Samuelsen key to defensive team play

By Eric R. Fleming

If one word could be used to describe the ever-improving basketball program at MIT, "guarde" would be a good choice. Mark Branch has helped the men's team tremendously with his fine play and attitude, and not to be outdone, the women's team has a backcourt gem of their own in captain Karen Samuelsen. The 5'6" S. J. junior, who hails from Oakdale, NY, leads the Engineers in scoring with a 13.2 average, and along with sophomore Susan Flint, makes up the front line of a defense that is fourth among Eastern Division schools in scoring defense.

A "veteran" of nine years of court experience, Samuelsen has also played field hockey, field hockey, volleyball (she is currently on the MIT women's team), and has run track during her high school and college career. No shrinking violet, Samuelsen feels that playing with men has helped her game the most, mentioning, "Girls have a definite disadvantage in basketball in that we start way too late, whereas guys are playing when they're in fourth or fifth grade." Samuelsen has taken her share of bumps and bruises as well as enjoyed the feeling of medical attention, but she never has let a feeling of insecurity interfere with her playing. She is an example of the "fun above all else" attitude that Coach Fleming and the players have. Samuelsen credits Heiney with instilling this philosophy, and gives praise to the two "veteran" seniors (1979-'80 edition of women's basketball, seeing improvement in older players such as Donna Wilson '82, Lisa Fleming '82, Denise Martini '80, and giving praise to the two teams combining for 58 turnovers, and margin. For sure, the game was not the bestplayed, but a contest where the home team, with wins this week over Yeshiva, 85-52, and Suffolk, 80-59, raised its record to 12-7, establishing its first winning season since 1972.

The win over Suffolk Wednesday in Rockwell Cage was the team's seventh in its last eight contests. Forward Geoff Holmes '80 was the star, scoring 22 points on six-for-seven shooting from the floor, with six steals thrown in for good measure. Ray Nagel '80, Mark Branch '83, and Bob Clarke '81 also hit in double figures (in addition, Clarke hauled in 14 rebounds) as the Engineers brol'e the game 88-71. According to O'Brien, "the game had a lot of breaks in it," but "the game was not the best-played, with the two teams combining for 58 turnovers, and at times play became extremely sloppy. However, it was a good team effort for MIT, as the team did the things it had to do to win."