



OUT OF THE COLD: SPRING 2016 EDITION

A ROUND UP OF WHAT IS IN STORE FOR THE 2016 SPRING SPORTS TEAMS AT HARVARD AS THEY BREAK OUT OF PRESEASON TRAINING AND INTO COMPETITION.



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PREVIEW SPRING SPORTS 2016

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With their respective seasons underway, the Harvard baseball and softball teams look to build on the improvements of prior years to challenge for the Ancient Eight title. Each team heads into the season with a mix of veterans and new faces.

FROM THE EDITORS

As Cambridge transitions into a new season, so does Harvard Athletics. With basketball and hockey seasons coming to a close, we turn our attention to sports such as lacrosse, baseball, softball and men's volleyball to fill the void.

While these sports may not attract the same stadium packing crowds as their winter counterparts, each team is full of promise as they look to add their names to the hundreds of Harvard teams that have called themselves champions. Their seasons bring a breath of fresh air to campus, giving fans the chance to enjoy action packed games outside of the rink or stadium.

This supplement provides a glimpse into what each season holds, and the storyline surrounding each team.

— ASV, JF, GH, JS, GM, SD,
SOMC, SJG, MK



DEPTH ON ALL LEVELS Returning to the field after finishing third in the Ivy League last season, the women's lacrosse team relies on a strong upperclass core for success. RYOSUKE TAKASHIMA—CRIMSON PHOTOGRAPHER

SPRING IN THEIR STEP

With the season openers already in the books, the Crimson's spring sports squads look to improve upon last year's records and vie for conference titles.



Junior Jillian Leslie returns to the field for her third season. SAUL A. URBINA-JOHANSON—CRIMSON PHOTOGRAPHER

TOUGH BEAT



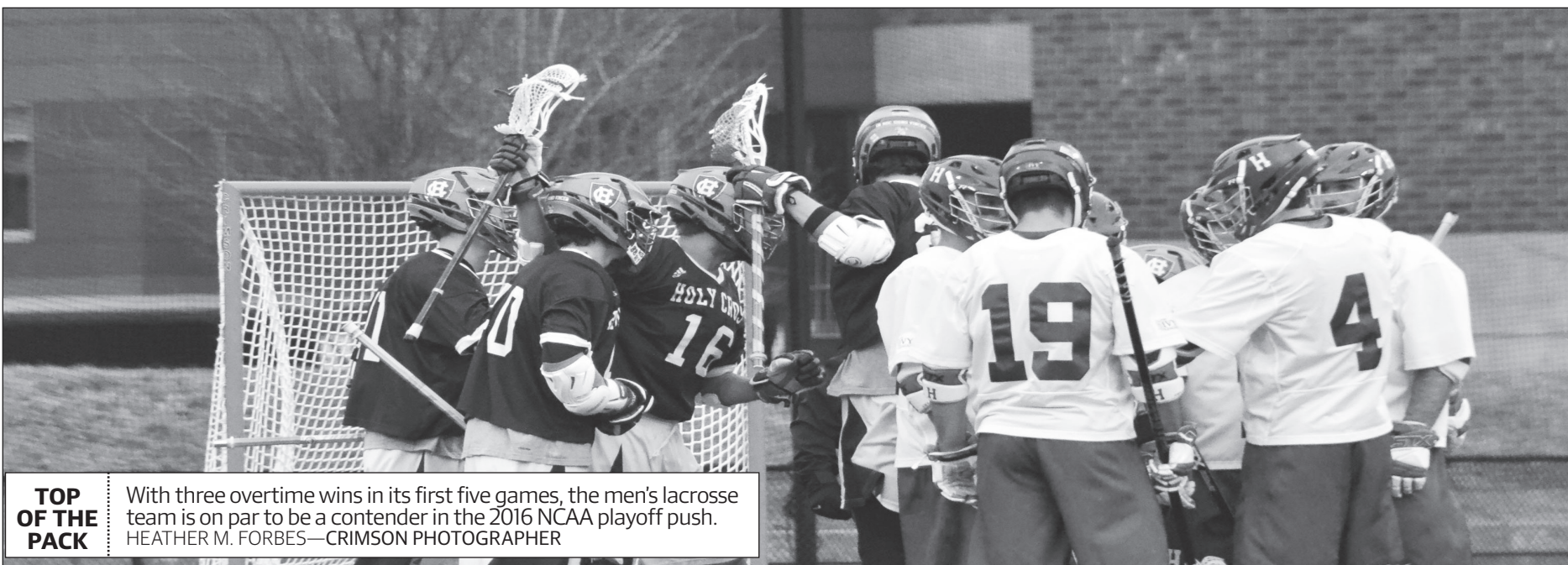
Sophomore setter Marko Kostich is on pace to pass his assist total from last year. JEAN PAUL VALENCIA—CRIMSON PHOTOGRAPHER

SECOND TO NONE



Junior Josh Ellis returns to the baseball field after an injury. SAUL A. URBINA-JOHANSON—CRIMSON PHOTOGRAPHER

HITTING THE FIELD



TOP OF THE PACK With three overtime wins in its first five games, the men's lacrosse team is on par to be a contender in the 2016 NCAA playoff push. HEATHER M. FORBES—CRIMSON PHOTOGRAPHER

The Crimson hopes to improve its success in one-run games after struggling last year in close contests. SAUL A. URBINA JOHANSON—CRIMSON PHOTOGRAPHER

**CLOSE
CALL**

A BALANCING ACT

Baseball looks to balance pitching, hitting, and defensive production in campaign for Ivy Title.

By **STEPHEN J. GLEASON**
CRIMSON STAFF WRITER

Fresh faces and high expectations abound as Harvard baseball enters the 2016 season, its fourth under coach Bill Decker. The Crimson has increased its win total in each of Decker's four years at the helm, including an 18-24 (7-13 Ivy) record last season. Led by perhaps the league's top infield—as well as two top-line starters—and challenged by a rigorous non-conference schedule, Harvard will look to end up on the other side of one-run games, of which it lost seven in Ivy play last season.

After leading the league in almost every offensive category, the Crimson offense seeks to replace the production of infielder Jake McGuiggan '15 and Oakland Athletics draft pick Mike Martin '15 at the top of the batting order.

"It was evident that the returning guys did the work they needed to do over the summer and that continued until the bubble season," co-captain DJ Link said. "Since we're losing a lot, we're going to need our returning guys to be that much better and then we're going to need some of the freshmen to step into big roles."

While freshman Ben Skinner will likely fill the void left by Martin in center and senior Mitch Klug will slide over to McGuiggan's spot at second, Harvard will lean heavily on three returning starters from last season—sophomore right fielder Conor Quinn, junior shortstop Drew Reid, and junior first baseman Matt Hink.

