SPORTS

"I remember being a little kid walking down the grocery aisle seeing athletes on these cereal boxes."
NATHAN CHEN '24 OLYMPIC-GOLD-WINNING FIGURE SKATER

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COLLEEN MURPHY



SOFTBALL
BY JULIA ROSENBLATT
CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

The four graduating Yale softball players have seen their team through a period of growth.

After finishing third in the conference their first-year season, the Bulldogs rebounded in 2024. Their sophomore season began with a three-game series win over Harvard, after which the team continued to dominate. That year, the softball program picked up statement victories over Brown and Columbia and swept Cornell and the University of Pennsylvania en route to earning a share of the Ivy League regular season title. Pitcher Emma Taylor '26 was named to the All-Ivy Second Team at the conclusion of the season.

Though the Bulldogs picked up identical 7-14 records in 2025 and 2026, the four current seniors put up strong performances in both seasons.

Taylor received All-Ivy Honorable Mention in 2026 and finished her career with 304 strikeouts, while Libby Peoples '26 showcased perseverance after overcoming a mid-career injury. Peoples came back stronger this past year to be named first-team All-Ivy, an honor she also received in her rookie season. Ava Kang '26 went six-for-six on stolen bases in 2025 and batted three straight multi-hit games against Dartmouth in 2026. Rounding out the senior roster, Mariah Niday '26 notched her first career hit against the University of New Haven this past season.

Off the field, the class of 2026 has fostered a sense of camaraderie within the team. In a phone interview, Ava Kainrath '29 said the seniors made her feel welcome before she had even set foot on campus, offering dorm videos, packing lists and advice to the first years to ease their transition.

TRACK & FIELD
BY WALTER ROYAL
SPORTS EDITOR

As Yale's track and field teams prepare for the upcoming Ivy Championships, the class of 2026's journey stands out as a testament to resilience.

The now-graduating seniors joined a program that had finished seventh in the women's and eighth in the men's divisions at the outdoor Ivies in 2022. Both teams struggled to bounce back, finishing last in the conference championships in both 2023 and 2024.

But in an interview with the News, captain Andrew Farr '26 emphasized the importance of perseverance during such discouraging times.

"It's really easy to get discouraged when things aren't going your way, when you are doing the right things, when you're sleeping right and eating right," Farr said. "But I think inevitably, if you trust the process and work hard, at some point you will be successful."

The teams' hard work began to bear fruit in 2025, when the women's team notched a fifth-place finish at the Ivy Championships. The following winter, they repeated that finish, and the men's team also moved up from the bottom rung.

Now in uncharted territory, the class of 2026 looks to improve on these marks at the 2026 Ivy League Heptagonal Outdoor Track & Field Championships.

Captain Makayla White '26 said he's proud of the team's progress.

"I've seen us from the very beginning, when we were at the bottom, and now leaving us in a better spot than I found it is something I'm going to be really proud of," White said in an interview with the News.

SAM RUBIN



LIZA KAUFMAN / PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR



BASEBALL
BY JUSTIN LEAHY
STAFF REPORTER

Captain Davis Hanson '26 watched Yale's 2025 opening series from his phone, with his knee strapped into a brace. A week prior, he had torn his ACL in a fluke play at practice. All he could think about at the moment were his teammates and the effect his injury could have on their season, he said in a phone interview.

As the first incoming class of head coach Brian Hamm's tenure, the class of 2026 had their work cut out for them. They had 23 losses across their first two years. But in 2025, while Hanson was undergoing rehab, the Bulldogs won 31 games and their first Ivy regular season title in eight years behind a rejuvenated pitching staff. They now leave Yale bound for the Ivy Tournament for the second straight year.

This season, with starting pitchers Tate Evans '26 and Daniel Cohen '26, Hamm and Hanson transformed the Bulldogs into an Ivy powerhouse. Evans hadn't made a collegiate start until this spring and now leads the team in ERA. Cohen, the soft-tossing righty, has had a stellar season in his own right, winning 6 games and throwing a Maddux — a shutout in fewer than 100 pitches — against Ivy-favorite Penn.

Hanson's team now has sights set on Omaha, the site of the College Baseball World Series. To get there, they will need to win the Ivy Tournament, a bid to which they have already clinched. The Ivy League Baseball Tournament will be held May 15 through May 18 at the site of the No. 1 seed.

LACROSSE
BY LIZA KAUFMAN
SPORTS EDITOR

In a full-circle final year, the nine seniors of men's lacrosse led their program's return to the NCAA tournament for the first time since 2023.

During the seniors' first season, the team posted a 9-6 record, steamrolling Cornell 22-15 in the Ivy League tournament semifinals and earning an at-large bid to the NCAA tournament.

The following season, the Bulldogs improved to 11-4 behind a seven-game win streak, including a 17-15 Ivy opener victory over Harvard. David Anderson '26 started in all 15 games and finished the season with 36 goals, the team's second-most. Patrick Pisano '26 anchored the defense with 53 ground balls and led the team with 21 caused turnovers.

After a challenging 2025 season, the seniors led one of the nation's strongest bounce-back campaigns during their final year.

This season, William Sheehan '26 recorded 17 goals, including a four-goal game against Dartmouth. Captain Pisano finished third in the conference in caused turnovers per game. He posted 41 ground balls and 22 caused turnovers, also notching his first collegiate goal against Dartmouth on the way. Meanwhile, Konrad Miklaszewski '26 and Eric Platten '26 provided depth to the defensive unit.

Yale finished this season ranked 11th nationally with a 9-6 record. After a strong season marked by upsets over Boston University, Harvard and defending national champion Cornell, the team earned an at-large bid to the NCAA tournament, marking a full-circle moment for the seniors.

The Elis twice pushed Princeton, the No. 1 seed in the NCAA tournament, to the wire, and Syracuse barely survived the Yale squad in a 16-15 NCAA tournament thriller.

Luke Michalik '27 wrote in a text message to the News that the seniors "have shown us the way and created a unique culture that will last beyond their time here."

LIZA KAUFMAN / PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR



YALE ATHLETICS



SAILING
BY WALTER ROYAL
SPORTS EDITOR

The Yale sailing program has enjoyed perhaps the most success of any of Yale's athletic teams, having won 27 national championships and boasting eight College Sailor of the Year awards.

Both the women's and coed teams have triumphed during their four years in New Haven. Immediately after the senior class arrived, the women won the 2023 Team Race National Championship, with Sarah Moeder '26 crewing in the title regatta. Skipper Stephan Baker '26 drove a boat in the coed team's 4th-place finish at the coed version of the event. These early successes set the groundwork for the class of 2026's continued contributions over the next three seasons.

The coed squad reached the No. 1 position in the Sail1Design rankings during the spring 2024 season, while the women's team reclaimed the No. 1 spot that they had lost during fall 2023. The teams placed third and second in team racing, respectively. The 2025 title once again narrowly eluded the Bulldogs. Both teams finished second in the nation for team racing.

While the coed team pushed through adversity in spring 2026, the class of 2026 got one last ride on the women's side. Moeder, Julia Miller '26 and Carmen Berg '26 played instrumental roles in a run from the No. 4 rank at the season's outset to the title regatta. The Elis fell one race short, however, taking second in the team race championship.