Basketball starts tonight

The Varsity Basketball team, practicing for their home opener Tuesday. (Photo by Joel West)

By Dennis Smith

The MIT Varsity Basketball Team taps off against Babson College in Rockwell Cage tonight to begin the 1978-1979 season. This year's schedule, beginning here with Babson, is tougher than last year's, in which MIT went 5-14. Babson is considered to be a good test of the team's ability, and Coach Fran O'Brien is optimistic. There are many returners on this year's squad, and most of them have appreciable game experience. At 6'5" Ray Nagen '80, who will be starting at center tonight for the Engineers, is highly respected by opposing coaches as one of the top Division III big men in the area. Nagen is a consistent scorer and a strong under-the-basket. Alongside Nagen tonight in the frontcourt will be John Wootin '79, the captain of this year's squad. Bobby Clarke '81 and Geoff Holman '80 will also see plenty of action, while Tom Berman '79, Darryl Fraser '80 and Keith Baker '81 will share the bulk of the backcourt duties.

In pre-season scrimmages, Coach O'Brien is pleased with the progress the team has made. The pre-season schedule has been a path of continuing improvement for the MIT club. As a sign of the progress the team has made, against a very tough Southeastern Massachusetts University team last Saturday, MIT was able to keep up and be competitive. MIT has hung in with each of the teams it has faced this pre-season. MIT's major weakness will be its depth. Injuries have depleted the bench, and have temporarily sidelined some of the starters. In a single IM football game, Bobby Clarke suffered a dislocated shoulder, and Tom Berman hurt his back and ankle. Both were out and try to win the New England Championship for the tenth consecutive time.

Would Newton gravitate toward O'Keefe?

Like the apple gravitated toward Newton.

Brian Wibecan is a member of the fencing team.

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The men's fencing team teamed the University of Connecticut, 20-7, in a scrimmage meet Saturday November 18. The win gave the team momentum for the upcoming season opener against Harvard tomorrow.

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Because of the nature of the meet, Coach Eric Sollee gave as many people a chance to fence as possible in order to give them some practice in a competition situation. However, the varsity was kept in until a win was definite.

Leading the effort for MIT was captain Johan Harnemark ’81, who won both his bouts in épée, as expected. Harnemark was the 1977 World Épée Champion. Bob Schoenberger ’81 also won two bouts, his first season in that weapon.

Foil was led by the double wins of Jim Freidah ’81 and Eric de Beus ’82. Freidah pulled off the best comeback of the day, winning a bout 5-4 after being down 4-0. De Beus was almost on the other side of that coin, but recored the fast touch in a close bout.

In Sabre, because of a forfeit and substitutions, no one won two bouts. George Gonzales-Rivas ’80, Dalhoon Chan ’80, and Carl Hiais ’80 each took one bout for Tech.

The team faces Harvard at 7pm Wednesday, at Harvard, and is psyched for a turnaround of the many close defeats they have seen in the past against that team. MIT is developing depth in all three weapons, and the intra-squad competition is fierce. This should prove beneficial as the team goes out and tries to win the New England Championship for the tenth consecutive time.