Reid hit .280 as a sophomore and scored 28 runs in a breakout campaign. Despite a slow start, Quinn finished his freshman campaign with a .291 average and seven doubles. Hink will miss the start of the season with a hand injury, but the junior provides the Crimson with power from the right side.

One Harvard player who is poised for a breakout season is sophomore third baseman John Fallon, who saw limited action in a crowded Crimson infield last season. However, when he was in the lineup, Fallon showed glimpses of the talent that made him a highly coveted prospect coming out of Houston. He took home Ivy League Rookie of the Week honors after going 11-for-15 with eight runs batted in in a weekend series against Princeton and Cornell.

Link had a bounceback junior campaign in which he hit .308 in 28 games. Skinner, freshman Patrick McColl, sophomore Matt Rothenberg, and junior Josh Ellis figure to see time in the outfield and at designated hitter.

Harvard's pitching staff is headlined by senior Sean Poppen and junior Nick Gruener, both mainstays in last season's rotation. Both Poppen and Gruener won three games last season and averaged over seven strikeouts per nine innings. While last season's team relied on its offense, the key for Harvard in 2016 will be balance.

Dartmouth, Penn, and Yale all boast deep starting rotations, and runs in Ivy League play are always hard to come by. Seniors Sean O'Neill and T.J. Laurisch anchor an experienced Harvard bullpen that will also feature sophomore Dylan Combs, co-captain Mike Sanders, and junior Kevin Rex, who is returning from an elbow injury.

The Crimson will play three weeks' worth of road contests before playing its first games in Cambridge on March 27. Spring break will feature six games in Clearwater, Fla., against UMass and Army, teams against which Harvard went 5-2 last season.

"I think you come back to the Ivy League really ready to go," Matt Sanders said. "In terms of seeing better pitching, it can be great for our hitters to go down there. It just really gets everyone ready to play when you come up North."

Ivy play begins April 2 with a doubleheader at Cornell and a twinbill at Princeton the following day. Harvard took the first three games in this series convincingly last season, but fell in Sunday's second game against Cornell.

"We've been right in a bunch of games," Sanders said. "We have all the tools we need to be successful and hopefully having the seniors in the bullpen and some of the older guys in the lineup is going to help us in those one-run games."

A pair of four-game series with Yale on the road and Brown at home precede home-and-home doubleheaders with Dartmouth, the eight-time defending Red Rolfe Division champion. Harvard has not stolen a game from the Big Green since 2012.

"While we're not looking at last year's statistics so much, it's one of those things that we're doing every little thing we can do to make sure those one-run games go our way" Link said. "The Ivy League is a grind. Sometimes it comes down to who wants it the most so it's the little things that get you winning those close games."

While the usual suspects will likely figure to remain atop the conference, this year's Crimson team appears to have the mix of experience and youth as well as offense and pitching needed to win the one-run games it lost last season. An improved pitching staff and a balanced infield have the potential to take the next step and bring Harvard its first winning Ivy League season since 2007.

"I think this year more than in the past, we have a pretty good balance of pitching, defense, and hitting," Link said. "I really feel like we have guys stepping up now from both sides. It's one of those things where we go live, you never know what you're going to get."

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ROOKIES BOLSTER BASEBALL TALENT

Led by hard-throwing pitcher Kevin Stone, the freshman class is poised to contribute in many ways from the get-go.

By **MANAV KHANDLWAL**
CRIMSON STAFF WRITER

Coming off an 18-24 season and fifth-place finish in Ivy League play, the Harvard baseball team will have to rely on a stable of talented freshmen if the group is to qualify for the NCAA Division I Baseball Championship for the first time since 2005.

The Crimson welcomes 12 members of the class of 2019 to the squad, a number of whom will be asked to contribute in various ways as the team looks to improve on last year's 7-13 finish in Ancient Eight play.

Coach Bill Decker bolstered his core of pitchers during the most recent recruiting cycle, bringing in a couple of arms that he hopes can help get big outs and eat up innings for the Crimson.

Chief among them is hard-throwing Kevin Stone, a graduate of Fairfield College Prep. The three-time All-Southern Connecticut Conference selection was chosen this past week to feature in Harvard's starting rotation, showing Decker's confidence in the 6'4", 210-pound freshman who hails from Stamford, Conn.

"I want to be a mainstay, a household name on the team," Stone said. "When they think of Harvard baseball... I want people to say, 'Yea, Kevin Stone is a big part of that team.' I want to be a team leader."

Stone was clocked in the high-80s during his high school career and is now throwing between 89 and 92 miles per hour. Relying on a two-seam fastball that runs in on righties, he uses a slider as his out pitch and mixes in changeups to keep hitters honest.

He was also one of the first members of this class to commit.

"I committed verbally the fall of my junior year," Stone said. "I had done a Harvard winter camp my sophomore year, they watched me in the spring, and then they invited me back for summer camp, and I did really well at the sum-

mer camp. My velocity was up, [and] I had good results on the mound."

Stone credits his Jesuit education for instilling intangibles in him, something he thought the recruiters found invaluable. They seem to have left an impression on his teammates, with fellow freshmen voting him as their representative on the team's Captain's Council, which includes two seniors and one member from each class.

This past weekend, Stone made his debut against Towson, completing four-plus innings with three strikeouts in a Crimson defeat.

Joining Stone, likely out of the bullpen to start, is fellow right-handed pitcher Simon Rosenblum-Larson. The Madison, Wis. native, who holds alma mater Madison West's career records in innings pitched, earned run average, and strikeouts, was a two-year captain for his team and earned All-City honors as well.

