Mid-semester round-up: spring sports start strong as winter sports wind down

By CLAIRE FRANKLAND
Sports Editor

With Quinnipiac's winter athletics closing its 2025-26 chapter and spring sports getting into full swing, Bobcat Nation has seen its fair share of records and milestones.

WINTER SPORTS

On the ice, men's and women's ice hockey programs have made a name for themselves this season, both reaching the Regional Finals of the NCAA Tournament.

For the men's program, the team captured its sixth consecutive regular season title with Quinnipiac being the only team in the ECAC to claim six straight titles. Additionally, the Bobcats made their seventh consecutive appearance in the NCAA Tournament, standing as the longest active streak by any team in the nation.

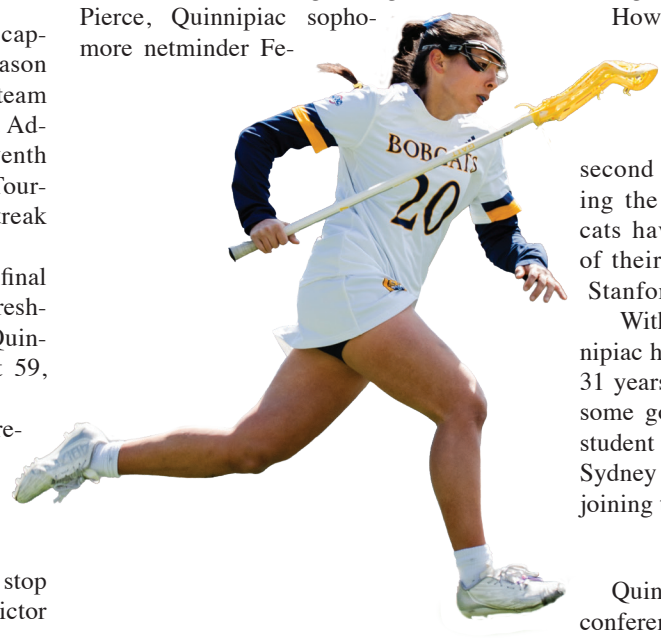
In the Sioux Falls Regional Semifinal matchup against the Providence Friars, freshman forward Ethan Wyttenbach tied Quinnipiac's single-season points record, at 59, coming off an empty net goal.

While he was unable to set a new record, Wyttenbach joins former Bobcat forwards Collin Graf '23 and Bryan Leitch '09 at the impressive point total in only his freshman campaign.

And the Bobcat record-tying didn't stop there, as senior forward and captain Victor Czerneckianair tied former Bobcat forward Travis St. Denis '16 for the most NCAA playoff games played as a Bobcat, at six.

Looking at the women's squad, the Bobcats captured their first ECAC title in a decade at the inaugural Lake Placid, N.Y. Women's ECAC Championship weekend.

With the title, Quinnipiac earned an automatic bid into the NCAA Tournament, where it landed in Madison, Wisco. for regionals. In a dominant semifinal game against Franklin Pierce, Quinnipiac sophomore netminder Felicia Frank stood like a brick wall in net, and in doing so set the Bobcats' single-season save record.



In the final game of her sophomore season, Frank would set the record, recording over 1,000 saves and solidifying her spot in program history.

Switching over to the court, both men's and women's basketball appeared in the MAAC Tournament, both coming up short of taking the conference title back to Hamden.

However, the women's squad's season wasn't done yet, as the Bobcats advanced to the Women's Basketball Invitational Tournament.

Quinnipiac would make it to the second round of the tournament — marking the first time in eight years the Bobcats have won a postseason game outside of their conference – before falling to the Stanford Cardinal.

With the recent shocking news of Quinnipiac head coach Tricia Fabbri retiring after 31 years at the helm of women's basketball, some good news can be found in graduate student guard Jackie Grisdale, senior guard Sydney Ryan and junior forward Anna Foley joining the 1,000-point club.

SPRING SPORTS

Quinnipiac softball is off to its best start in conference play since joining the MAAC in 2014, currently posting a 11-3 record.

Coming into the season ranked No. 7 in the MAAC Preseason Coaches Poll, the Bobcats have managed to come up with some big wins, including snagging a three-game series from Iona (who was ranked No. 4 in the preseason poll).

Moreover, the Bobcats' stats speak for themselves, leading the MAAC in batting average with .323, while senior outfielder Mac Davis leads the conference with a .500 batting average.

Shifting over to the court, women's tennis remains undefeated on home turf, going 6-0, as the squad opened up conference play against Sacred Heart with a 6-1 win March 20.

In her 11th season at the helm of the Bobcats, Quinnipiac head coach Paula Miller recently recorded her 150th career win, following a 7-0 win over the University of New Haven March 21.

On the turf, two women's lacrosse athletes have reached the 100th goal milestone: senior attackers Mia Delmond and Catie Bendowski.

Delmond reached the milestone in the Bobcats' 15-9 loss to the Yale Bulldogs Feb. 17, where Delmond recorded two back-to-back goals in the matchup. The Rockville Centre, N.Y. native has 26 goals, as of publication, bringing her career total to 124.

Bendowski reached the milestone in the Bobcats' 14-13 loss to the Niagara Purple Eagles March 21.

QUINN O'NEILL/CHRONICLE

Closing the book

A lookback on Quinnipiac men's ice hockey's 50th season

By ALEXANDRA MARTINAKOVA
Editor-in-Chief

When the clock ran out in the NCAA Regional Finals against North Dakota Saturday night, it didn't just mark the end of the game, it marked the end of a golden anniversary for Quinnipiac's men's ice hockey program — and definitely not the end it wanted.

