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## Mules on the Move

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## Ruggers Earn Way to Nationals

Mules show last year's success was no fluke

By Matt Apuzzo '00

If opponents have underestimated the Colby men's rugby team, that should change. The White Mules clinched their second consecutive trip to national competition recently, and rivals are learning that last year's surprise appearance in the national spotlight was no fluke.

Last season, the Mules won one of two games in the regional tourney, but Yale University swept the playoffs and clinched the national tournament berth. When the Yale Bulldogs unexpectedly withdrew from the national tournament, depleted by injuries after a spring-break trip to Europe, Colby was given the nod.

This year, with a strong core of seniors returning, the Mules wanted to prove that they belonged with the best in the country. After a 7-0 regular season, they trampled Le Moyne College (N.Y.) 78-3 in the New England playoffs. The win sent a message to opponents waiting at the regionals. "Yeah, we went to nationals last season but it was basically just blind luck," said veteran "prop" Sean Scott '00 after the



Colby, in white, goes head to head with Le Moyne in the New England playoffs.

win over Le Moyne. "It's very important to us this year to go out and win it outright."

When the Mules got to Amherst, Mass., for the regional playoffs, they didn't waste any time, jumping on SUNY College at Oneonta early and running to a 34-17 victory that put them one win away from nationals. Fans and players came to see Colby face Central Connecticut—a squad many believed to be one of the strongest and most

talented in the region—to see if the Mules were for real. The result was a 20-10 victory that gave Colby more than just another tournament berth. It gave the Mules vindication.

"We heard other teams talking during the first game," said Steve Ward '00, who scored three times during the tournament weekend. "Everyone thought we were going to get killed by Central. It feels really good to show everybody. We lost a lot of players to gradua-

tion last year. To come back and do even better says a lot."

A lot indeed.

The White Mules were playing without captain David Normoyle '00, Russ Mink '02 and Corbin Brace '00 for most of both games. Injuries kept the three key contributors sidelined, but neither injuries nor opponents could keep Colby contained. "We have such great depth right now that there really wasn't too much to worry about," Brace said.

The Mules have all winter to rest, recover and train for national competition. Nor should circumstances easily sideline any Mules in the spring. Last year, when Normoyle found out Colby made the nationals, he put his studies in Spain on hold to fly home to compete. Chances are, since he will be in the country, he'll be on the field for the Mules this spring.

The tournament falls at the end of the spring season. Coach Robert Weggler reported Mayflower Hill would be the site for the Mules' opening game. ♦



Emi Domoto-Reilly '01, at right, moves the ball while teammates Lauren Rodier '02, center, and Rebecca Bruce '02 move up on offense.

## Tournament Win a Field Hockey First

For the first time in the history of the program, the field hockey team advanced to the second round of the ECAC Division III Tournament last fall, by besting No. 3 Wellesley, 3-2.

Wellesley led 1-0 until the sixth-seeded Mules tied it before halftime on a shot by Jaime Cassidy '00. In the second half, captain Robynne DeCaprio '00 fed a ball to Becca Bruce '02, who put the Mules ahead, 2-1.

Wellesley came back with 20 minutes left to tie it up, but an unassisted goal by Melanie Estrella '00 with five minutes remaining gave the win to Colby.

"It was definitely a strong game for us, since we had never made it past the first round of the playoffs before. So that was a really positive experience for all of us. It was very exciting," said Captain Jesse Davis '00.

The victory earned the White

## Toland Wins All-America Honors



Sarah Toland '00

A love of running fast and the discipline of training—but not too hard—came together brilliantly for Sarah Toland '00 in November when she placed 11th among 213 runners at the National NCAA Division III cross-country championship race. With a 17:18.5 time on the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh's five-kilometer course, she earned All America honors and set a new Colby record, lopping 9.5 seconds off Michelle Severance Isham '94's Colby best.

Before transferring to Colby as a sophomore, Toland ran simply

for pleasure. "I was never very serious about it," she said. That changed after the native Cape Codder raced in a lifeguard competition and learned she was darned fast.

Learning not to be too serious was her hardest lesson, according to women's running coach Debra Aitken. Toland sat out her sophomore year, injured. "It's definitely a challenge—getting her to realize that she needs to be healthy first," Aitken said.

When Toland says she takes running more seriously than academics, it's simply evidence of how much she loves to run; with a 3.9-plus GPA she is, along with other elite students in her class, a Julius Seelye Bixler Scholar.