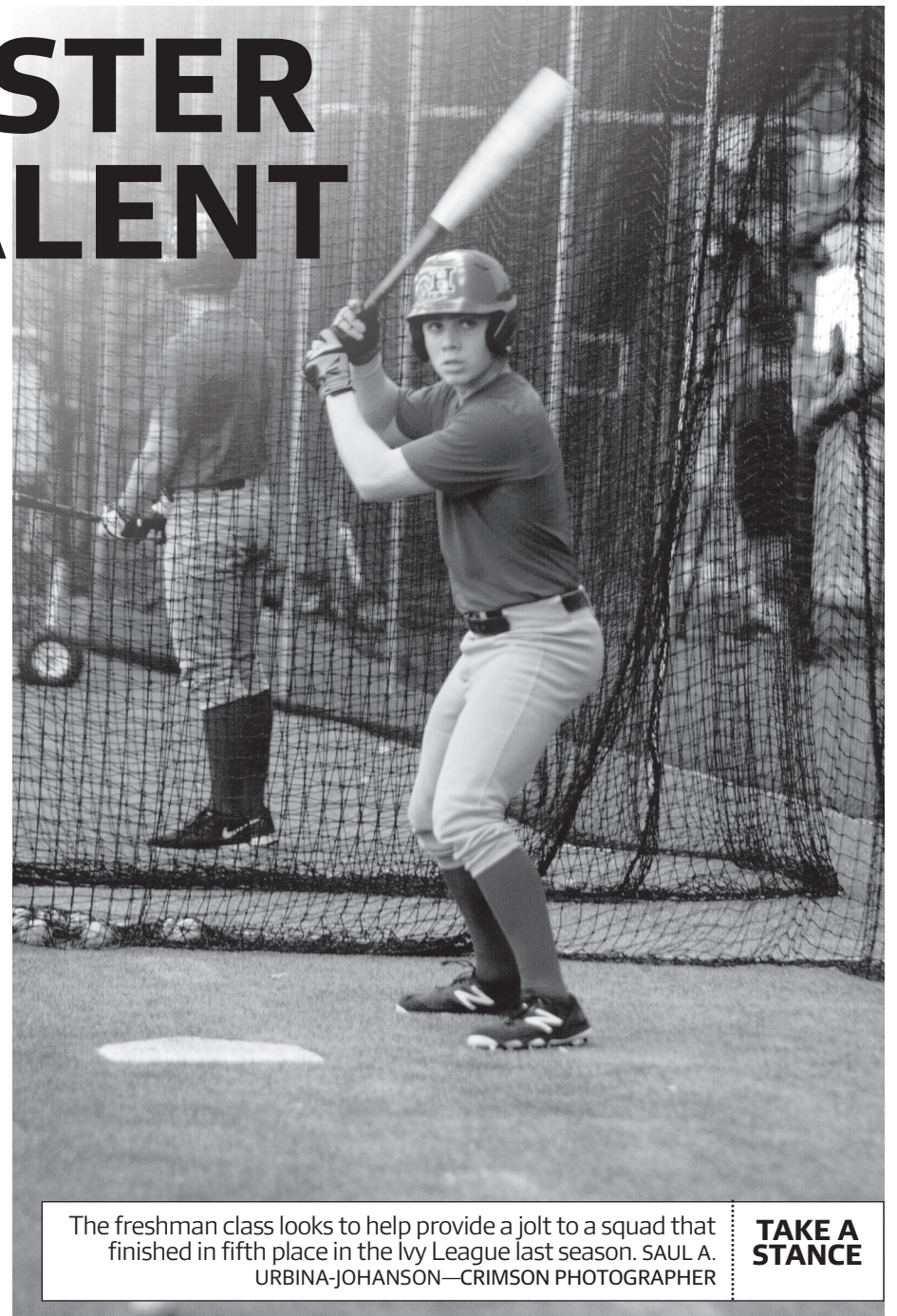
A couple of freshmen will also see a significant portion of playing time on the diamond at other positions, notably first baseman Patrick McColl and center fielder Ben Skinner.

With a recent hand injury to projected everyday first baseman Matt Hink, McColl has been given first-team opportunities, and has already featured heavily for the Crimson early in the season. He collected six hits in 14 at-bats to start his career at the recent tournament hosted by Wake Forest. He also drove in four runs during this stretch.

"It's tough at first getting used to the high level of competition because you don't see it all the time in high school. But once you get used to it, it's fun to compete since it's fun to be at the same level as these guys right away."

With his 6'6" frame, McColl was brought in to command the infield and swing his powerful left-handed bat, one that produced a .431 average in his senior season at Los Altos High School.

McColl has gotten the opportunity to



The freshman class looks to help provide a jolt to a squad that finished in fifth place in the Ivy League last season. SAUL A. URBINA-JOHANSON—CRIMSON PHOTOGRAPHER

TAKE A STANCE

work with Hink over the course of the fall and winter and looks forward to the chance to continue to do so.

"It's real nice," McColl said, "We can kind of go at it but he can teach me things along the way, since I'm a new guy coming in and he's been there for two years."

Skinner, also hailing from California, is another one of the highly-touted prospects in the freshman class. Heading into the season, center field was a bit of a question mark, and the rookie seems to have played his way into this slot. During the team's recent trip to North Carolina, he started all four games.

The speedy righty, Campolindo High's defensive player of the year, led his team to two North Coast Section Championships in his four years.

Joining Skinner and McColl in the field will be former Harvard-Westlake infielder Chase Aldridge, infielder Trent

Bryan, outfielder John MacLean, infielder Edwin Owolo, and outfielder Patrick Robinson.

Rounding out the class of 2019 are catchers Devan Peterson, Jake Allen, and Rey Pascual. With captain DJ Link and junior Josh Ellis the team's first choice men behind the dish heading into the season, opportunities may be somewhat limited but there are still high expectations for all three going forward.

"We have a great clubhouse atmosphere, a great clubhouse vibe," Stone said. "Getting even closer to my teammates, to play as a family, playing as a unit, will be key to our success. I want to look back at the end of the season and say, 'Hey, this is our family and I can't wait to get back at it in the fall next year.'"

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FRESHMAN DOMINANCE

Just two tournaments into the season, the freshmen are already making plays for the team. Behind a combination of freshman and senior talent, the Crimson is looking at a promising season.

By **GINNY MILLER**
CRIMSON STAFF WRITER

The Harvard softball team (4-4) is two tournaments into its season after opening play at the JU Green and Gold Classic in Jacksonville, Fla., on Feb. 26. One week later, the team traveled to Georgia for the Eagle Classic.

“It is a lot of hard work—we have a lot of practices every week, but we make the most of the time that we get together,” co-captain Morgan Groom said. “We worked a lot on playing as a team on the field, supporting each other on the field and such. So we were really prepared, even though we are such a young team, to go into these two tournaments.”

“Our preseason feels like a long process when we are going day in and day out in the bubble and the football field,” co-captain Zoe Galindo added. “It is very trying and really helps build our stamina. What was nice about this year is that we were able to go outside in January and February unlike other preseasons.”

The Crimson welcomed a large freshman class of eight athletes, who have already proven vital to the team’s success this year. Freshman shortstop Rhiana Rich, who was recently named Ivy League Rookie of the Week, is batting a team-high .517 and has a .793 slugging percentage. The El Segundo, Calif., native has gone 15-for-29 at the plate in her first eight games, scored seven runs, drove in four runs, knocked two triples, and recorded her first career homer in Harvard’s first two weekends of play. Freshmen pitchers Kathleen Duncan and Sarah Smith’s performances on the mound also helped the Crimson to a 3-1 record on its opening weekend. Both Smith and Duncan anchored the Crimson in their debuts, with Smith allowing just one hit and Duncan just one run on four hits, earning saves for the team.

“Our freshman class is great,” Groom

said. “With eight of them, they are definitely a very large, very vocal group, but they are absolutely awesome. On the field they don’t play like freshman. They come out there, and they play big. They play with a lot of confidence, which is great. And off the field, they are a really fun group of people, and they’re fun to hang out with.”

This pool of talented freshmen joins a Crimson squad that finished as the runner-up in the Ivy League North Division for the third straight season last year. Harvard went 23-21 overall and posted a 13-7 conference record. On its home diamond, the Crimson recorded a dominating 11-3 mark. The young team will look to top its recent second-place finishes to come out on top of the Ivy League this spring.

