By Eric R. Fleming

Following Saturday's 42-7 drubbing over Roger Williams, MIT football has reached a high point. The team now stands at 4-1, and is assured of its first winning season since its re-emergence in 1978. Most importantly, interest in the team, which last year was on the slim side, seems to have picked up.

The crowd at Saturday's Homecoming, which did not reach capacity until midway through the first quarter, featured a number of Institute dignitaries, including Dean for Student Affairs Robert Holden, Faculty Chairman Sheila Widnall, Clarence Williams, special assistant to the President, and Vice-President Constantine Simonides. Simonides kept President Paul Gray's tradition of last year alive by doing the "Beaver Call" with the Tech cheerleaders.

If one word could be used to describe the typical MIT gridiron crowd, "obnoxious" would be a good first choice. Attending a football game here can be compared to viewing an LSC movie in terms of obnoxiousness. The marching band is an excellent example. The band "dumps" on cheerleaders, on the officials, and on innocent reporters who ask questions. Of course, all of this is in fun, and adds to the play on the field.

Crowd responsiveness to the "spirit-leading" groups is lackluster at times. A band number such as "V-I-C-T-O-R-Y" doesn't really excite the crowd. The cheerleading squad has more success, especially when Robert Thompson '82 spells out "Massachusetts Institute of Technology."

Many of the fans in the stands on Saturday had attended the Fairfield game two weeks ago, or witnessed MIT in action last year. One first-time fan, Marie Macaluso '84 enjoyed the game and noted, "If they continue playing like this, I'll be out more often." Cheryl Stoversteiner '80 came out because she likes football, and also because she was "practicing cheering for the (Philadelphia) Eagles." Two students from Wellesley, Kris Hallett '84 and Emily Rowland '83 had somewhat personal reasons for attending: friends on the team. In addition, according to Hallett, "We miss football at Wellesley." Phil Zylberman '80, a Pi Lambda Phi alumnus, comes to have a good time; he says of last year's parade, "We floated the flutist." Also, team seniors Jay Napoleon and Rich Scheumann are brothers of P.I.P.

Following last year's Homecoming game, crowds at the remaining games were rather sparse. Does this suggest that people go to Homecoming just because it is Homecoming? The question cannot be answered yet. A positive note: people are asking about the football team, something which did not occur too often in 1979. With just three years under its belt, MIT football cannot be considered a tradition, and maybe a few more years are needed to really establish the sport in the community. To date, however, the signs are promising.

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