By David Rothstein

MIT regains NEW8 volleyball title from Smith

MIT captured the New England Women's Eight Conference volleyball title from Smith College Saturday with a 15-9, 15-10, 15-1 stouping of the Pioneers at Babson College. It was MIT's second title in the three-year history of the NEW8 playoffs, which MIT hosted and won in its inaugural year. Last year the Engineers lost to Smith in the NEW8 finals at Wellesley College.

Saturday's match was in many respects a mirror-image to last year's final, which Smith won thanks to the skill of NEW8 1988 Volleyball Athlete of the Year Nancy Satchwell and guidance of Coach of the Year Bonnie May. MIT's Ronda Altman '78 won this year's Coach of the Year honors, while senior Engineer co-captain Cecilia Warpinski was selected as the 1989 Volleyball Athlete of the Year.

The Engineers reached Saturday's final with an easy win over Wheaton College in a quarter-final game Thursday evening at MIT, and a 15-5, 15-11, 15-11 win over the fourth-seeded Mount Holyoke Rams Saturday morning in the semifinals.

MIT clearly outplayed the Rams, and it was the Engineers' sloppy play in great part that kept the scores close. But credit must be given to Mount Holyoke for recovering from a first-game blowout to serve well in the second game, disrupting MIT's offense. The championship match began on a higher level, with both teams playing well the first few points. However, before Smith called for a timeout at 10-10, MIT got caught on this number, and let Smith fight back to a 12-10 lead. Warpinski and Debbie Nungester '90 and a Nungester block of a Smith overpass put MIT ahead by a two-point margin. The Engineers quickly scored on a kill by Tanya Parker '90, a service ace by Nyla Hendrick '92 and a couple of Smith errors to tie the score at five.

Five MIT points in the second game came directly off the serve as Smith could not find the right combination of receivers, and MIT lost, 15-10.

They could have called the match after two games, but did not. Instead, the Engineers turned it over, with the match, appropriately, with yet another service winner. Sophomore middle hitter Cindy Pfennig floated a serve to the Pioneers' left-back corner, and no Smith player thought it could have landed inside the white lines.

Point, game and match to MIT. The title was back.

With its conference title, MIT (28-4) won an automatic bid to the NCAA Division III Nationals and will meet Ohio Northern University in Ada, Ohio, in the opening round. The Engineers will have to go without Altman, who is expecting her second child any day. Coaching duties will be taken up by assistant coaches DaveInsley and Jean Heiney.

MIT had put in a bid to host the Regional round of the championship, but MIT learned that it could only host teams from New England are in this year's playoffs. Altman did not expect that this would work for the Regional round. She said that Ohio was one of the sites to which MIT could travel for the short and direct plane ride, rather than the long bus ride to upstate New York, or a long plane trip to California.

In last year's Regional, MIT traveled even further, to the University of California, San Diego, losing in the first round to Pomona College.

The Engineers have met the No. 1 team in the nation on only one other occasion, losing to Ohio State in the second round of the 1986 NCAA playoffs.

Bentley edges out Beavers

By Shawn Mastroian

The Beavers suffered only their second loss of the football season to a tough Bentley team last Saturday in a game that could have gone either way. The contest, which ended 21-20, was decided in the final seconds as a two-point conversion attempt by the Beavers was snuffed, resulting in the loss.

The game started out ominously enough as Bentley ran back the opening kickoff for a touchdown and a quick 7-0 lead. MIT quickly responded by marching down the field and a one-yard touchdown. The key to this drive was a powerful offensive line surge, led by senior center Don Ewart. This allowed the "Rocket Backfield" of Tim Day '89, Shawn LaHouse '90, and Garret Moore '90 to run free and push the ball down to the Falcon 36. From here, Day passed the ball to an open Meese, who ran the ball all the way in for three. Freshman Dan McGahn's kick knotted the score at seven.

From here, the teams exchanged punts, and then mental mistakes began to hurt the Beavers. Tony Lapes '90 had punted the ball to Bentley, but a facemask call against MIT put the Falcons in business at the MIT 45. Here, the defense had apparently stopped Bentley on three plays, but on the punt, a defensive holding call gave the Falcons a first-down. Once again, it appeared that Bentley had stopped Bentley, as when the Falcons threw an incomplete pass on fourth-down, it should have been a MIT ball. A defender jumped penalties, however, and Bentley once again had a first-down without moving the ball. Given all these chances, Bentley scored on the next play on a perfectly thrown pass, giving them a 14-7 lead.

These mistakes carried over to the offense. After a 25-yard snap by Lapes put them in Bentley territory, a holding penalty stalled this drive. The two teams then engaged in a punt-a-thon for the rest of the half. The typical Falcon drive was three plays one of their drives netted them minus 10 yards) as the MIT defense was, simply put, dominating. The offense showed signs of life as they were able to move the ball, but they could never move the ball into the endzone. The first half ended with this score.

The second half opened rather nondescriptly as well. MIT punt ed on their first possession, and an interception by Darcy Prather '91 stopped the Bentley drive. The Beavers then punted, and the Falcons in turn failed on a fourth down conversion. While not very exciting, the Beavers were, at least, pinned deep in their own territory, the offense decided that they had had enough.

Moore ran for seven, and then LaHouse picked up MIT's first down of the second half, thanks to a key block on the outside by Jon Ertischek '91. Moore and LaHouse then combined to run for another first down, but that was all they could get as the defense shut down the passing attack. The punt, however, put Bentley on their own 12.

A run, a facemask call by Mike Ahrens '91 pushed them back four more, and Rick Bennett's punt was downed a pass to stop this drive. The punt set up Bentley at the Falcon 36.

This time just moving the ball wasn't enough for the Beavers. After a botched option play, Day ran twice for 20 yards, and then Moore pushed his way through the middle for a 20-yard run.

With 35 seconds left on the clock, Tim Day scrambles right and hits Doug Smith for a 79-yard pass. (Please turn to page 25)

Learning a few lessons from volleyball triumph

Feature

By David Rothstein

A few lessons learned from Saturday's day at Babson:

Lesson No. 1: You don't have to play very well if your opponents play worse than you do. Certainly, the Engineers did not play their best to beat Smith. Altman was the good exception that MIT displayed in beating several of its opponents this season. Smith coach Bonnie May was gracious in her post-game commentary, saying that MIT "played very well [and] didn't make any mistakes." MIT coach Ronda Altman '78 was a bit more to the point.

"The scores don't by any means reflect the imagination that we indicated we played well.

In general, however, we have a stronger all-around team," Alt man said, comparing Saturday's match to last year's MIT-Smith championship final andcalling her skirters for "hanging in there," despite struggling.

Lesson No. 2: Even if you don't play very well, but you still win, you can enjoy it. Especially if you win a conference title.

"This was our way to National," said senior co-captain and NEW8 Volleyball Athlete of the Year Cecilia Warpinski after the match. "Now we're secure, happy, and - psyched."

"It was a good day for us," Warpinski said, standing a few yards from the post-match crowd of players (10), manager (one), coaches (three), fans (five) and parents (two). "That was the MVP without the team." Nor would Altman be Coach of the Year.

Lesson No. 3: Volleyball and dancing don't mix. At least not for Smith.

"I want to be in love with you... oooh, oooh, oooh..."

"The words floated from the upper player that Smith had up during the pregame warmups. Pioneers were given as a baseline with tiles tied through the collar, beachstyle, and went into a "beach, shoulder-wave" dance routine.

"I want to be in love with you..."

It looked like it took them a while to practice the routine. "Oooh, oooh, oooh.

"Apparently, Smith has been (Please turn to page 25)