MIT Soccer beats Bates, 2-1

By Eric R. Fleming

The soccer team, winning its first four starts, ended their drought by pulling off one of the biggest upsets in the New England soccer scene this fall. Led by junior Guillermo Abadia's pair of goals midway through the second half, Tech hung on to defeat Bates 2-1 at Steinbrenner Stadium Saturday. Bates was ranked third in New England Division III this week.

Weather conditions were a definite factor in the game, which featured a great deal of fierce action in front of both goals. A stiff breeze blew throughout the contest, which worked against the Engineers in the first half. The wind took many of the goalie kicks, causing the midfielders to misjudge many balls. As a result, Bates kept the play in the MIT end during most of the half.

Goalie Bob Schaefer '83 was called on to make several saves, including a diving stop of a blast from 25 feet. Despite the pressure, Tech had the best scoring chances. Jay Walsh '81 eluded the Bates defenders, but the ball was cleared away just before crossing the goal line. Walsh also had a breakaway broken up by the Bates goalie with 1:30 remaining in the half. The half ended in a scoreless tie.

Early in the period, Bates took the game to MIT. It was at this point that much of the tough play took place. Two or three of the infractions called in or near the penalty area could have gone either way, but were called against Bates, not the Engineers. Later, Tech began to apply pressure, but still could not put the ball in the net. Malcolm Duke '83 missed two near-perfect opportunities, including a shot that hit the crossbar with 24 minutes left. Finally, at 09:24, Abadia scored as he took advantage of another goal-mouth display. Even so, the junior's shot hit the right goal post and trickled in. Just five minutes later, Abadia converted again on a picture-perfect pass from Walsh. The senior forward from Foxboro led the breakaway break, forced the defense to retake the ball, then gave the ball to Abadia, who had only the goalie to beat. The entire play was set up with a bouncing ball by Schaefer, who used the wind to its full advantage.

Down a pair, Bates took the play, and scored just three minutes later; however, Schaefer was not as fortunate as the ball hit the crossbar with 24 minutes left.

Bates controlled the play, as evidenced by its eight shots to MIT's five. Yet, the difference was in the nets, as Schaefer made 11 saves, and clearly outplayed the starting Bates goalie, who did not look sharp, and was replaced after Abadia's first goal. Walsh also played a strong game, setting up a goal, and coming close to scoring himself. Overall, the team played well when it had to, and the victory was a satisfying one, especially in light of a couple of tough defeats in the last week.

MIT stunned Bates, 2-1, in a major upset last Saturday at Briggs field. John Shim '83, battles two Bates defenders for the ball. (Photo by Al O'Connor)