Coach encouraged: water polo winning

By Tom Curtis

This year, several MIT sports teams have shown spectacular improvement, particularly in water polo. The men’s water polo team. After a mediocre 3-5-8 season last year, the team has posted an 8-5 record (8-2 against New England competition) and is currently ranked second in New England behind Brown, the 1975 and 1976 New England Champions.

In Saturday’s MIT Tournament, the team showed why it is ranked so highly. In the tournament, MIT defeated UMass 13-4 in the morning and captured the championship in the evening by beating Harvard 8-5 for the team’s first victory in seven years.

The team’s improvement has come through the refinement of the individual skills of its players and by playing as a unit. In fact, the team members “love playing together” and really have fun when they play a match. His team finds water polo “one game where you must play together.” His team has been able to overwhelm squads which, last year, easily beat MIT. For example, compare last year’s three-point loss to UMass with this year’s victory.

MIT scores against UMass in their 13-4 victory during Saturday’s MIT Tournament.

sports

By Gordon Haff

In the MIT Water Polo Tournament held last Saturday, MIT defeated UMass, and Harvard by scores of 13-4 and 8-6, respectively.

In the first game, MIT’s tight defense all but shut down an ineffective and careless UMass offense. On the other side of the pool, UMass’s own defense was a mirror image of its attack, the pool, UMass’s own defense was a mirror image of its attack, the MIT squad’s crisp passes and effective use of a driver coming down the middle. Coach John Benedick characterized this play as “really starting to work. It usually results in either a goal, an expulsion, or a penalty shot.” MIT’s major problem in the first quarter was an offense which played overly tight. They tended to get so crowded that it was difficult to get a good shot away. However, they cleared this up in the second quarter.

The end of the game was hardly a contest. With John Donlan scoring four goals, Eric Byrle ‘80 and John Calvert ‘79 each tallied once. The Harvard game was another example of well-played water polo. Both defenses played their zones with few mistakes. UMass capitalized on man-up situations, and MIT, capitalized on penalty shots. Indeed, every Harvard goal except for one penalty shot came by that route. Coach Benedict remarked “that our six on five is very good.” It is a cornerstone of the whole team. We know how to play the zone and are more consistent at that other teams.

Although MIT’s squad showed some lack of experience compared to Harvard’s team which is made up of almost all seniors, they were more than made up for it with what Benedict called a “purposely offensive” and their drive to win.

Coach Benedict noted after the game that “the team’s second effort is starting. They are starting to learn that it isn’t enough just to get to the ball. They have to do something constructive with it.”

He was also happy with the way that this squad was getting the inside water — rolling in past a defender on the inside.

Next weekend, the team, which is now rated second in New England behind Brown, goes down to New Haven to the Yale Tournament. Then they will play Dartmouth who have, according to Benedict, “improved tremendously. We will have to play them tough.” If they beat Dartmouth, MIT will play Georg Southern or Yale. If still victorious, they would almost certainly face Brown, New England Champions for the past two years.

SPORTS

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By Helen Miyasaki

The women’s water polo team finished 10th of 46 schools in the 1977 New England Women’s Collegiate Water Polo Championship held this past weekend in Amherst, Massachusetts. MIT competed against the top schools in New England including Tufts, Dartmouth, and Trinity. Each team entered two singles players and two doubles teams.

In singles, Cathy Green ‘78 and Christine Yungman ‘78 won easily over U of Hartford in the first round, 6-2, 6-3. Yale proved to be tougher. Hartford’s 6-2, 6-3, but after winning the first set in a tie-break, Vogdes and Perone polished off the second set 6-4, 6-3. It is the first time that MIT has defeated UMass in their 13-4 victory during Saturday’s MIT Tournament.

In doubles competition, co-captains Chris Vogdes ’78 and Stefana Perone ’78 won easily over U of Hartford in the first round, 6-2, 6-3. Yale proved to be tougher. Hartford’s first set 6-2, 6-3, but after winning the first set in a tie-break, Vogdes and Perone polished off the second set 6-4, 6-3. Fortunately, they got the other side of the seed, the Mass State Champions, a set. MIT’s other singles entry, Marcia Grabov ‘78 received an unluckly draw, losing the tournament’s number four seed in her round one match and lost 6-1, 6-2. Marcia won her first two consolation matches, defeating opponents from UConn and Rhode Island College. Her match against Rhode Island was a hard fought two-hour duel, 7-5, 7-6. She lost the third round to last year’s quarterfinalist from Brown, Brown in three sets 6-4, 6-1, 6-0.

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