wins is in the playoffs and pushes transition year Bobcats squad to the second round of the MAAC Tournament, perhaps the "down" season is an omen of things to come.

Eighth-year head coach Mason Poli seems to think so, and his team, which was ranked No. 4 in the MAAC Preseason Poll, is right behind him.

"After what we consider a down year last year, they definitely had some motivation to kind of rewrite our history," Poli said.

That history has its share of ups and downs in recent memory. Two years ago, the Bobcats were making a name for themselves in the regular season. They capped off the season 9-5, ranked No. 20 nationally midway through the year. Yet, Quinnipiac's season ended in heartbreaking fashion in the first round of the MAAC playoffs.

Last year, a subpar regular season was capped with an unlikely upset against the No. 3 team in the MAAC, the Canisius Golden Griffins.

Now it's all about putting the two performances, 2024's regular season and 2025's postseason, together to build something the program hasn't seen in a decade: a MAAC championship victory.

As the season starts, the Bobcats look to be in a good place to achieve that goal.

It starts with continuity. Offensively, the Bobcats were relatively young in 2025 but return 10 of the 11 top goalscorers from last year's campaign. But these athletes are far from the group that often struggled to put balls in the back of the net.

"It's a lot of the same names, but they're different people from day one a season ago," Poli said. "You see the composure they bring to the field now, and the relationships they have, the way they play off each other."

That offensive firepower is also aided on the coaching side. The Bobcats brought in assistant coach Matt Rice from Ohio Wesleyan University, who's already made a mark on the offense and team dynamic.

Poli credits Rice's personality as a key factor in connecting with the team, focusing on "subtle changes" to the Bobcat offense.

One thing that the Bobcats aren't keen on changing is junior attacker Nate Watson. His team-leading 29 goals and 45 points as a sophomore propelled the Bobcats for much of the season, and Quinnipiac is counting on his offensive production again in his junior campaign.

Poli commended the New Brunswick native's ability to direct the Bobcat offense last year, along with the finishing ability that kept him at the top of the Bobcat scoresheet. In Quinnipiac's opening game against the UMass Lowell Riverhawks this season, that prowess around the net was evident. Watson's eight points tied his career high from last season, with his five goals leading all Bobcat scorers.


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For Watson, this new season provides the chance to just continue that maturation as a player and find a greater physicality within his game.

Another consistent star that will be critical for the Bobcats to return to the MAAC tournament is graduate student goaltender Mason Oak.

Even with the laundry list of accolades Oak has collected in his time sporting the Bobcat blue and gold, his impact on the field goes beyond his stellar netminding. That familiar presence in net extends to his on-field communication, and makes the job of Quinnipiac's defenders that much easier. The defense knows what shots the 2024 MAAC Defensive Player of the Year likes to see, and can adjust accordingly.

"It allows us to play a certain style," Poli said.

But the Bobcats' strengths lie beyond the tried and true parts of last season. Problems that surfaced in 2025, such as injuries on the Quinnipiac backend, are becoming strengths. The transition season, although disappointing in result, facilitated new personal combinations that will drive a staunch defense core to continue improving.

One combination to look out for: sophomore defender Joe Konesco and junior long-stick midfielder Glenn Platania.

"We view (them) as the number one cover guys, so to not have to slide and support them, we're really excited," Poli said.

Continuing to settle into the defense schemes of second-year assistant coach Logan Tousaw will also benefit the Bobcats' defensive numbers, and the changes he's made will keep opposing offenses from figuring the squad out.

"He probably changed a little bit more in some of our defensive slide packages," Poli said. "...even some of the variability we're now able to bring on the defensive end."

There is a lot to be excited about for the upcoming season of Quinnipiac men's lacrosse, but one thing is for sure; the Bobcats don't plan on backing themselves into a playoff spot the same way again. With a new postseason format that only includes the top five teams in the standings, Quinnipiac's 2-6 conference performance last season likely won't cut it again.

With the jumps Quinnipiac has made in the offseason, and the potential this young team has to take the next step, there's no reason the top seed in the MAAC tournament is out of the question.

The team's 15-12 victory against UMass Lowell on Feb. 6, while not a conference bout, is a step in a positive direction for the Bobcats. The next step is winning its first game at home since 2024. Quinnipiac will have the chance to achieve that goal on Friday, Feb. 13, against the UMass Amherst Minutemen. Face-off is set for 2 p.m.