“Overall, I am really excited to start... Ivy League season,” Groom said. “I think we have a really good team this year, and we should be able to compete very well with the other teams this year.”

Leading the team for her 22nd season as head coach is Jenny Allard, the Ivy League’s most tenured coach and one of its most successful. Allard boasts a 536-400-3 overall record, including a 252-102-1 Ivy League mark. Allard has headed Harvard softball for half of the program’s existence and been at the helm for all of the Crimson’s six Ivy League titles, each of its six 30-win seasons, and its five NCAA Championship berths.

Allard welcomes three new additions to her coaching staff this year. Assistant coach Nicole D’Argento joined the Harvard staff in July after spending a year as assistant coach and recruiting coordinator for Army. In August, Allard also announced the addition of Lacy Wood as her new top assistant coach. Wood comes to Harvard after serving as an assistant coach at Eastern Kentucky for three years and as volunteer coach at her alma mater Louisville in 2012. In Febru-



With promising play from the freshman, Harvard is looking at a solid season ahead. SAULA URBINA-JOHANSON—CRIMSON PHOTOGRAPHER

AT WORK

ary, Jenny Rohn joined the ranks as a volunteer assistant coach for the Crimson. Rohn graduated from Western Michigan in 2015, where she was a member of the softball team for four years and a captain for two.

“Coach Lacy, Coach Nick, and Coach Jenny have been absolutely awesome,” Groom said. “They bring a lot of knowledge to the coaching staff, which is great, but [they] are also very, very supportive and very fun to be around especially on these long trips on the weekend.”

Harvard will travel to California to play in two tournaments over spring break—the Loyola Marymount Tournament and the San Diego State Classic II—and will have its home opener on March 29 against local rival Boston College.

“We are really excited to show people how well we have meshed as a team and are still excited to go and compete on the field,” Groom said.

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EIGHT AT THE PLATE

The Crimson welcomes eight new freshmen to the roster this season. Infielder Rhianna Rich has already begun to contribute, leading the team at the plate in the season's opening weekend.



RICH IN RUNS

Infielder Rhianna Rich earned the title of Ivy League Rookie of the Week after her 9-of-16 batting performance in Florida.
SAUL A. URBINA-JOHANSON—CRIMSON PHOTOGRAPHER

By **STUART JOHNSON**
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

An excerpt from the Harvard athletics mission statement reads, “Harvard values the lessons that have long been taught by athletic participation: the pursuit of excellence through personal development and teamwork.”

For Harvard coach Jenny Allard, values like these are what she looks for in recruiting a new freshman class.

“We are... looking for kids that are

looking to be true scholars,” Allard said. “I think beyond that we look for people... who want to come in and make Harvard softball the best program it can be.”

Allard added significant depth in the infield, with the addition of rookies Meagan Lantz, Erin Lockhart, Rhianna Rich, Kaitlyn Schiffhauer, and Sarah Smith.

Even with only eight games played, Rich has shown what she can do at the collegiate level, being named Ivy League Rookie of the Week after her first weekend for the Crimson. She batted a team-

best 9-for-16, and went on to hit two triples and a home run in Florida. The El Segundo, Calif. native was three-time first team all-league and the Pioneer League Most Outstanding Softball Player in 2014.

Lantz is the younger sister to Katherine Lantz '15 who was a first team All-Ivy League player after both the 2014 and 2015 seasons. Meagan was three-time softball first team all-county for the Miami Herald, the 2015 Female Scholar Athlete for the Herald, as well as the offensive MVP for North Broward Prep.

Lockhart, who comes to Cambridge via Lincoln, Neb., has quite the resume from high school including, but not limited to, being named 2015 Nebraska State Gatorade Player of the Year. Lockhart was also named all-state in 2012, 2013, and was all-state captain in 2014.

Schiffhauer was a three-time first team all-league and Palo Alto Daily News' Newcomer of the Year in 2011. Schiffhauer was also named the Cal-Hi Sports Spring CCS 2015 Scholar Athlete of the Year.

Shively, a catcher, was voted Varsity Freshman of the Year and second team all-region at North Paulding High School. She would go on to be all-state and first team all-region in 2012 and 2013.

Along with the infield group, Allard padded the pitching rotation with the addition of Kathleen Duncan, Nicki Nishizawa, and Sarah Smith.

Duncan provided nine relief innings in five appearances in the first weeks of the 2016 season. The New Jersey native also has three years of first base experience at the high school level.

Nishizawa, a mere 5,075 miles from her hometown of Aiea, HI, is a right handed pitcher from Punahou School, the same school President Barack Obama attended. Nishizawa was first team Interscholastic League of Honolulu and an all-state honorable mention her senior year.

Rounding out the list is right-handed pitcher Sarah Smith from Somerset, NJ. Smith was second team all-conference in 2013 and first team all-conference in 2015. In her first career appearance, Smith recorded a save after allowing a single hit in

2.2 innings of work.

Like all student-athletes at Harvard, they work just as hard in the classroom as they do on the diamond. The softball team has taken this aspect of a student-athlete's life one step further—the players set a goal for their team to work for a 3.5 average GPA for the school year. Many of the freshmen have not found this benchmark to be restricting, but rather liberating.

“I actually think that's really helpful to have that goal because you want to help the team by getting a higher GPA—it's more motivation for you,” Smith said.

Last season, the Crimson was recognized by the National Fastpitch Coaches Association for having the fifth-highest GPA in NCAA Division I softball. The leaders of the team, like team captains Zoe Galindo and Morgan Groom, communicated early on what was to be expected from the freshmen.

“They have really set a tone, and followed the tradition of our team culture,” Allard said. “[The seniors] as a class are strong and really know what Harvard softball is about, what it represents.”

A common theme amongst the freshmen in discussing their transition to college softball was family. As most freshmen experience, there is a period during one's first year of college of having to meet new people and figure out a way to balance class with extracurricular activities.

The freshmen softball players had the advantage of having a family on campus that they could go to for support.

“I think our freshman class gelled instantly,” Shively said. “Our group of freshmen not only play well together and enjoy each other's company, but we're just friends on the field and off the field.”

Not only were the freshmen able to come together as a group, but they also were instantly welcomed on the team.

Shively summarized the feeling of the freshmen as a whole when she said, “Basically the culture was one of a family, and I knew that if I was going to Harvard that I would be part of a family for the next 4 years. That was an opportunity that I couldn't pass up.”

