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Mules on the Move

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Goals and Aspirations

Impending move to Division III leaves women's hockey netminder in the line of fire

By Matt DiFilippo

This is what it was like to be sophomore Josie Chapman and play goalie for the Colby women's ice hockey team this season. On January 16 the White Mules trailed Dartmouth 2-0 when a Dartmouth penalty gave Colby a power play. The Mules lost the puck and Dartmouth got a two-on-nothing break. Chapman had no chance. Colby fell into a 3-0 hole on its way to a 7-0 loss.

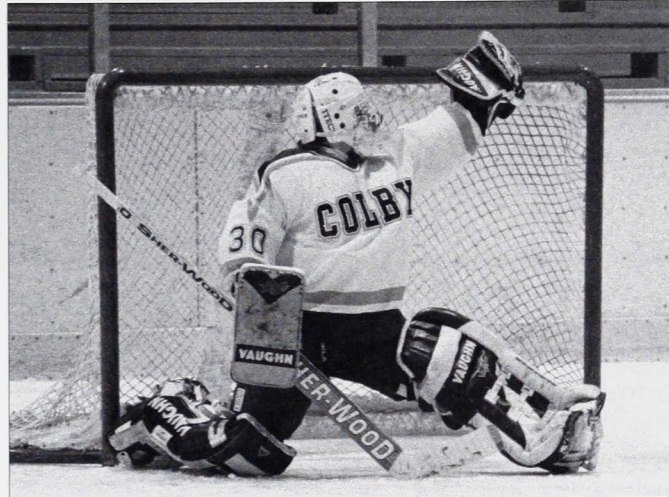
This season Chapman had too many difficult moments like that. Women's ice hockey finished its season (0-26), leaving some less-than-flattering numbers next to Chapman's name. She faced more than 1,400 shots—nearly 70 per game. She was scored on 198 times. She even suffered a concussion.

But a better measure of Chapman's performance is her saves percentage, which steadily improved to a respectable .879. "I think about the games a lot and run things through my mind," Chapman said. "The numbers haunt me."

Chapman said the last part with a laugh. But she lost sleep after the January 10 game against visiting Cornell, when she set the Eastern College Athletic Conference (ECAC) record with 83 saves as Colby was outshot, 94-6.

"It was hard," Chapman said. "We were losing to Cornell, 8-1, with a few minutes left in the game. Eight to one is not that bad. It ended up 11-1. We kind of fell apart. The numbers seem so high. It's hard to get those numbers out of your mind."

To be fair, there are numerous reasons for the winless record



Josie Chapman '01 had a record-setting season in goal.

and lopsided scores. Since Colby was a pioneer in women's ice hockey, with a varsity program that dates to 1975, it got in with the big schools (Brown, Harvard, Cornell etc.) early, before there were divisions to group teams by school size or skill level. Competition was always keen, and it escalated as women's hockey became more popular. Almost all Colby teams play in Division III, but even though different divisions were created for women's ice hockey Colby remained in Division I playing national powerhouses.

When the school announced last year that women's ice hockey would move to Division III beginning in 1999-2000, the final season in Division I already was locked in. But three of the Mules' top players transferred—two to the University of Minnesota and one to Boston College. Colby also lost two players to illness before its first game, and the school's all-time leading scorer, forward Meaghan Sittler, had graduated.

With so many departures the

Colby players and coaches knew they would struggle this season. Accordingly, they did an admirable job of staying loose and upbeat through a difficult year.

"I think the key was the mental preparation before the season," Colby captain Juliana Bontecou '99 said. "This year is sort of a tough-to-keep-your-heads-up year. The team's done a great job of that."

The Mules tried to set smaller goals throughout the season, like improving their play from period to period. Despite injuries that left them with only 14 players in some contests, despite playing in front of fewer than 100 fans in an average home game, their effort never wavered. Colby was shut out in 13 consecutive games late in the season. The 14th game was their closest of the year, a competitive 4-1 loss to Yale.

As for Chapman, she relished the opportunity to face so many shots. "It's hard losing," she said at mid-season. "But at the same time, I think we're all having a good time out there,

so it takes away from the fact that we're losing 13-0. I've certainly realized that you don't have to win to have fun. I'm having a blast. That's a goalie's dream, to face ninety-four shots in a game."

One game still stands out for Chapman. Just 12 days after setting the ECAC mark for saves in a game against Cornell she broke her own record with 95 saves against Brown. "That was an awesome game," she said. "I was just definitely on. It was very exciting and I was having a lot of fun."

Chapman has been playing organized hockey since age 4. At Moses Brown School in Rhode Island she played goalie for a boys' team. She has worked hard to improve her game, and her teammates appreciate her steady influence.

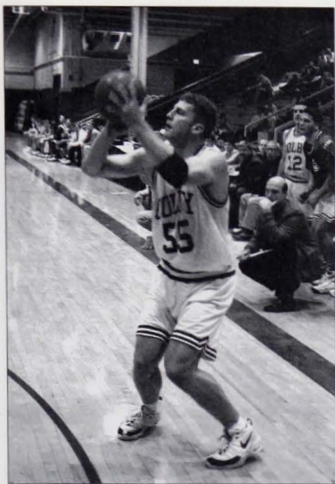
"Goalie is obviously a very mental position," Bontecou said. "It's tough to see a score like 15-0, 16-1 and see that the goalie played a good game. But the team sees it more than the public because they don't always look at the shots."

