

Yale Rugby Club

Fall 2005

Upcoming Fall 2005 Schedule

- 9/20** Connecticut
(scrimmage)
- 9/17** @ Amherst
- 9/25*** New Hampshire
- 10/1** @ Harvard
- 10/8**** Brown
- 10/15** @ Norwich
- 10/22** Playoffs: Week
I TBA
- 10/29** Playoffs: Semifi-
nal, Consolation, Rele-
gation Matches TBA
- 11/5** Playoffs: Final
Placement Match TBA
- 11/12** Northeast Re-
gional Playoffs or @
Princeton
- 11/19** Harvard

*Sunday match
**Match to be played at
New Haven Rugby pitch

Division I should come naturally for eager Elis

By Garan Geist

As fall practices commence, this year's Bulldogs look ahead to a very important fall season. With their long-awaited return to D-I rugby and the tougher competition that it brings, many outsiders could look at this as a transitional year for Yale. However, the team is looking not just to prove its mettle, but to make a statement.

Returning 11 of 15 starters from last year's D-II New England Champion squad, the Men of Eli could not have picked a better time to move up in the competitive ranks. The Bulldogs are further motivated by the fact that they have beaten 3 of their 5 conference opponents the last time they faced each other (having lost to Harvard and not played against Norwich recently). Add in an extended playoff format in which 4 teams advance, and Yale's postseason hopes look bright indeed.

However, the Bulldogs must avoid complacency and redouble recruiting efforts as the year begins. With a



The 2004-2005 Yale Rugby Club takes a moment to pose for a picture at the 2005 Ivy League Tournament.

separate B-side standings and championship being instituted this year, depth is more important than ever before. Because some D-I programs (notably Dartmouth and Army) have a C or even a D-side, it is crucial that Yale set and reach a goal of maintaining at least two full squads at each and every practice to stay on par with the rest of the competition.

Looking to the schedule, the team can point out several important dates. On September 17, the Bulldogs travel up to Amherst for their first taste of official Division-I action and hope to

kick off their season on the right foot. After returning home to face UNH, the Bulldogs then go on the road once again, this time traveling to Cambridge (10/1) to embarrass the Crimson in their own house. After two more weeks of league play, Yale then can look ahead to the beginning of the playoffs on October 22, before closing out the season with the traditional Yale-Harvard match the weekend before Thanksgiving, this year in New Haven. After that, it is time to gear up and get ready to host the Ivy Tournament, tentatively scheduled for April 8-9.

Recapping the Spring

By Sherman Wang

Coming off a defining 11-2 record for the fall season, Yale Rugby took to Payne Whitney Gym during the off-season to re-build their dominant physical prowess that helped the club advance into Division I for this upcoming year. New officers were elected to lead Yale Rugby into the new division: Robert "SARS" Smith, '06 will take charge on the field as next year's captain; Garan Geist, '06 will manage the club's operations as president; Ervin Yeo, '07 was elected treasurer, Sam Beutler, '07 was elected alumni secretary, and Sherman Wang, '07 was elected vice-president.

The spring season was kicked off in scorching heat on the rugby pitch of the Bahamas. With a sizable majority of the team touring the Bahaman islands, Yale rugby played two great games against the local club teams Bahaman Buccaneers (Loss: 10-5) and Nassau Cuckoo's (L: 25-24). Although the Bulldogs were short on starting players and rusty from the off-season, the Bahamas tour exposed the Yale team to a faster style of rugby and bigger, rougher guys. The tour would prove to be very useful in getting out kinks, learning new styles of play, and solidifying friendships within the Yale Rugby team.

On March 23rd, Yale hosted St. Cuthbert's Society (L: 10-0) of Durham University. Through inclement weather, both teams came out firing, but with several missed opportunities for the Bulldogs, St. Cuthbert pulled away with a 10-0 lead just as the game was called due to worsening weather conditions. Despite another loss in the beginning of the spring season, Yale proved its tenacity and ability to compete with solid interna-

tional teams. Later that evening, Yale Rugby gladly carried out its part as a member of the world rugby community, proving to be a cordial host by showing the visiting team a good time in the Elm City.

The following weekend, Yale Rugby finally got back into its dominant rhythm of play against Western Connecticut State University (Win: 49-17). Playing on artificial grass, both Yale's pack and backline were explosive, running faster, rucking harder, and playing with more synergy than their opponent. With a 49-17 win, the Yale team proved what coach Jan Pikul had said all along, "The forwards determine who will win the game, the backs determine by how much." With a great B-side game and rookies mixed into the A-side, Yale Rugby is sure to have a great future with upcoming talent.

On Saturday, April 9th, Yale traveled to Philadelphia to participate in the annual Ivy League Rugby Championship hosted this year by UPenn.

Seeded 4th, Yale proved its mettle against perennial powerhouse Dartmouth (L: 35-3) in the first round. Although unable to find a rhythm and eventually losing to Dartmouth by a misleading score of 35-3, Yale battled with a fierce defense and proved the team's ability to contend with one of the nation's best Division I teams. Following the first-round loss to Dartmouth, who would go on to win the tournament, Yale soundly defeated defending Ivy champions Princeton (W: 15-5) and Brown (W: 35-12). Although only securing the 5th seed for next year's tournament, which will be hosted here at Yale, the Bulldogs and Penn Quakers proved to be the tournament's most surprising teams, both of which will likely make a run at the Ivy title next year.