LEFT FIELD

23 **TRENT BRYANT, Freshman**
1-for-7 in first four games

5 **MADDY KAPLAN, Sophomore**
Second in slugging and OBP

CENTER FIELD

1 **BEN SKINNER, Freshman**
Started first four games of season

3 **ZOE GALINDO, Senior**
Tied for second most hits

THIRD BASE

7 **JOHN FALLON, Sophomore**
Has two homeruns on the season

12 **MEAGAN LANTZ, Freshman**
Played in seven of first eight games

SHORTSTOP

5 **DREW REID, Junior**
Errorless through four games

22 **RHIANNA RICH, Freshman**
Leads team with .517 batting average

CAPTAINS

13 **DJ LINK**

33 **MATT SANDERS**

3 **ZOE GALINDO**

21 **MORGAN GROOM**

AROUND

With the weather warming and the season starting, softball and baseball will take the field this month. Here is a look at what the respective team based on games played this season.

an
f career
s on team

SECOND BASE
6 **MITCH KLUG, Senior**
Has four hits in first four games
7 **GIANA PANARIELLO, Junior**
Errorless on season thus far

RIGHT FIELD
3 **CONOR QUINN, Senior**
2-for-16 in first four games
11 **HALEY DAVIS, Senior**
One of three seniors on the team

PITCHER
32 **SEAN POPPEN, Senior**
17 **NICK GRUENER, Junior**
29 **TAYLOR CABE, Junior**
21 **MORGAN GROOM, Senior**

FIRST BASE
31 **PATRICK MCCOLL, Freshman**
Leads team with .429 batting average
14 **SAVANNAH BRADLEY, Junior**
Has a homerun and five RBIs thus far

THE HORN

and the ground thawing, both
the field in Cambridge later this
the field will look like for each re-
played thus far in the 2015-2016
on.

CATCHER
9 **JOSH ELLIS, Junior**
Leads team in on base percentage
17 **ELIZABETH SHIVLEY, Freshman**
Tied for most RBIs on team with seven

DESIGNATED HITTER
13 **DJ LINK, Senior**
Splits time between DH and catcher
2 **CATHERINE CALLAWAY, Junior**
Coming off of a .339 average last year

PLANTING THE SEED

Harvard's success this season rests largely on the performance of three of its seniors—all of whom hail from the same hometown

By **GEORGE HU**
CRIMSON STAFF WRITER

Garden City, N.Y., despite being home to a population of just over 20,000 people, consistently produces some of the best high school lacrosse players in the country. Even so, few people could have anticipated that the small town would lay claim to a whopping five Top-25 recruits in 2011 and 2012. Harvard men's lacrosse coach Chris Wojcik '96 knew the long tradition of skilled players coming from the area, however, and made sure that he was in Garden City early and often in those years. His reward: four of the five star recruits.

"That town has a rich history of producing some very good college and pro players," Wojcik said. "And Long Island in general, it seems like, every lacrosse program in the country has a footprint there or is trying to make one."

Long stick midfielder Brian Fischer has since graduated, but the other three remain and will look to lead the Crimson to success as the group's senior leaders this season. Attackman Devin Dwyer, ranked No. 4 overall by Inside Lacrosse in the prep class of 2012, will spearhead the Harvard offense, while classmates Sean Mahon and Stephen Jahelka will anchor the midfield and defense, respectively. In 2011, Inside Lacrosse rated Mahon the No. 4 midfielder in the country and Jahelka the No. 1 defenseman.

The trio is part of a senior class that stands at 15 strong and accounts for more than a third of the team's 42-man roster. Together, these players have experienced what it is like to both exceed expectations and fall short of them. In 2014, they helped an initially unranked Harvard squad finish first in Ivy play with a 5-1 record and surge into the NCAA tournament for only the sixth time. The next year, however, the team started the season ranked No. 12/13 nationally but faltered, finishing with a 2-4 conference record.

Now, the members of the senior class set their sights on redemption, and ending their collegiate careers with an-

other Ivy League regular season championship. If accomplished, it would make this class the first ever in school history to graduate with multiple conference titles.

"I think a big reason a lot of the guys my year came here was to try to build a winning culture in a place that hadn't always had one," Mahon said. "We've taken steps in that direction, but I don't think anyone is really satisfied with where we're at yet."

The team certainly has the firepower to accomplish this goal, and its push for the conference championship starts with the three Garden City natives. Mahon and Jahelka will serve as captains this year, but all three have been recognized on preseason watch lists.

Dwyer and Jahelka were named Preseason All-Americans by Inside Lacrosse, and were also two of nine Ivy players to be drafted into Major League Lacrosse. Dwyer was taken 46th overall by the Florida Launch, while Jahelka will play for the Denver Outlaws after being drafted 14th overall, which matches the highest a Crimson player has ever been selected.

"Stephen missed all but two games last year because of an injury," Wojcik said. "It's good to have him back, not just for his ability but also his leadership. As for Devin, the way I've always described him is that he makes the players around him better, whether it's through his lacrosse IQ, his vision, or his wide set of skills."

Beyond its large group of seniors, Harvard also boasts a talented sophomore class. Attackman Joe Lang, who was third on the team in goals (21) as a freshman last year, was recognized as the Crimson's third and final Preseason All-American. Only senior attackmen Deke Burns (26) and Ian Ardrey (24) scored more, and both will be back alongside Lang once Burns comes back from injury.

Morgan Cheek, a fellow attackman who netted the game-winner against Villanova in Harvard's season-opener, and goalie Robert Shaw, a former Roxbury Latin stand-

out who won the starting spot from incumbent Bryan Moore during the preseason, are two of Lang's classmates who figure to play key roles as well.

As for the class below them, most of the freshman will likely not see much playing time except for faceoff man James Sullivan, who was rated by Inside Lacrosse as the No. 1 player at his position in the incoming class, taking over duties at the faceoff X immediately.

"The learning curve will be steep for him, especially with him being at a specialty position," Wojcik said. "But James is extremely driven to succeed and we think he'll be up to the challenge."

The Crimson also has four other players in the Inside Lacrosse Power 100 Freshman Rankings, including defenseman Marc-Antoine Pion and goalie Jack Corbett. With so many upperclassmen, however, the team knows that it has the experience to win at the very start of the season as well as at its pressure-packed end. Harvard has taken it to all challengers so far, claiming Inside Lacrosse's No. 7 ranking.

Brown, the league co-champion last year, could pose a challenge to Harvard within the conference and features one of the country's best players in Dylan Molloy. Molloy and the Crimson's own Dwyer are the only two players in the country who rank in the Top 10 individually in both goals and assists per game. The last contest of the season against Yale looms even larger on the calendar. If both teams play up to expectations this year, the matchup against the Bulldogs could decide the Ivy title.

"You don't win a conference championship or national championship in one game," Mahon said. "Each game will be important to us, and we understand that we need to approach every single one as a chance to learn and improve to get to that ultimate goal."

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Seniors Devin Dwyer, Stephen Jahelka, and Sean Mahon all call Long Island's Garden City home. HEATHER FORBES—CRIMSON PHOTOGRAPHER

**GC
CREW**

A JAHNELKA GOOD DEFENDER

After being drafted 14th in the Major League Lacrosse draft—tied for highest in program history—Stephen Jahelka has one more year to leave his mark at Harvard.

