

SPORTS

“Carpe diem. Seize the day, boys. Make your lives extraordinary.”
DEAD POETS SOCIETY BY JOHN KEATING

FOOTBALL: Montana State squad that foiled Yale goes on to win playoffs

BY BRODY GILKISON
STAFF REPORTER

Last Monday, the No. 2-seeded Montana State Bobcats (14-2, 8-0 Big Sky) took down the unseeded Illinois State Redbirds (12-5, 5-3 MVFC) in breathtaking fashion to win the Football Championship Subdivision national championship, the Bobcats’ fourth in program history.

Many Yale faithful may remember the Bobcats’ first game of their playoff run at home in Bozeman, Montana, where the Bulldogs held their own in their second-round matchup in the inaugural year of Ivy League participation in the postseason tournament.

“Yale is the one team I wouldn’t want the Bobcats to have to play again,” one Bobcat fan wrote on X. “That’s a salty bunch of physical dudes that are well coached.”

Montana State entered the matchup being favored by nearly 30 points before the game against an unseeded Yale football team. However, the Bulldogs fought tooth and nail down to the final seconds of the game before coming one score short of tying it up.

Throughout the Bobcats’ 14-game win streak that eventually ended with their hoisting the hardware, the Yale game has been called one of Montana State’s toughest.

The Bobcats only beat the Elis by eight points and secured victories in each of their next two playoff games with a greater margin of victory. After beating Yale, the Bobcats went on to dismantle SF Austin 44-28 in the next round, before spanking the Montana Grizzlies 48-23 in their semifinal matchup.

Three straight postseason victories brought Montana State to Nashville for the national championship game, which they won in jaw-dropping fashion, with quarterback Justin Lamson connecting with Taco Dowler in overtime for a game-winning touchdown. The Bobcats’ 35-34 win over the Redbirds brought the 2025-26 FCS season to a close.

Yale still holds the most college football national championships of all time with 18, and is the only team in history to go 16-0 in a season, which it did in 1894.

Contact
BRODY GILKISON at
brody.gilkison@yale.edu.



Last week, the Montana State Bobcats defeated the Illinois State Redbirds in Nashville to win the Football Championship Subdivision playoffs — to which Yale had earned the Ivy League’s first automatic bid.

LIZA KAUFMAN / PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR

SQUASH: Yale to open Ivy League play against Princeton and Penn

BY RACHEL MAK
STAFF REPORTER

This Saturday, the women’s (1-1, 0-0 Ivy) and men’s (2-1, 0-0 Ivy) squash teams will face Princeton in their first Ivy League games of the season. Then, on Sunday, the teams will square off against a highly touted Penn squad.

The No. 8 nationally ranked women’s team will take on No. 4 Princeton (4-1, 0-0 Ivy), a team that the Elis haven’t beaten since 2014. In their last matchup, the Tigers had a near-perfect performance, only dropping two games in their 9-0 victory. Sophomore Meha Shah ’28 was one of the two Bulldogs to take a game off of her opponent, and she will return this year in the third position.

On Sunday, Shah and her teammates will take the court against No. 2 Penn (7-0, 0-0 Ivy), a squad that has only dropped three matches this season. Two of those were at the hands of the University of Virginia (6-3, 0-0 MASC), a team that beat Yale on Nov. 16.

In the Bulldogs’ lone regular season matchup against the Quakers last year, Yale lost 8-1, with Whitney Taylor ’26 securing the Bulldogs’ only win. Taylor returns this season as the captain of this year’s squad, and she is looking to rally her teammates around the challenge of facing two fierce opponents.

“Our team is excited by the opportunity to compete against two top programs and fight through every rally,” Taylor wrote to the News. “That mentality has been our standard, and it’s what we’ll bring to every match this season.”

Meanwhile, the No. 5 Yale men’s team will face No. 8 Princeton (2-2, 0-0 Ivy) on Saturday. The two teams have traded wins since the 2017 season, with Yale emerging victorious in their most recent matchup in Philadelphia last year to advance to the College Squash Association National Championship.

The Bulldogs had a 5-4 loss to the Tigers in the 2024-25 regular season but exacted their revenge when it mattered most

in postseason play. In Yale’s 6-3 victory on March 8, Tad Carney ’26, Lachlan Sutton ’27, Rohan Arya Gondi ’28 and Rishi Srivastava ’28 took down their opponents and will all be back in action for the Bulldogs this weekend.

