Baker beats SAE for Octathon

By Bob Hunt

Baker House captured the first Octathon championship with a 3-2 volleyball victory over Sigma Alpha Epsilon (SAE). Both teams were undefeated going into the final game.

Through the first six sports — basketball, water polo, volleyball, football, ultimate frisbee, and soccer — the two teams scored identical 6-0 records. It was by chance that they met in the deciding contest of the week-long competition.

Peter Lemme '80, IM Chairman and organizer of Octathon, said that he was amazed that such a situation occurred, since the scheduling was difficult and each of the 22 entries played only one game in each sport. Lemme noted that perfect weather and a lack of referee problems helped the competition tremendously, and added that only one of the teams forfeited — Black Student Union, which could not field a soccer team for its Sunday morning contest.

Aside from that, anticipated problems of false identification of contestant (“ringers”) proved to be no problem at all.

Overall, Lemme noted that the greatest domination of the sports occurred in volleyball, where many teams scored the maximum 200 points available. Scoring followed a complicated pattern, but worked out well, Lemme pointed out. He said that the concept of maximizing a team score brought up some unusual situations: if a team had won its first vote, it would be able to lose the second contest in order to maximize the points spread in the third game, thus gaining more points. Another incident occurred in the Baker-SAE softball game, where Baker wanted to bat in the bottom half of the last inning (although it had already won the game) in order to score more runs and pick up points. However, the team was not allowed to do so.

As for the future of Octathon, Lemme pointed out that the Intramural Chairman should alter the contest, because knowledge of the individual sport managers is vital for assigning referees. Lemme said that he took care of the details of the competition save for referees, whose assignments were handled by the individual managers. He reasoned that someone who did not know the managers would have a tough time bringing together all the loose ends.

In two years, he noted, hockey should be in the position to round out the Octathon schedule, since by that time availability of ice would not be a problem, whereas the present lack of an ice rink would have made hockey competition nearly impossible this year. Even so, field space was extremely tight since the 22 entries this year were more than Lemme expected. Should more teams plan to enter next year, steps might have to be taken to limit the teams to one per living group, since it is hard to have two teams entered. Lemme pointed out the example of Alpha Epsilon Pi, which entered two teams this year with less than perfect roster numbers. However, in all, the competition ran very smoothly and it appears that Octathon will be a fixture of MIT sports for some time to come.

Baker House rainmaker Ray Nagem '80 scored two points in a game against Brandeis. The Engineers open their home basketball season against Brandeis next Thursday at 7:30pm in Rockwell Cage. (Photo by J. M. Grunfeld)

Big three returning for O'Brien

By Eric R. Fleming

Led by forwards Ray Nagem '80, the MIT men's basketball team opens its 1979-80 season next Tuesday at Bobom, hoping to greatly improve last year's 5-17 record.

Despite the presence of four returning starters from the '78-'79 squad, the Engineers are a young club, including two freshmen and three sophomores on the 12-man varsity roster. In addition to Nagem, who was the team MVP with a 16.1 point per game scoring average, and 56.1 shooting percentage from the field, MIT is expecting good seasons from co-captain Geoff Holman '80, a 6-2 forward, and 6-4 forward Bob Clarke '81, the team's leading rebounder last year. The backcourt is led by Keith Baker '81 and Mike Weiss '82, with sophomore Andy Krystal and freshmen Mark Branch and Bob Joseph. O'Brien is looking forward to a lot of action. Coming off the bench for MIT are junior forwards Kevin Hawkins (who missed action due to a knee injury) and Bill Shetron, and forwards Dave Delies '82 and George Felt '80.

Coach Frank O'Brien is optimistic about his club, noting that the pre-season practices have been "very good," with the team picking up new concepts well. Also, O'Brien adds that enthusiasm is high and that the attitude among the players is excellent. O'Brien hopes to see the defense, ranked third in NCAA Division 3 last year, improve still further. The team also wishes to improve its shooting, which was less than 49 percent from the field, with Nagem being the only regular to connect on over 43 percent of his field goal attempts.

The team's lack of size may play a role in its success, with no one on the squad over 6'4. This small size may hurt MIT at both ends of the floor. O'Brien will employ a three forward, two guard offensive, instead of playing with a dominant center type of attack. Above average speed will attempt to offset the size problem. O'Brien states: "Important to MIT's hopes for this year will be the first half of its schedule. Nine of the ten opponents defeated the Engineers in '78-'79, a season which saw them lose seven of their first ten games, and go 1-9 on the road. With improving teams such as Babson and Brandeis (MIT's home opening foe on Thursday, November 29 at 7:30pm), and perennial 20-game winner Tufts on the Engineers schedule, O'Brien says, "The first ten games present a real challenge for us." O'Brien is counting on his forward trio of Clarke, Holman, and Nagem (who suffered a minor knee injury in a recent scrimmage, and has seen limited action in last Thursday's and Friday's practices) to carry the load in '79-'80. Their fortunes will go a long way in determining the outcome of the team's season.

Ray Nagem '80 scores two points in a game against Brandeis. The Engineers open their home basketball season against Brandeis next Thursday at 7:30pm in Rockwell Cage. (Photo by J. M. Grunfeld)