By **KAYLA R. HOLLINGSWORTH**
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

When Stephen Jahelka felt his Achilles tendon snap in his second active game of his junior year, he was forced into a decision that no player wants to make. With only one year of eligibility left in his college career and a multitude of opportunities in front of him besides playing Major League Lacrosse, Jahelka could either endure a rehab process that was expected to last more than a half year or simply call it quits.

“On the car ride home, it didn’t really occur to me how bad it was,” Jahelka recalled. “I called Pete, one of my old friends from high school who had also torn his Achilles, and what he told me was, ‘This isn’t only going to be a physical battle but [also] a mental battle—an extremely challenging mental one.’ I kind of just shrugged that off.”

Jahelka had overcome shoulder surgery the previous season, and he was confident that he could come back strong once again. This time around, however, the frustration set in early. As he struggled to come to terms with his injuries, he was also forced to think about why the sport he had played since he was four really mattered.

“It was when I was sitting around, not doing anything, that I realized how lacrosse had always been a way I could give my parents something to be proud of,” Jahelka said. “When that was taken from me for pretty much an entire year, it hurt a lot.”

Before long, he discovered exactly what his old teammate Pete had meant. Not only was Jahelka mired in a mental battle, he was also losing it.

“Once I realized that, I was able to see the bigger picture,” Jahelka explained. “I was able to erase the pressure of making people proud. For the last six months, the focus was not to let the voices in my mind win.”

Luckily for Jahelka, the support system on the Crimson was set up to help him through his recovery process. Jahelka hails from Garden City, N.Y., a community that emphasizes youth lacrosse and has sent countless athletes to Harvard to play the sport. Since arriving in Cambridge in 2011, Jahelka has been a part of a lively Long Island presence on the team that includes fellow team captain Sean Mahon, leading scorer Devin Dwyer, and faceoff man James Sullivan, among several others. All of the players have known each other for years, dating back



Jahelka was the top ranked defenseman in his class when he enrolled at Harvard according to Inside Lacrosse. HEATHER M. FORBES—CRIMSON PHOTOGRAPHER

**SENIOR
STINT**

to youth—leagues and, of course, high school lacrosse.

“There wasn’t a single guy I remember who didn’t text me at some point during that process to ask how I was doing,” Jahelka said. “To have 42 of your friends as an unwavering barrier of support was absolutely incredible when I was in recovery. Especially Bobby [Duvnjak, a fellow defenseman], who was injured at the same time I was. They got me through it.”

Probably more than any other factor, family strength has been a common thread throughout the trials and tribulations of his lacrosse career. That connection only increased as his Achilles healed.

The support of not just one team but two allowed Stephen to turn his physical limitations into an opportunity to grow closer to those around him. Jahelka’s sister, Jacqueline, remembered how he involved his family throughout the process.

“He would call us and say, ‘I ran for a minute today.’ It was like we were right by him going through the process with him,” Jackie recalled. “And one of the first things he told me after the injury, I’ll never forget, was ‘Jackie, now I can watch all of your games.’”

For the Jahelka family, the strong bonds recently came full circle last Saturday, when the team suited up at Hofstra University to face No. 4/4 Duke in a neutral site game.

For Jahelka, however, the crowd was anything but neutral. His grandmother, who had attended Hofstra, mother, sister, aunt, uncle, and cousins, as well as high school friends and teammates, all came out to support him as the Crimson secured the 14-9 upset win, its first win over Duke since Jahelka joined the team. What made

the victory even sweeter was that it came on the same field that Jahelka had played every year in high school for the state championship.

While he sat on the sidelines last season, Jahelka also had a chance to bond with his teammates in a new way. For every technique he couldn’t teach a teammate with an example on the field, for each piece of advice he couldn’t bark out from the center of the defense, Jahelka made up for it by being vocal from the sidelines, especially in practice.

“Some players fade into the background when they get injured,” Harvard coach Chris Wojcik ’96 said. “Stephen, though, not only remained involved with the team as a whole, but helped individual players improve. He was almost like another coach.”

This year, with Jahelka and Duvnjak back on the field, the Crimson defense has restored its backbone. This new cohesiveness has produced impressive results, as the unit held Duke, now the nation’s seventh-rated scoring offense, to a season-low nine goals last Saturday.

While Harvard has started the season 4-1 and has high hopes of bouncing back from a disappointing sixth-place conference finish last year, Jahelka knows that adversity will eventually hit. But perhaps more than anyone else, he also knows how to overcome it—how to lean on family and friends and come back stronger.

“I chose this school because I wanted to help build a program,” Jahelka mused. “I remember that all I wanted after four years was to be able to look back and say that I started something. We have a chance to do just that this year.”

A year after graduating one senior, the Harvard women's lacrosse team seeks to top its third-place finish in 2015. CRIMSON PHOTOGRAPHER HEATHER FORBES

POCKETS OF TALENT

OLD FACES, NEW SEASON

The Crimson enters 2016 with an experienced roster—an unusual asset for the program.

By **GEORGE HU**
CRIMSON STAFF WRITER

For all the talent that Harvard women's lacrosse coach Lisa Miller has brought to Cambridge over the past few years, the one problem that she could not fix immediately was her squad's lack of experience playing at the collegiate level.

Despite retaining only one senior last season and three the year before, the Crimson finally has a core of veteran players that it can count on in 2016. With six players in each of the junior and senior classes, the team fields an impressive amount of experience and hopes that the growing pains of previous years are now over.

"The lineup is more balanced as a whole," said Miller, who is in her ninth season at the helm of the program. "There are things we're doing in practice this year, more detailed and more complicated drills, that we haven't been able to do in the past."

The familiarity on the team begins with its leadership. The three co-captains from 2015 have all returned, along with the entire coaching staff, which means that players will look up to the same leaders for the second consecutive year.

With Audrey Todd leading the mid-field, and defender Tory Waldstein and

goalie Kelly Weis holding down the defense, Harvard has three seniors who understand how to direct the team. This expertise manifests itself both on the practice field and during game day.

"Everything feels more comfortable when we're in practice," Todd said. "People have a better sense of what they have to do, and it makes it really easy for the captains to make sure everything's going according to plan."

The Crimson, by virtue of graduating only one senior who played sparingly last season, returns each starter and goalscorer from last year's squad. This team was good enough to finish tied for third in the Ivy League last year.

Junior attacker Marisa Romeo, after becoming the seventh player in school history to score 48 or more goals in her freshman season, looks to bounce back after an injury late last year cut her sophomore campaign short.

Despite missing the final three games, she still led the team with 48 points on 37 goals and 11 assists. As a result of her performance, she was named to the All-Ivy first team.