Next season in Division III Colby will be more competitive, and the players have talked about what it will be like to win again. For Chapman there will be fewer excuses if she gives up a lot of goals in a game.

She can hardly wait. "I'm going to miss having all the action," she said. "But at the same time, I'm really looking forward to the intensity of a 2-1 game."

Matt DiFilippo writes for Blethen Maine Newspapers. An earlier version of this story appeared in the Central Maine Newspapers.

Strong Down the Stretch



James Spidle '99

With the help of junior guard Ken Allen, Colby's leading scorer, the men's basketball team won nine of its last 13 games to finish the season with a 15-9 record and the third seed in the Eastern College Athletic Conference (ECAC) New England Tournament. "We were a very competitive team and were close to being among the elite, but lost a couple of tough games," said head coach Dick Whitmore.

Colby played host to sixth-seeded Salem State in the tournament quarterfinals. The Mules held the Vikings to just 48 points and advanced to the semifinals with a 61-48 victory. Two senior co-captains paced the team—James Spidle led all scorers with 17 points, while Bill Hinton led the defense with nine rebounds and two blocked shots.

In their semifinal game against Williams, the Mules came out on fire, shooting nearly 70 percent over the first 10 minutes and giving Colby a quick five-point lead. Williams never allowed them to extend the advantage, though. The Mules pulled within four points with three minutes remaining, but the Ephs held on to win 78-66. Whitmore said he was "very proud of the way the team worked at Williams. We were competitive until the end of the game."

Sign of Tradition

Before taking the ice each period, members of the men's hockey team reach up to tap a sign that says "Our House" as they move from the locker room into Alford Arena. It's a tradition that began before this year's six senior players arrived at Colby. Despite the ritual, though, the team's last regular-season game in "Our House" was a disappointing 2-1 loss to Amherst.

Even with the loss, Colby's regular season was strong enough to earn the team a third seed in the ECAC Division III tournament. When tourney pairings were announced the men received another chance to make the last game at "Our House" a win when they drew home ice for the quarterfinal game on February 27 against Connecticut College. When that contest was over the players gathered at center ice and raised their sticks to celebrate a 5-0 win over the Conn College Camels and the first shutout of the season for goaltender and assistant captain Jason Cherella '99.

The White Mules' (13-9-4) season ended a week later with a 3-1 loss in the ECAC semifinals. But Colby players were able to heed Coach Jim Tortorella's directive to "hang your Colby jersey up with pride"—no one more so perhaps than Captain Rob Koh '99. A two-time All American and likely to earn the hat trick when this year's All Americans are announced, Koh is the only Division III player from the East going to a team of American college all-stars who will compete against Canadian college all-stars in two post-season games this spring. ♦

sport shorts

After a 19-8 record last year, expectations were high for **women's basketball**, but injuries took a toll on the talented team, which finished 13-11. Sophomore **Kim Condon**, an All-American last season, missed eight games with a hip injury before coming back to lead the team with 15.6 points per game. Sophomore **Mandy**



Kim Condon '01

Cochrane paced the Mules in rebounds with 7.3 per game while **Erin Cole-Karagory** became the second junior in Colby history to reach 1,000 career points. . . . **Men's squash** almost broke even with a 6-7 record, paced by sophomore **Mike Natenshon**, who won eight of 11 matches in the number four slot. . . .

Women's squash notched three straight victories over

rival Bates on the way to a 9-10 record. Winning two of their three matches at the Howe Cup Tournament at Harvard in January, the women were ranked 13th in the country. Sophomore **Anne Garinger** led the team, going 12-7 in the number seven slot. . . .

Women's indoor track and field won the USM Challenge Cup Invitational on January 16 and the Bates Challenge Cup on February 6. First-year **Katie MacDonald** led runners, while junior **Karen Hoch** paced the team in throwing events. Junior **Faith Anderson** led the team in scoring at several meets. . . . **Men's indoor track and field** began the season with a second-place finish at the Bates Quad Cup meet and maintained a high level through the rest of the season. Junior **Emil Thomann** led the sprinters while senior captain **Wilson Everhart** paced the distance runners. . . . **Men's alpine skiing** was led by sophomore captain

David Riss, who finished 11th in the giant slalom at St. Lawrence and 12th in the slalom at Bates. Riss qualified for the NCAA Championships at Sunday River. . . . In **women's alpine skiing**, junior **Amanda Rutherford** paced the team with an 11th-place finish at Dartmouth and a 14th at Williams, both on the slalom course. . . . **Nordic skiing** welcomed eight first-years and posted some impressive results. The men were led by junior captain **Tim Bertram**, who earned a 20th-place finish at the Bates Carnival. The women were paced by senior captain **Darcy Cornell**, who finished 15th at Bates. The highlight of the season came when Colby finished sixth at the UNH Carnival. . . . **Women's swimming** placed eighth among 39 teams at the New England Championships and went 4-4 in head-to-head competition. First-year **Jessica Knight**

broke two individual Colby records and helped three separate relay teams set new school marks on her way to All-New England honors. . . . **Men's swimming** went 3-5 in dual meets and then stepped up at the New England Championships to finish eighth in a field of 27. Junior **Jeff McCloskey**, who owns 10 Colby records, and senior **Andy Brown** were named to the All-New England team.