

TEAM PREVIEWS — BY MIKE PRADA

# JustSports fall preview: Judges looking to build on success

## Men's tennis rebuilds; women return together

When the men's and women's tennis teams hit the courts this fall, they will do so with varying levels of experience.

The men's team will enter the season with an entirely new starting lineup after losing its top six players, including 2005 University Athletic Association Player of the Year Sam Jonas '07, to graduation. Coach Ben Lamanna will rely heavily on rookies Simon Miller '11, Jason Sacher '11 and Stephen Niemen '11 to fill the void.

"After two years on the job, I feel like I'm starting over again [on the men's side]," Lamanna said.

Although Lamanna said he hasn't decided on a lineup yet, Miller will likely replace Jonas at the top.

He was a highly-ranked junior in Florida and received inquiries from several Division I schools before deciding to come to Brandeis.

Meanwhile, the women's team loses just one starter from last season's sixth place UAA squad. Colleen Donnelly '08, Ana Katz '08 and Gabrielle Helfgott '09 will anchor the top three spots in the lineup.

Lamanna said he has high expectations for Katz this season.

"Ana has been working her butt off," Lamanna said. "She's improved a lot over the summer and has really been working hard."

## Golf looks for stable play

Despite setting a school record for its best aggregate team score, the golf team still finished in last place at last season's University Athletic Association Championships.

With every key contributor returning this season, the Judges hope they can escape the cellar.

"We are as talented as all the teams in our division," Aaron Hattenbach '09 said.

"The problem is consistency and getting our whole team to shoot in the 70s. One or two guys [each week] isn't going to get us a championship."

Two seniors, Jeff Stein '08 and Alex Botwick '08, as well as three juniors, Hattenbach, Alex Podell '09 and Ralph Harary '09, comprise

an experienced starting lineup.

Stein led the squad with a score of 13 over par at the UAA Championships, and Hattenbach, who led the team in scoring average during the 2006 fall season, is looking to rebound after struggling with mononucleosis early in the spring.

Captain Dan Shani '08 also returns after a semester abroad to provide depth.

"[Our depth] will keep things competitive within our team, and there's no guarantee of certain players playing every match," Hattenbach said.

The Judges begin the season at the Bowdoin College invitational Sept. 8 at noon.

## New depth bolsters volleyball

The volleyball team retains every key contributor from last season's East Coast Athletic Conference championship squad, but coach Michelle Kim said the incoming rookies will still compete for starting positions.

"Competition is a good thing," she says. "It makes a team better to have players that are not too comfortable in their shoes, and [the newcomers] mean we have more of that this year than last year."

Newcomers Elizabeth Villalind '11, Nicole Smith '11 and Abby Blasco '11 join a returning nucleus that includes outside hitter Lorraine Wingenbach '09 and middle blocker Piera Carfagno '10. Wingenbach, the most valuable player of the ECAC tournament, and Carfagno both made the all-University Athletic Association team last season.

Setter Violette Ruggiero '09, middle blocker Bridget McAllister '10, outside hitter Becca Schwartz '09 and outside position player Ashley Powers '08 fill out the starting lineup, and captain libero Shannon Trees '08 is back to anchor the defense.

A key for continued improvement will be performing better on the road. The Judges won all ten of their home matches last season, but finished 12-17 away from Red Auerbach Arena.

"When we're at away games, we need to focus on the game and not where we're playing," Trees said. "We need to think that we're going to win the game, no matter who we're playing."

The Judges begin the season on the road against Wellesley College Sept. 4 at 7 p.m.



SARA BRANDENBURG/the Justice

GETTING STARTED: Libero Shannon Trees '08, front, practices her serve.

## Despite falling just short of Nationals, men's cross country on the rise

Despite its first top-10 finish in New England since 2001, the men's cross country team finished just short of qualifying for the NCAA Championships last season.

Head coach John Evans says the team has sufficient motivation for this season after several members suffered food poisoning at last year's University Athletic

Association championships.

"We were good enough to qualify last year, but we got unlucky when we went into New England with six of our top seven runners sick," Evans said.

"We want to be at that level where we thought we were last season."

To exceed their sixth place finish at Regionals, the Judges must

replace two of its top four runners. Promising rookie Brian McDonald, who finished with the third-fastest time among rookies in Regionals last season, transferred to Loyola Marymount, and captain Joel Sunshine '07 graduated.

All other key contributors from last season return, and Evans welcomes in one of the top recruiting

classes in the region.

"We have five or six guys that have even stronger credentials than [McDonald] had coming in [last year]," Evans said.

The women's team finished 13th at Regionals last season, but its top three finishers—Megan Bisceglia '07, Camille Stevens-Rumann '07 and Mary Schillinger '07—all graduated. Evans admits

that this may be a transitional year for the Judges, but Emily Terrin '08, Katy Agule '09 and Ally Connelly '10 all return to lead the way, and they will be joined by many new recruits.

The two squads begin the season at the University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth Invitational Sept. 15 at 10 a.m.

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