If Romeo can maintain her scoring pace from the past two seasons, she will move into the top 10 in the Harvard record books for both most career goals and most career

points.

"Marisa is working her way back from injury, but she's already been drawing the opponent's best defender and even been face-guarded at some points," Miller said. "I think it speaks volumes of the kind of player she is, even when she's not 100 percent."

On the offensive end, the Crimson also looks to Todd and sophomore midfielder Julia Glynn to provide the goals.

Glynn was another one of the Crimson's three All-Ivy first team selections, being named to the All-Ivy second team as a freshman after leading Harvard with 44 points—27 goals and 17 assists—which is tied for eighth most assists in a single season in school history.

Meanwhile, Waldstein and junior defender Emma Ford lead the defense. Ford was the team's final member of the All-Ivy first team in 2015, and recorded a team-high 35 ground balls. Waldstein, on the other hand, has been a stalwart for Harvard since freshman year, starting every single game.

In goal the Crimson calls on Weis, another one of the team's four-year starters who arrived in the two large recruiting classes of several years ago. She, like Romeo, has school records in her sight, as she is already in the top ten for most career

saves.

In 2016, Weis entered the season with 333; projecting her average performance forward, she is on pace to graduate as one of the top three scorers in the program's history.

"It's good to know we have her in goal," Todd said. "It gives the rest of the team confidence and definitely takes pressure off the offense."

Weis and the rest of the defense will be crucial for Harvard against the potent offenses of several teams in the Ancient Eight, including defending champion Princeton and fellow title challenger Penn.

The Crimson will face the Tigers, who are currently ranked No. 6 in the nation, at home early in conference play. However, the team must wait until later in the season to battle the Quakers; then Harvard will travel south to Philadelphia for the match-up.

"They [Princeton and Penn] certainly set the standard for excellence in the conference," Miller said. "But each game in the Ivy is tough and often comes right down to the wire. We have to be ready to battle every time out."

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Freshman Caroline Garrity and senior Tori Waldstein exemplify the range of talent across the team. HEATHER M. FORBES—CRIMSON PHOTOGRAPHER

DECORATED NET

A SISTERLY ACT

The Burke sisters are back together and better than ever. The dynamic duo will look to make the most of their two years together.

By **GEORGE HU**
CRIMSON STAFF WRITER

Colleen Burke's first day of practice with the women's lacrosse team this past fall was hardly typical.

She had no trouble figuring out where to go, no doubts about what to expect, and even had a close friend to rely on through the process—a friend who was none other than her older sister, Marina.

For years Colleen had watched team practices, ever since Marina, now a junior on the squad, began her recruiting process. Harvard's coach, Lisa Miller, still remembers seeing the younger Burke sister for the first time when she was only a freshman in high school.

"I was attending one of Marina's soccer games—she was also great at that, by the way—and I saw one of her speedy teammates, [Colleen]... win a penalty," Miller recalled with a chuckle. "And I watched as Marina, who was supposed to take the kick, let the freshman have it."

In the four years since, both of the players on that field have arrived in Cambridge to suit up for the Crimson. The two are the first pair of sisters that Miller can remember coaching for Harvard, and the sisterly duo often reminds Miller of that early soccer game when she saw them both in action.

A FAMILY AFFAIR

Jordan Field isn't the first place where the Burke sisters have played together extensively. Neither is the soccer field where Miller watched them.

In fact, the two siblings have played together since elementary school, whether on the same youth, school, or club team.

"We've always been a big sports family," their father, David Burke '83, explained. "We started them [Marina and Colleen] off in softball, and then later on, they were playing soccer together in the fall and lacrosse in the spring."

From a young age, the sisters' parents, who are former field and ice hockey players, encouraged their children to play sports. However, it was the sisters' older brother, Brendan, who provided special motivation as the family transitioned into high school and college.

A year older than Marina, Brendan is now a senior forward for the ice hockey team at Amherst College. Both Marina and Colleen remember hanging around the rink as children and seeing the work that allowed Brendan to become the first child in the family to play college athletics, and both were inspired by his effort.

LIKE SISTERS

One of the main reasons Colleen found it easy to commit to the Crimson was that she already knew the team through Marina. Living less than 30 minutes away in Westwood, Mass., the entire family often watched Marina's games during her freshman and sophomore years.

Colleen had the chance to meet and become friends with many of Marina's college teammates. These bonds have helped Colleen find comfort this season and eased her transition onto the team.

"Having them around helps me stay focused but also relaxed," Colleen said. As time has passed, Colleen's comfort with the team has extended to her classmates as well.

"Colleen came in and became good friends with the freshman, and of course she knew a lot of the upperclassmen already," Miller said. "Through Marina a lot of the juniors and seniors have been able to get closer to the freshmen, almost like older sisters themselves."

Because the squad has been very young over the past two years, with only four seniors graduating during this period, most of the upperclassmen have known each other for a long time. There's a level of familiarity among those players that has taken years to develop.

Luckily for the freshmen, one of their own has been around the team for just as long to find that familiarity herself.

"The relationship between Colleen and Marina is really cool to see," said Nicole Baiocco, another freshman on the team. "It works great for them, and it works even better for the team."

With two seasons to play together for Harvard, the Burkes are eager to see what they can write in yet another chapter of their partnership. The two will be working together to hold down the defense for the Crimson this year as the squad pushes for a high finish in the Ivy League.

In the meantime, they will be looking to do what they always have: play, relax, and improve side by side.

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The three seniors on the men's volleyball team are looking to lead a cast of underclassmen through a tough conference slate. JEAN PAUL VALENCIA—CRIMSON PHOTOGRAPHER

ONE LAST CHANCE

Men's Volleyball Looks to Take EIVA

Despite a consistently strong Penn State squad that has taken the EIVA championship for 17 years straight, the Crimson's three seniors are looking to end their careers on a high note with a conference title.

By **SAM DANIELLO**
CRIMSON STAFF WRITER

For the first half of the school year, there is only one thing that members of the Harvard men's volleyball team can do: watch.

While women's volleyball takes place in the fall, the men don't start until the spring. This scheduling quirk creates a strange dynamic between the two programs. When one squad is playing, the other is cheering.

It was for this reason that members of the men's team spent their fall witnessing the women's team not just win a share of an Ivy League title, but also a first-ever appearance in the NCAA tournament.

Now, with the fall in the past, the Harvard men's team has begun the hunt for its own unprecedented feat, namely a postseason conference title and an NCAA berth.

At 8-6 overall and 5-2 in conference play, Harvard stands at second in the EIVA. The Crimson has beaten St. Francis (then ranked No. 15 in the nation), Princeton (the only other Ivy school with a program), and George Mason (the squad that ended Harvard's 2015 season).

But in 2016, as in every year going back to 1998, there is one opponent that outweighs all the others—Penn State.

"This is the year where we could really make a good tournament run," captain Branden Clemens said. "I would love to have a chance to play Penn State in the EIVA championships."

