

# ATHLETE OF THE WEEK



DAVID SHEPPARD-BRICK/the Justice

## Olivia Alford '08

■ The sprinter turned in a career-best performance by winning two events at this weekend's UAA championships in Atlanta.

Normally, slow starts derail any chance for a strong result in races like the 200- and 400-meter dashes. But at this weekend's University Athletic Association championships in Atlanta, Olivia Alford '08 more than made up for slow starts with fast finishes.

The sprinter had a breakout performance, coming from behind to win the 400-meter dash with a time of 59.09 seconds, while placing second in the 200-meter dash with a time of 26.46 seconds.

"I'm not really a sprinter anymore, so I don't really work on my starts out of the box, but in the straightaways, I started using my arms and really pumping my legs," she said.

Coming into the final stretch of the 400-meter race, Alford sat in fourth place, but she used a strong kick on the final straightaway to win by just over two-tenths of a second.

"I was surprised that I was able to run without getting too tired," she said. "It must have been the adrenaline of everything going really well."

Due to a semifinal run that was only third-best among the finalists, Alford was relegated to the outside lane, usually the least-desirable position on the track. She said, however, that it actually gave her an advantage in this race.

"[Being in the outside lane] is usually not good, but for the last straightaway, I knew I had my energy left," she said. "[The runners] passed me on the turns, but I was able to pass them back."

It was a similar script for Alford in the 200-meter dash, as she rebounded from a slow start to speed into second place. Her 18 points for the meet were good for nearly a quarter of the Judges' final total.

Going into the end of this season, Alford said this weekend's performance will do wonders for her confidence.

"[Thriving at UAAs] was really important, mostly because it'll probably put pressure on myself to try to uphold [my own] standards," she said.

—Mike Prada

# just Briefs

## AP BRIEFS

### Suns withstand Bryant's first-half explosion, beat Lakers in Game One

PHOENIX—For a long time Sunday, the Phoenix Suns couldn't make a shot and Kobe Bryant couldn't miss.

Then Leandro Barbosa brought the NBA's highest-scoring offense to life, and Bryant went from awesome to awful.

The result was a second-half rally that gave the Suns a 95-87 victory over the Los Angeles Lakers in their first-round Western Conference playoff opener.

Barbosa showed why he is a leading candidate for the NBA's sixth man award. The super-speedy guard scored 19 of his 26 points in the second half, including 15 consecutive Phoenix points in one stretch, to match his career playoff scoring high.

Amare Stoudemire, back in the postseason after missing last year's while recovering from two knee surgeries, added 23 points and 12 rebounds.

Bryant scored 39, but only 11 in the second half. The NBA's scoring champ was 1-for-10 shooting in the fourth quarter, when Phoenix pulled away.

That's right, a Suns team known for its prolific offense relied on defense. Phoenix held Los Angeles to 10 fourth-quarter points.

Nash had 20 points and 10 assists and Shawn Marion 16 points and 16 rebounds for a Phoenix team that struggled mightily on offense until Barbosa provide the spark, highlighted by a 31-footer at the third-quarter buzzer that cut the Lakers' lead to 77-74 entering the fourth.

Lamar Odom, who had to leave the game briefly to get five stitches in a cut over his left eye, had 17 points and 16 rebounds for Los Angeles.

Game 2 of the rematch of last year's first round series is tonight in Phoenix. The Suns won the opener last year, too, but lost the next three, then regrouped to win the last three.

### Bulls defeat defending champion Heat in Game One of first round

CHICAGO—The Miami Heat endured a difficult regular season. Defending their championship won't be easy, either.

Luol Deng scored 33 points, Ben Gordon and Andres Nocioni each hit two free throws in the final 19 seconds, and the Chicago Bulls held off the Heat 96-91 Saturday in Game One of their opening-round rematch.

The Heat trailed 92-91 after Dwyane Wade found Udonis Haslem for a layup with 38 seconds left, but Gordon hit two foul shots with 18 seconds remaining. After a timeout, Wade missed a three-pointer and Nocioni hit two more free throws with 9.8 seconds left for the final score.

Game Two is tonight in Chicago.

The Heat beat the Bulls in six emotional games last year on the way to the championship, but injuries limited them to 44 wins during the regular season. Still, this looked like a difficult matchup for a Bulls team that dropped from the second seed to No. 5 when it lost the finale to New Jersey.

Wade scored nine of his 21 points in the fourth quarter, and Shaquille O'Neal finished with 19 points before fouling out.

Deng, who enjoyed a breakout season but had struggled against the Heat, made it look easy this time, hitting 14 of 22 shots. Gordon chipped in with 24 points and a career-high 11 assists, and Nocioni scored 17 points.

That was enough to offset a rough outing by Kirk Hinrich, who finished with two points and had four fouls.

The Bulls appeared to be in control late in the third quarter. Tyrus Thomas blocked consecutive shots by Gary Payton and Antoine Walker (20 points), then broke the other way for an alley-oop dunk that made it 70-59. Gordon's 19-foot jumper made it 72-59 with 38 seconds left in the quarter.

O'Neal and Wade headed to the sideline with their fifth fouls about 3 1/2 minutes into the fourth, but the Heat pulled within 78-76 after two free throws by Walker.

Miami's stars checked in with 4:58 remaining and the Bulls ahead by three. Nocioni's three-pointer made it 84-76 with 4:24 left, and when he drove the lane and got fouled by O'Neal with 3:19 remaining, things were looking good for the Bulls.