Quinnipiac women's lacrosse ready to finish what it started

By COOPER WOODWARD
Associate Sports Editor

When looking at the 2025 Quinnipiac women's lacrosse team in isolation, one sees a lot of ugly. Eight losses and a blowout defeat in round two of the MAAC tournament. But looking at last seasons record and ending, there is a significant season-to-season improvement.

After a two-win 2024 season, the team made great strides on offense and defense to the tune of a 10 win 2025. Now, in 2026, the squad is looking to build off their improvements beyond the quarterfinals of the MAAC tournament.

"We're gonna do really well, if not better than last year," senior attacker Cate Bendowski said.

Let's take a look at how the Bobcats can do exactly that.

SCHEDULE

Kicking off the season, the Bobcats have eight non-conference opponents, six of them on the road, beginning with Hofstra University and ending with Furman University. They will also meet Yale University on Feb. 17 and Bryant University on March 4, both of whom are programs who have been perennially successful in their respective conferences.

The step up in competition for the Bobcats is by design, as head coach Jordan Christopher believes it will better prepare the squad for the season they want to have.

"It's going to test us for battle," Christopher said. "Hopefully we've learned a lot more of the lessons and we're ready for what's to come."

Quinnipiac opens its conference schedule against the Niagara Purple Eagles, a game that is still on the minds of all 17 returning members of the Bobcat squad.

After going over two decades since their last win vs the Purple Eagles, the Bobcats finally snapped their losing streak last season in wild fashion, with sophomore goaltender Shannon Alden making a foot-save in the final minute of the contest to give Quinnipiac the win.

The Bobcats will also look to avenge past losses, with four of their final five games being against teams who got the better of them in 2025. One of those squads is their in-state rival from down I-95, the Sacred Heart Pioneers.

While the Pioneers took the first meeting, the two teams met again in the first round of the MAAC tournament. That time around the Bobcats came out on top, due in part to offensive explosions from Bendowski and fellow senior attacker Mia Delmond. The two combined for seven of the Bobcats 16 goals while assisting on three more.

"We were playing with such a swag to us," Delmond said.

Games and performances like that will be crucial in Quinnipiac's hunt for its first conference championship in its history.

THE YOUTH

In their single largest recruiting class in program history, the Bobcats welcome 17 fresh faces to Hamden, including 12 freshmen. Five of those freshmen will join the midfield group, four will join the defense, two are goaltenders and one is an attacker.

While some of the responsibility of adjusting the new players to Quinnipiac's culture falls on Christopher, the majority falls on fellow teammates and leaders on the field. This year's group of captains are taking this challenge head on.

"Every practice I try to help build their confidence," Bendowski said. "I give them little critiques on what they can do to get better because, as a player, I appreciate that a lot."

As expected, there are a lot of nerves in joining a new team for the very first time. You're in a new environment with people you don't know which is bound to create nerves and anxiety. The solution, rely on the teammates who have been here before.

"The biggest thing about playing a team sport is trust and respect," Delmond said. "If you're able to trust the people that you're with every single day at practice, the games are gonna be a lot less stressful and a lot more fun."

Alden and sophomore defender Anna Givens are perfect examples of high level performances from the younger players. Givens finished her freshman campaign fifth in total goals scored with 21, total points with 28 and shots with 39.

On the other end of the field, Alden became the primary goalie for the squad and a dominant one at that, recording 169 saves in 18 games between the pipes.

Staying loose and relaxed will be key to getting this year's freshman class to follow in the footsteps of their predecessors and contribute at a high level to the Bobcat squad.

MENTALITY

On paper this season looks destined to follow years past with steady and consistent improvement. The Bobcats are defining their desire to do just that in one word: "Belief"

"They just have a belief in themselves and a belief in our program that we're destined to do something great," Christopher said. "It's gonna take every one of them to do it, but they're ready"

Whether on or off the field, the Bobcats are entering the season with belief in themselves, each other and the culture that they have built. One defined by three pillars: passion, grit and discipline.

"I hope those three things are on display every time they see us," Christopher said. "We're a team that is going to play to the final whistle, no matter if we're up 10 or down 10."

The Bobcats will kick off their season at home, taking on Hofstra University on Saturday, Feb. 14. Face-off is set for 12 p.m.