For the past 17 years, the Nittany Lions have claimed the conference title and thus the automatic bid to the NCAA tournament. The perennial heavyweights have

won six straight against the Crimson.

This year threatens to be no different, as Penn State is undefeated in league play and ranked No. 6 in the nation. On February 12, the Crimson hosted the Nittany Lions and lost 3-0, partly thanks to a sloppy offense that posted a .179 hitting rate. Still, with a second matchup looming in early April, Harvard hopes to achieve the unusual through a combination of veteran leadership and sheer energy.

Now a senior, Clemens has shown flashes of excellence since freshman year, when he averaged 2.33 kills a set. Since then, the outside hitter has racked up 10 career double-doubles, fine-tuned a powerful jump serve, and become a focal point for the offense.

The Crimson may thrive when multiple hitters get involved, but much of the fate of the season depends on Clemens's play. So far he is delivering at the rate of 3.84 kills per set and a .324 hitting percentage, good for fourth and second in the EIVA, respectively.

"Earlier in the season, I was making more errors than I am now," Clemens said. "I'm happy that I've reduced the errors because that'll help my hitting efficiency and in the end help my team's performance."

Yet Clemens isn't the only veteran power Harvard has to offer. Senior outside hitter Alec Schlossman and senior libero Alister Bent provide additional experience. Meanwhile junior outside hitter Casey White has evolved into one of the best diggers in the conference—all this maturation despite a difficult 2015 campaign in which personnel issues limited the team's potential.

"Last year was tough," Schlossman said. "We strug-

gled with a lot of injuries.... It was tough to get in a groove, but this year we've managed to stay relatively healthy."

In 2016 "we" also includes a crop of six underclassmen that composes the bulk of the team and represents its future.

Since early 2015, sophomore Marko Kostich has run the offense from the setter position, racking up a total of 944 assists. Sophomore outside hitter Brad Gretsche has been a frequent recipient of these passes. A consistent second option on offense, Gretsche has posted at least eight kills in every game this year.

Only two players compose the freshman class, and both are middle blockers—Trevor Dow and Spencer Scott. Dow especially has impressed in the first half of the season, surpassing a .555 hitting percentage in each of the last seven games. While Dow shares time with a capable sophomore in Riley Moore, watching the rookie's development will be a storyline to follow throughout the year.

Despite the profusion of young talent, the program squarely belongs to the class of seniors that has played three seasons without a conference title. In 2015 the Crimson qualified for the four-team playoff before falling to George Mason in four sets—Penn State took the crown as usual.

This season, the team hopes to parlay its hot start into a historical accomplishment.

"I think this team can beat the Penn State team this year, Clemens said. "That's a goal."

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HIGH ENERGY, HIGH REWARD

According to captain Brandon Clemens, the Harvard men's volleyball team has ridden on-court intensity to early-season success.

COMING IN HOT

With a 5-2 record thus far in conference play, the Crimson has climbed to second place in the EIVA. JEAN PAUL VALENCIA—CRIMSON PHOTOGRAPHER



By **SAM DANIELLO**
CRIMSON STAFF WRITER

The Harvard men's volleyball team is off the bench.

Donning crimson libero jerseys or normal white shirts, clutching half-filled water bottles or nothing at all, team members stand in a rough line, clapping and hooting above each other's shoulders. The atmosphere signals pressure and importance—that this lively moment is the one that will determine the outcome.

But there's a slight problem—it's only the first point of the match.

For a sport that requires only five players a side, involves no violent collisions, and often takes place in converted basketball gyms, men's volleyball sure knows how to fill a court with noise.

The game action is relatively quiet—aside from thwacks and orderly whistles, it's easy enough to hold a conversation with a seatmate.

But the torrent of shouts, smacked hands, and sideline roars begins when the points end. Then on the bench, players high five and shout encouragement.

On the court, anything goes.

"As far as the celebration stuff, it just comes out naturally," senior outside hitter Alec Schlossman said. "We're excited to be playing together."

This culture of excitement is not unique to the Crimson. Indeed the tradition of bench members not actually using the bench is common to most levels of volleyball, from high school teams to national programs.

The same goes for on-court interactions, and half of the thrill of watching volleyball is witnessing the ritualized congratulations that players exchange after points.

Yet this year's Harvard squad takes special pride in staying active. At a minimum, there is the vocabulary—one of the most frequent descriptions of the team is "high-energy."

"As I've been talking about all season, we're a high-energy team," captain Brandon Clemens said. "We're able to stay crisp and clean and execute well. Having that combination with the high energy is pretty tough to beat."

After every point, win or lose, the

players on the court circle in the center. They slap hands, pat backs, and exchange brief words before returning to their positions.

Part of the energy is a function of the team's size. At 11 players, the men's volleyball program is one of the smaller teams on campus, and according to Clemens, this affects community.

"We're genuinely happy to see ourselves do well and see our hard work manifest itself in good play," Clemens said. "There's such a passion and desire to win that you kind of feel it."

The acoustics of volleyball games amplifies these emotions. Unlike other spring sports, volleyball takes place in a gymnasium, which captures every kind of noise. This is why it's almost always possible to know that the Crimson is playing a match by standing outside the Malkin Athletic Center and turning an ear to the sky.

On the court, the energy of the Harvard team sometimes goes nuclear during especially heart-pounding junctures. In these cases, everyone has his own strategy.

Clemens typically crouches down—which shaves a few inches off his 6'6" height—and pops his eyes wide open. It's a wild look, and over the past four seasons, it's become synonymous with key point victories.

Sophomore Marko Kostich may be the most excited of the bunch. As a setter, he needs to stay vocal to organize the offense, and he remains this way afterwards, shouting encouragement to teammates or just simply shouting.

"Point won or lost, he's always yelling," Schlossman said. "He's very high-energy—it's great."

Per Schlossman, the team never plans any celebrations; whatever you see on the court is something players thought of an instant before.

However, during film sessions, Crimson players like to point out especially strange reactions on either side of the net.

Junior outside hitter Casey White is another player with noticeable excitement. Like Kostich, he stays loud throughout the match and specializes in the chest bump.

"He's one of the people who loves to do big celebrations," Clemens said. "[He and Marko] are both really good leaders on the court without even having a leadership position. I'm really happy with that."

So far in 2016, high energy has led to early wins, as Harvard has climbed to second place in the EIVA. Even in defeat, Harvard has pushed opponents to the limit, as half the team's losses have come in five sets.

Some might read this statistic as evidence of grittiness, but others might read it the way Clemens does—that this year's Crimson is a strange case of celebration causing success, not the other way around.

"The energy is not just being hyper, but it's also a constant energy," Clemens said. "It's believing in yourself while also being hyped up."

I feel like it manifests itself in our ability to come back from tough situations," he added. "Every time we get on the court, we're genuinely excited to play."

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