Baseball looks to opener

By Joe Garavoli

The 1970 spring baseball season was a year of firsts. It was the first winning season in eight years, it was the first time MIT had two Greater Boston League All-Stars, and it was the first time in New England to cancel its remaining schedule in emphatic fashion with the Cambodia strike. The team had but one senior, so it looked as if the Bonnie Stowers were strong in 1971 too. But as the grass of Briggs Field would have it, only five of last year's basic eleven are out this spring.

So what's the outlook? Big Al Dopfel '72 (1-0 with a 3.91 earned run average last year) returns to lead the beaver pitching staff. He is considered by many to be the Bob Gibson of the GBL, and his success could determine the success of the team. Right beside Al is Chuck "Dizzy" Holcum. Dizzy's performance in the fall guaranteed the junior lefthander a spot in the starting rotation. After Dizzy, it looks like sophomore Gary Williams, rookie Steve Reber, and John "J.P." Peterson '73 will round out the staff.

The hitting attack should be led by Bob "Diz" Biedrzycki. In making the GBL all-star team last year, Dreesser hit .341 and scored an average of a run per game. When he wasn't hitting, he was playing centerfield, and another leading hitter will be Ken Weisshaar '72. As last year's lead-off hitter he got on base almost 50% of the time and led the team in runs batted in. Up there with Dreesser and Weisshaar will be a sloe of rookies. When Reber isn't pitching, he'll be playing centerfield, and hittin' up center. Another rookie, Joe DeAngelo, may well be able to hit the college curve ball, and if he does he will be dangerous. Finally, Dennis Biedrzycki '72 should be in a position to really help the squad.

Just behind these players come veterans Dopfel and Rich "Popper" Roy '72. Dopfel hit fifth last year, pounding the ball with power, but striking out 25% of the time. If he can cut his strike-outs, he could be a significant asset to the attack. Popper, on the other hand, is known as a defensive ace (isn't that what all weak hitters are?), but he has hit well this spring and hopes are high that he will hit better than last year.

So what have you got? Biedrzycki catching with Holcum on the mound. DeAngelo at first, Weisshaar at second, Roy at short, and Reber, Dopfel, and Dreesser in the outfield. Hey, where's the third baseman? Old pro Tom Pilip '71 or rookie Dave Tierrell could fill that spot. Or, if you're a gambling man, your might bet on Kevin Rowland '74.

This writer doesn't know for sure who's going to fill the holes, but if they are filled with reasonable performance, the season could be successful. The hitting could be as good as last year's (.262 team average); the fielding will be about the same; and the pitching a lot stronger in the big games, but a lot weaker on occasion. So, the predicted record ought to be 11-11.

But there's something different about this year's squad. There are a lot of rookies and a few old pros who don't know what the word quit means. They hustle in practice, and they play a real loose brand of ball. The seniors call themselves old-timers and try to lead, while the team openly refers to itself as a bunch of turkeys. It's this kind of attitude that makes a "team," something that MIT sports often lack, and it's this kind of attitude that could well lead the beavers to a more successful season.

Road trips highlight early spring action

The opening of the spring sports season will see fire of the MIT varsity squads on the road, all of them heading south during the spring break. The tennis, baseball, golf, and lacrosse teams have extended trips, while the sailing squad will compete in a weekend event at the Naval Academy.

The varsity sailors open the new season with a darling invitation at Boston University on March 27, and on the following weekend, they will compete for the Owen Trophy at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. Also on the 3rd and 4th of April, the mariners square off in invitational at Tufts and Yale respectively, with an additional freshman regatta at Tufts on the 4th.

The Tech varsity tennis contingent is headed for North Carolina, with their first match scheduled against UNC at Chapel Hill on Monday, March 29, followed by contests with Davidson, North Carolina State, and Wake Forest. On the way home, the netmen will stop off in Washington, D.C., to meet the squad from Georgetown University.

Both the varsity baseball and golf teams are looking forward to trips to sunny Florida during vacations. On March 29 and 30, the baseball squad will play back-to-back games against Florida Presbyterian in St. Petersburg, followed by a game versus Amherst at Tampa. To conclude the journey, they will meet South Florida in two consecutive games in Tampa on April 2 and 3.

MIT's golf squad is scheduled to play in the Gulf American Classic Intercollegiate Invitational at Cape Coral, Florida, from March 29 through April 3, while the lacrosse team travels to Long Island and the Baltimore area.