Sunday’s opponent, No. 1 ranked Penn (7-0, 0-0 Ivy), has started the season off hot, having won five of their seven matches this season 9-0. Last season, Yale and Penn met twice, with the Quakers coming out on top both times. Despite losing 8-1 in their first matchup at the beginning of the season, the Bulldogs fought back hard when the teams faced each other in the national championship. Although Yale ended up falling 6-3, the team put up a good fight and showed growth, ending the season with their best finish since 2016.

Now, after putting in hours of work on the practice courts over winter break and coming off a 9-0 victory over MIT on Jan. 13, the Bulldogs will look to snap Penn’s undefeated streak.

“We feel very ready following



This weekend, the women’s and men’s squash teams will take on Princeton and Penn at home.

YALE ATHLETICS

our training camp and match with MIT earlier this week,” Carney wrote to the News. “This is one of our biggest weekends of the regular season, and we can’t wait to start Ivy League play against Princeton on Saturday.”

Yale will host Princeton in the Brady Squash Center on Saturday at 12 p.m.

Contact
RACHEL MAK at
rachel.mak@yale.edu .

MEN’S TENNIS: Yale to open spring season against Notre Dame

BY REMI CLARK-REDSTAR
STAFF REPORTER

The Yale men’s tennis team will hit the courts at the University of Notre Dame on Friday for their first competition of the spring season.

With a record of zero wins to one loss against Notre Dame, the

Elis are looking to claw out victory against the Fighting Irish in what will be a heated competition to kick off the season. The Bulldogs’ spring season opener will also mark the transition to team-based scores instead of individual scores and rankings.

Last semester, the Elis competed in an individual

format, and each win or loss affected individual players’ or doubles teams’ NCAA rankings. Going into the spring half of the season, wins shift to affecting overall team rankings.

“Now in the spring, all our matches are team matches,” team captain Eric Li ’26 said. “Although we play our own matches, we

are focusing on staying together, sharing the energy in between courts and competing consistently throughout the entire match.”

Evening the score

In the first match in program history against Notre Dame last year, Yale fell in a tight 3-4 loss. The Bulldogs won two out of three doubles matches and three of seven singles matches.

against Ivy League teams and the NCAA championship — occurring at the end.

The team has been preparing for tournament play since the fall, paying particular attention to doubles. The doubles lineup has been fluid thus far, with different players being paired with each other from tournament to tournament. Strategically, emphasis was placed on playing aggressively and making use of net play and volleying.

Still, the Bulldogs managed to notch notable wins, with Vignesh Gogineni ’26 defeating the then No. 28-ranked player in singles, and Gogineni and Edward Liao ’28 beating the then No. 78-ranked doubles team. Jim Ji ’27 and Jason Shuler ’27 also clinched victory in straight sets over another Notre Dame doubles team.

“Notre Dame is a good ACC team that is consistently ranked in the top 50 nationally,” interim head coach Eduardo Ugalde wrote in an email to the News. “We lost a close match to them at their facility last year, so this year we are looking to take the win in our home courts. We will need to compete really hard and have great focus on all matches.”

A victory for the Bulldogs on Friday would not only even the record to 1-1 but would also place the total wins to losses ratio in the Bulldogs’ favor.

“We want to get out to fast starts in doubles,” Li said. “We worked a lot on doubles in the fall and are looking forward to seeing the work pay off.”

Ugalde and Li identified Liao and Ethan Chung ’29 as particular players to keep an eye on. Both had strong showings last semester. Liao reached the semifinals in the Ivy League tournament and Chung debuted undefeated in singles and doubles at the Yale Invitational.

Seniors Gogineni and Li both made it to the finals of the New England Regional Tournament this past season — Gogineni in singles, Li in doubles. Gogineni qualified for the NCAA singles championship, and Li qualified for the ITA sectional championship.

The season opener against Notre Dame will take place at the Cullman-Heyman Tennis Center on Friday.

Looking ahead

This spring, the men’s tennis team will play 24 different events between now and May, with the most important matchups — those

Contact
REMI CLARK-REDSTAR at
remi.clark-redstar@yale.edu .



The team is optimistic about the upcoming spring season and is aiming for a championship run.

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