MIT water polo breaks even 2-2

By Buzzy Sawyer

The MIT women’s water polo team earned a 2-2 tournament record at the Eastern Championships at Bucknell University last weekend. The team now holds an 8-3 season record.

Competition among the 12 East Coast teams was unpredictable and exciting as many of the teams had not previously played one another.

The Saturday morning opener saw MIT swimming smoothly and confidently, handing the Annapolis women a tidy 11-5 defeat. The Tech women drove, shot, and scored four quick goals in the first quarter. Second and third quarter play was steady and strong enough to defend against a determined Annapolis attack. MIT clinched the game several goals later, posting an important first round victory.

MIT returned to the pool to continue its winning ways, defeating a team from Mechanicsburg, PA, 8-5. While the Mechanicsburg team swam with speed and skill, holding MIT to a 5-4 halftime score, the Tech women returned after halftime with all the right moves. During the second half, MIT’s defense prevailed, shutting down a speedy Mechanicsburg attack. The offense then ripped four goals in to capture a second MIT victory and advance to the tournament semi-finals.

The third match of the day for MIT was against a fiery Chicago squad whose aggressive offense stunned the Tech women. Chicago swam to an early first-half lead, and despite Tech’s powerful rebound throughout the second half, the MIT women could not overcome the earlier deficit. MIT lost, 4-9. In its final round of competition, MIT met the top-seeded team from Slippery Rock. The first quarter left MIT trailing 0-5. The Tech women could only counter with a second quarter freeze, unable to overcome the Slippery Rock defense; it was only late in the fourth quarter that MIT’s hole player hurled the first, and score after, a second and final MIT goal into the Slippery Rock net, leaving the final tally at 2-0. The Eastern Championship tournament concluded Sunday afternoon. Slippery Rock swam away with the title, followed by outstanding performances by Bucknell University, Queens College and the University of Chicago, respectively.

This weekend, the Tech women will host a tournament at the Alumni Pool. MIT will play Harvard “B” at 5:30 pm on Friday, University of Massachusetts at Amherst at 10 am on Saturday, Harvard “A” at 2 pm, and Brown at 5 pm.

(Editors’ Note: Buzzy Sawyer is a coaching assistant for the women’s water polo club.)

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