As a senior Toland has her winter (indoor) and spring track seasons ahead and, though she claims not to be competitive, she said she would "like to break some records," perhaps in the three- and five-kilometer distances. "It's just a really great feeling to be running fast," she said.

Maria Mensching '02, who has a perfect 4.0 GPA and like Toland is a member of the NESCAC All-Academic team, was Colby's other qualifier for the national cross-country championship. With a personal best (17:58) on the 3.1-mile Oshkosh course, she finished 60th, solidly in the top third of the nation's best Division III runners. ♦

Mules the chance to play No. 2 Wesleyan. Shots on goal in that hard-fought semi-final were even up at 14, but Wesleyan scored late in the first half and again near the start of the second, and the Mules ultimately fell, 2-1. Lizzy Brandt '02 knocked in Colby's only goal late in the game off a penalty shot.

Colby recorded another first this season—its first win ever over Middlebury, the defending Division III champions. The

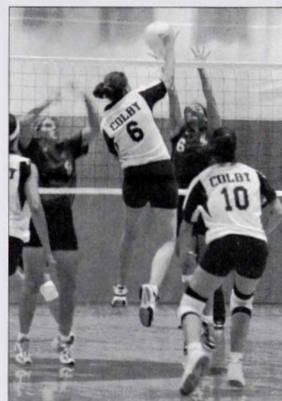
Mules defeated the Panthers, 3-2, in penalty strokes after two scoreless overtimes.

"We accomplished more than any Colby field hockey team to date, and we're really proud of that," said Davis, adding that every player on the squad got in the final game against Wesleyan. The Mules' strong bench, she said, bodes well for the future of the team.

The White Mules finished the season with a 9-7 record. ♦

## sports shorts

**Women's soccer**, 7-5-2 in the regular season, made its fifth consecutive post-season appearance, bowing to Amherst in the first round of the ECAC tournament. **Christine O'Donnell '03** led



Reagan Carey '01, left, and Jennifer Johnson '00.

NESCAC in regular-season scoring with 13 goals, a new Colby record. Just three players will graduate. . . . **Men's soccer**

finished 6-7-1, and **Jamie Lue '03** led scorers with five goals

and an assist. . . . **Football** (3-5) finished with a 20-0 romp over

Bowdoin. The defense tied the school record for interceptions in

a season with 18. **Dan Noyes '02** broke **David Lane '73's** school

record for receiving yards when

he got 164 against Tufts. But for

missing an overtime field goal attempt against Bates and a two-point conversion in a comeback bid versus Tufts, the Mules might

have been 5-3. . . . **Volleyball** (16-14) improved all year and took second at the State of Maine Tournament. **Reagan Carey '01**,

**Melissa Fiebelkorn '00**, and **Amanda Cuiffo '02** were First Team All-State. Fiebelkorn's 22 assists in a game and Cuiffo's 21 kills in

a three-game match both set Colby records. . . . At the Head of the Charles Regatta, the **men's crew** was the second Division III

team across the finish in the championship eights. Six seniors—

**Dave Sherwood, Andy Miller, Colin Truex, Sean Neville, Tyler Peterson** and **Chris LaPointe**—are staying in shape for their final

spring season. . . . **Women's crew** finished fifth at the Textile

River Regatta in Lowell, Mass., beating every NESCAC entry

except Williams. In their first trip to the Head of Charles championship level they finished second among Division III crews. . . .

**Men's cross country** placed 12th among 32 teams at the

ECACs. Top finisher for the Mules on the 8,000-meter course was

**Brendan Gavin '01** (27:43.13). . . . **Women's cross country**,

ranked fifth in New England in Division III all season, made its

debut in the national team rankings at 24th and won the State

Championship for the second year. Talk about depth—top

runners rested while the second seven raced in the ECACs and

placed fourth out of 35 teams. **Rachel Meiklejohn '02** finished in

20:25.31 to pace that group. . . . **Women's rugby**, 2-6 in the fall

season, finished with a 7-0 win over Bates. . . . **Women's tennis**

(3-7) placed 12th among 24 teams at the New England Women's

Intercollegiate Tournament (NEWITT). At number-one singles,

**Brittain Palmedo '03** had a 10-3 record. . . . **Men's tennis**

competed for the first time in the Middlebury Invitational, where

**Owen Patrick '01** and **John McManigal '03** reached the finals of

the number-one doubles flight but fell to Bates.