The Ivy League Tournament highlighted several advances for Yale Rugby. The club brought the largest squad to the tournament in recent

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The Yale Forwards dominate a scrum against former Ivy League Champion and Division I opponent Princeton in the 2005 Ivy League Tournament. The Bulldogs finished 5th in the tournament after a disappointing first round loss to Dartmouth.

Yale to Play Harvard in Reg. Season

By Rob Smith

Along with our transition to Division I this fall comes a new schedule and new opposition. One new regular season foe, however, has been and will remain Yale's bitter rival: Harvard. For the first time, and likely for the foreseeable future, Yale will play Harvard twice during the fall season. One leg will count toward league standings and will be played in Cambridge, whilst the

other will be a matter of pride as Harvard travels to Yale over the Harvard-Yale weekend.

This opportunity only adds to the excitement of moving into the upper echelons of collegiate rugby. Adding to the anticipation is the realization that Yale will have two opportunities to snap a five year losing streak. None of last year's graduating class, nor any of the current squad, have been able to tame their fa-

bled opposition.

To add to the anguish, in three of the last four encounters Yale has led after the first half, failing to capitalize and seal victory.

The 2005 Beast of the East tournament was thought to provide the perfect opportunity for revenge with Yale playing their best rugby of the spring. Yale eagerly anticipated a clash with Harvard in the consolation finals, but Harvard failed to keep their end of

the bargain, falling to a Westchester team Yale beat in their stead. This time Harvard can not recoil.

This new schedule not only allows two opportunities to play Harvard each fall, it also offers alumni two venues to watch the historic rivalry which dates back to the late 1870's. As always, we appreciate all our support and hope to see some friendly faces at each game.

2005-2006 Officers

Rob "SARS" Smith '06
Captain

Garan Geist '06
President

Sherman Wang '07
Vice President

Pietro Desario '07
Match Secretary

Sam Beutler '07
Alumni Secretary

Sean Walbridge '08
Michael "Beanpole"
Proctor '08
*Recruitment
Chairs*

Jack Mahoney '07
Sean Clifford '06
Social Chairs

Recapping the Spring cont.

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memory, carrying 30 players in all. In addition, Yale was represented by four players on the All-Ivy Select sides. Flanker Sean Walbridge '08, prop Sherman Wang '07, and scrumhalf Garan Geist '06 were all selected to the second All-Ivy XV, with locke Terence De Pentheny O'Kelly '07 being selected to the first XV.

The following weekend, Yale Rugby traveled to Portsmouth, Rhode Island, to defend their 2004 Beast of the East Division I championship. Yale opened the competition with an upsetting 22-14 loss in the first round match against Northeastern University (L: 22-14) who would end up shutting out the rest of their opponents and winning the tournament. The opening game was characterized by

a strong first half by Yale, but a failure to capitalize and finish the game in the second half. It would be a mistake that the Bulldogs would not make again for the rest of the weekend, defeating the University of Albany (W: 26-0), UMASS (W: 32-0) and Westchester State (W: 19-10) to capture the consolation championship. The Beast of the East tournament also allowed Yale's B-side to polish their skills with a combined Brown and Yale B-side team that joined the Division II bracket.

The spring season came to a close on a stormy day with Yale hosting Princeton (W: 10-7) for the annual Koranda Cup match. Having already defeated the Princeton squad at the Ivy tournament, the Bulldogs were confident coming out, but inclement weather proved to be a factor for

both sides with poor traction and miserable handling conditions. The game resulted in a disappointing end when the game was called only five minutes into the second half. Although Yale succeeded with another victory, the Koranda Cup remains with the Princeton squad since both sides agreed to only give up the cup if a full game was played. With the support of alumni who made it out even in the worst of weather conditions, Yale Rugby was proud and sad to end the year for the graduating seniors.

Thank you to the Yale Rugby Class of 2005 for all of your dedication to the club: Michael Atkins (Captain), Matt Reagan (President), Will Harper, Matthew Devlin, Frank Busch, Don Jeon, Robert Pazornik, Jason Park, Michael Freedman-Aponte.

Visit Our Website
Online At:
www.yale.edu/rugby

If you are interested in donating, individual donations* may be sent to:

Friend's of Yale Rugby
P.O. BOX 208216
New Haven, CT 06520

*All checks may be made out to "Friends of Yale Rugby"

For online donations, refer to the alumni section of our website.



Questions, comments, concerns?

Feel free to contact our Alumni Secretary at the following email address:

sam.beutler@yale.edu

Returning Players:

Sam Beutler - Fullback/Center
Robert Cardone - Wing
Sean Clifford - Prop
Henry Cook - Wing
Terence De Pentheny O'Kelley - Second Row
Pietro Deserio - Second Row
Josh Foran - Flanker
Garan Geist - Scrumhalf
Jordan Hanson - Hooker
Dan Koffler - Hooker
Jack Mahoney - Center/Flyhalf
Nick Moscow - Flanker/Second Row
David Smith - Wing/Flyhalf
Robert Smith - Flyhalf
Sherman Wang - Second Row/Prop/Flanker/Number 8
Jesse Wolfson - Scrumhalf/Flanker
Ervin Yeo - Flanker/Second Row/Number 8
Mark Cotter - Number 8
Ryan Fennerty - Hooker
Aaron Friedman - Wing
David Light - Scrumhalf
Drew Marticorena - Hooker
Scott Proctor - Second Row
Ben Swiss - Prop/Number 8
Sean Walbridge - Flanker/Center
Paul-Harvey Weiner - Flanker
Sam White - Wing
Zach Dugan - Wing
Greg Carlson - Flanker/Center