It was an up and down season for the Bobcats, with records broken and tied left and right as well as some really bad losses.

Despite a decent start to its season, Quinnipiac fell to the Yale Bulldogs for the first time in eight years. That loss would almost carry over and set the tone for some of the bigger games the Bobcats faced and their outcomes.

One day the Bobcats are stomping all over then-No. 13 Boston University in a 6-2 win and the other they fall 6-1 to then-No. 11 Cornell in their first home loss in over a year. This inconsistency is what ultimately led to their demise in the NCAA Tournament.

"It's just perplexing, we were so awesome on Thursday, confident, passionate," head coach Rand Pecknold said following the loss to North Dakota."

"We were younger than we normally are," Pecknold continued. "We're a young team, immature at times. I got caught off guard by that."

That back and forth characterized the entire season. As Pecknold stressed throughout, the team had a lot of maturing to do and it clearly didn't manage to grow up enough in time.

On paper that makes sense. The roster was made up of 10 freshmen, the largest incoming class since 2019.

All eyes were on the nation's leader in points, freshman forward Ethan Wyttenbach. The 19-year old true freshman came in with a big promise and delivered in every shape of form. Thirty-five games into the season he broke the program's single season points record by a first-year. In the NCAA Regional Semifinals, he tied the program's single season points record at 59 with his empty netter for his last point in his freshman season.

His accolades do not end there. Wyttenbach was named ECAC Rookie of the Year and was a runner-up for ECAC Player of the Year as well. He is still a finalist for the Hobey Baker Award as well.

His stellar season caught the attention of every fan of college hockey. No official information has been released yet whether the Calgary Flames draftee will be staying in Hamden or signing as of publication.

"He finishes plays," Pecknold said on Wyttenbach following a win over Sacred Heart Jan. 23. "He's got that ability to finish, that's next level."

He led the team both with his 25 goals and 34 assists.

He wasn't the only standout amongst the first-year class. His linemate Markus Vidicek was right behind him with 20 goals on his own and forward Antonin Verreault was second in points with 40.

"It's an outstanding class," Pecknold said. "It's got some depth to it. Obviously we've had some pivotal kids that have come through and established our program, but this has to be as good as any, if not the best."

While not a freshman, junior forward Mason Marcellus is a name that stood out this season as well. Earning his 100th point with his goal against Brown Feb. 6, he ended all three years in Hamden with a 35+ points season and since he already announced his intention to come back for his senior season, it wouldn't be surprising if he bore the "C" on his chest this fall.

While the forwards drew flashy attention, on the other side of the blue line lay a little quieter names that contributed a lot to this program this year.

Sophomore defender Elliott Groenewold stepped up this year, earning himself the title of the ECAC Best Defensive Defenseman as well as a place on the NCAA All-Regional Team.

The Bruins prospect led the NCAA with an impressive +39 plus-minus rating and recorded 49 blocked shots on the season.

While Groenewold might or might not be leaving Hamden — as Pecknold joked at the beginning of the season "if the Bruins can let me have (Groenewold and sophomore forward Chris Pelosi) for at least another year after this I'd appreciate that" — there are some names that skated in the navy and gold for the last time on the Sioux Falls ice.

Senior forwards captain Victor Czerneckianair and Anthony Cipollone spent all four years as Bobcats, and alongside Alex Power are the last remnants of the 2023 National Championship team. These three were also the only seniors that did not transfer in but spent their whole careers in Hamden, and their departure hit hard for the remaining players.

"I mean, these guys are the epitome of winners and they set the standard for this program," sophomore forward Tyler Borgula said following the season-ending loss. "From the bottom of my heart and from everyone else's heart, these guys mean the world to us and we look up to them."

Four year seniors are becoming a dying breed, with the changes to the transfer portal and new NIL rules. But these guys showed how staying true to your roots can be pivotal to the culture of a college team.

"It's been everything," Cipollone said through tears after his last game. "All my best friends are from Quinnipiac and I'm just very grateful that Rand gave me the opportunity to come and play here."

What draws the biggest question is the future of the Quinnipiac netminders, juniors Dylan Silverstein and Matej Marinov. With the signing of the San Jose Sharks prospect Christian Kirsch from the Kitchener Rangers (OHL), one of the three goaltenders Quinnipiac currently rosters will most likely have to say goodbye to the navy and gold.

While freshman Sam Scopa appeared in two games for less than 10 minutes, Silverstein and Marinov have been splitting their time in the net the entire season, for better or worse. They both appeared in the final game for the Bobcats, letting in three and two goals respectively.

Silverstein ends the season with a 10-7-1 record while Marinov posts 17-5-2. But while Marinov has been the more consistent starter this year, it was Silverstein who started both games against Clarkson in the ECAC Quarterfinals and the NCAA Regionals.

Will that impact the decision of who will have to transfer out, if anyone, only time will tell.

The future is not set yet for the Bobcats. The transfer portal opens April 13 and stays open for 15 days. Time will tell who Pecknold will grab out of it, and who will say goodbye to Hamden.

But despite the heartbreaking end, this season left its record breaking mark one way or another. Now it's up to the future class to build up on what was left behind for them.

And who knows, hopefully there will be a couple more national championships to talk about in the next 50 years.