### Rangers sweep Thrashers for first playoff series victory since 1997

NEW YORK—The New York Rangers finally got a chance to party like it was 1997.

Matt Cullen banged in a shot off the crossbar early in the third period, snapping a tie and helping New York to a 4-2 victory over the Atlanta Thrashers Wednesday night that put the Rangers into the second round of the playoffs for the first time in a decade.

A year after being swept out of the first round by New Jersey in their return to the playoffs, following a seven-season absence, the Rangers turned the trick on the Thrashers, who exited their first series in four games.

Cullen fired a rolling puck from just inside the blue line that smacked the iron and dropped on its side just over the goal line at two minutes, six seconds. It withstood a lengthy video review and gave the Rangers their first series win since ousting New Jersey from the second round in 1997.

Sixth-seeded New York earned its first home playoff victory since 1997 Tuesday upon returning to Madison Square Garden after taking the first two games in Atlanta. It was the Rangers' first sweep since the opening round of the 1994 playoffs, the year they last won the Stanley Cup.

Fresh off a 7-0 victory in Game Three on Tuesday, the Rangers had a much tougher time with goalie Johan Hedberg than Kari Lehtonen. Hedberg stopped 37 shots in a 2-1 loss in Game Two but Thrashers coach Bob Hartley made the curious decision to go back to Lehtonen, the 4-3 loser in the opener.

Michal Rozsival and Shanahan wiped out one-goal advantages and put Cullen in position for the game-winner. Jagr scored into an empty net with 1:33 remaining.

Henrik Lundqvist made 24 saves for the Rangers, who held a 17-6 scoring edge and 143-99 shots advantage in the series.

## Judging numbers

**3** of the last four Bowdoin Polar Bears' batters were hit by Judges' pitchers during the baseball team's 6-5 loss Sunday. Tyler Robinson '08 hit the first of the three batters, and Kyle Ritchie '10 hit the last two as Bowdoin overcame a 5-3 ninth-inning deficit.

**9**-point separation in the final score of two women's tennis matches at the UAA championships in Cleveland this weekend. The Judges shut out the University of Rochester 9-0 Saturday after dropping a 9-0 match to the University of Chicago a day earlier.

**4** All-UAA honors earned by the men's outdoor track team during the UAA championships this weekend. Machel Charles '07 took second in the 400-meter run and Mark Bercy '07 came in third in the 110-meter hurdles, while the Judges also took All-UAA honors in the 4 x 400 and 4 x 800 meter relays.

**2** first-place finishes earned by the women's outdoor track team at Sunday's UAAs. Olivia Alford '08 won the 400-meter dash with a time of 59.09 seconds, while Anat Ben Nun '09 took first place for the third time in her career in the triple jump.

**9** batters sent to the plate by the softball team during the seventh inning of its victory in the second game of its 4-1 doubleheader against Bowdoin College Saturday. The Judges scored all four of their runs in the game during that inning. Shortstop Chelsea Korp '10 started the rally by beating out a throw for a bunt single to start the inning.

## UPCOMING GAME OF THE WEEK

### MTennis at the UAA Championships

The Judges compete in the UAA championships from Friday to Sunday.

The men's tennis team will travel to Cleveland this week in search of redemption at this year's University Athletic Association Championships.

The Judges finished last place out of eight teams at last year's UAAs, but come into this year's tournament with positive momentum, having won five of their last seven matches.

By contrast, Brandeis lost five of seven matches heading into last year's UAAs, spoiling a promising season that began with a 6-0 start.

In their most recent match, the Judges lost 6-1 at Division I Boston College. They will host Wesleyan College in their regular season finale today at 3 p.m.

## TEAM LEADERS

### Baseball (batting average, min. 20 AB)

Outfielder Ben Dashefsky '07 leads the Judges with a .340 batting average so far this season.

Player	AVG
Ben Dashefsky	.333
Chuck Sheehan	.317
Ryan Healey	.316
James Likis	.300
Zach Golden	.299

### Baseball (strikeouts)

Tyler Robinson '08 has struck out a team-high 47 batters from the mound.

Player	SO
Tyler Robinson	47
Drew Brzozowski	23
Craig Letendre	19
James Collins	14
Kyle Ritchie	11

### Softball (batting average, min. 20 AB)

First baseman Natalie Volpe '08 paces the Judges' lineup with a .400 batting average.

Player	AVG
Natalie Volpe	.400
Kaitlin Streilein	.370
Danielle Mayer	.341
Samantha Worth	.306
Chelsea Korp	.298

### Softball (strikeouts)

Rookie hurler Natalie Volpe '08 has tallied a team-best 45 strikeouts for the Judges.

Player	SO
Natalie Volpe	45
Allie Mussen	41
Emily Vaillette	26
Kaitlin Streilein	21

## UAA STANDINGS

### Baseball

Not including Monday's games

	UAA Conference		Overall		Pct.
	W	L	W	L	
Emory	4	2	30	7	.811
<b>JUDGES</b>	3	3	11	11	.500
Rochester	3	3	16	7	.696
Washington	3	3	24	8	.750
Case	2	4	10	12	.455
Chicago	0	0	9	12	.429

### Softball

Not including Monday's games

	UAA Conference		Overall		Pct.
	W	L	W	L	
Rochester	6	2	16	5	.762
Washington	6	2	23	5	.821
Emory	4	4	28	6	.824
<b>JUDGES</b>	2	6	15	15	.500
Case	2	6	13	11	.542
Chicago	0	0	18	8	.692