SPRING SPORTS PREVIEW

TEAMS READY FOR ACTION

THE ITHACAN

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The Ithaca College baseball team has made its return to the diamond and has high expectations for the 2022 season. This year, the club is着眼 on a Liberty League title and a trip to the NCAA tournament.

Last season was head coach David Valesente's first full year in charge. Although the 2020 season was shortened because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Valesente said he expects his team to pick up where it left off and improve from last year, which entailed winning the Liberty League and competing in the NCAA tournament. He also wants his team to excel on and off the field.

"Our goals are to build off of last year’s return to play and continue to compete at a high level," Valesente said. "Our goal is also to keep players healthy and to keep them on task for success in the classroom."

Several sluggers from last year’s lineup are returning to the club this spring, including four players that hit above .300. Senior first baseman and pitcher Buzzy Shirley led last year’s team batting average by hitting .390. Sophomore infielder Louis Fabbo also played an integral role, hitting .355 with 34 runs batted in (RBIs) and 27 runs scored.

The team recently began preparation for the 2022 season by attending training sessions and participating in early-morning and late-night practices in February. After participating in those team sessions, senior pitcher Kyle Lambert feels much better about the team dynamic compared to last season.

"I think this season will be different because this year, the team feels different," Lambert said. "It feels like … we all have great team chemistry, we’re all very connected, we’re all very close. I think that’ll be a big difference for us this year."

Junior catcher Gil Merod is also planning on breaking individual records and earning accolades of his own this season, which include recording a higher batting average and earning an all-league or all-region acknowledgment. Merod impressed in 2021, but he said he wants his team to improve and put more tallies in the win column.

"I know last year we lost games pretty weekly and we gave up some runs," Merod said. "I would say a minimum of 30 [wins]. That’s a doable task that would show the talent we have, the powerhouse that Ithaca [College] should be back to back." But regardless of the end results, he said he still hopes the team can improve on the tactical aspects of the game.

Merod also said team chemistry is important, noting that there is a more positive atmosphere among everyone on the roster this season. The team will look different from the past two seasons but back to normal overall because there will be a more usual spring baseball schedule compared to the ones during the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. The team has two preseason trips planned before the spring break trip, which Valesente said will help it better prepare for the upcoming season.

Valesente does not want his team’s focus to change each game based on whoever it plays this season, noting that each game is just as important.

"I’d like to really focus on playing against the game," Valesente said. "We don’t care who we play. Day in and day out, whether it’s the best team in the country or the worst, we’re playing against the game. For us to be successful, I want us to do the little things."

The Bombers kicked off their season Feb 25 in a 5-4 walk-off victory against SUNY New Paltz. The club will not be taking the diamond at Freeman Field until March 30 when it takes on Elmira College.
The Bombers will open up their season at the Cayuga Duels on April 2, where it will face-off with William Smith College, Canisius College and Johnson & Wales University at the Cayuga Inlet.

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Junior Jake Lentz said Robinson has been pushing the team to train harder through workouts and is preparing the rowers for a big season.

“Coach Robinson is turning up the intensity of our training on the erg and is also improving our form in pool stations,” Lentz said. “He has us working hard at a high intensity.

“Besides pushing the rowers to work harder,” Lentz mentioned how Robinson has been working on improving our culture. He said the coach has been emphasizing the importance of team interaction.

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With the spring season approaching, the Ithaca College men’s crew team is ready to attack.

“We are excited for the season and we are ready to compete and is excited to see how the season goes,” Lentz said. “And I have a feeling there will be someone that is going to surprise us by developing in a short period of time.”

With almost a month to go before the season starts, Lentz said the whole team is ready to compete and is excited to see how the season goes.

“All of our main goals is to be as competitive as we can and to race with two competitive eights,” Robinson said. “In 2019, we had a bunch of success. Fast forward to last spring, we didn’t have our guys and a few years before that we had trouble with the second eight. Now with this season, we have our two eights.”

With the National Invitation Rowing Championships (NIRC) back this season and COVID-19 restrictions being relaxed as the year moves along, the team looks forward to facing opponents it has not faced since Spring 2019.

“Our biggest competition is our rivals [Rochester Institute of Technology] and Hamilton College. Every time we race them, if we beat them, we feel like it makes it a successful season,” Robinson said.

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we think of as [a] regular schedule,” Moore said. “I think they don’t realize this team right now has so much potential and we graduated a huge senior class, but last year’s strong senior group, she is confident that the team has the ability to contend for a national title.

“I think our expectations are pretty high for where we’ve got to go,” Ritchie said. “There’s always that talk of [how] we graduated this huge senior class, but what they don’t realize is this team right now has so much potential and so many players have already played there’s no worry for our performance this year and expectations left off right where we ended last year.”

The Bombers’ impressive 2021 season came to a halt in the third round of the NCAA Championship, falling to No. 4 Salisbury University by a final score of 16-9. The team had a perfect 11-0 regular season record, playing a shortened slate of games because the start of the season was delayed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Bombers are set to return to a full schedule in 2022, with 17 contests on the team’s regular-season slate. Head coach Katie Moore said she is looking forward to once again having a traditional spring.

“It’s certainly nice to get back in what we think of as [a] regular schedule,” Moore said. “It’s the first time that I’ve come to really appreciate our players is we just take things as they come and we worry about what we can control. And the way we control how we roll with things and it’s served us well.

The Bombers were able to overcome adversity presented by the pandemic last season, recording 16-50 goals and 21.89 points per game as a team, which was the best mark in the Liberty League. This dominant offensive output was led by midfielder Jacqui Hallack ’21, who led the Liberty League with 4.94 goals and 5.94 points per game. This impressive performance earned Hallack All-American honors, being named IWLCA Division III National Midfielder of the Year, IWLCA First-Team and to the USA Lacrosse Magazine First Team.

Graduate student Rachel Rosenberg, defender and captain, was also a key contributor to the Bombers’ dominant play last season. Rosenberg led the team with 58 ground balls collected and 54 turnovers forced. This resume helped her earn IWLCA First-Team All-Empire Region, All-Liberty League First-Team and IWLCA Second-Team All-American honors in 2021. She also enters this season as a First-Team Preseason All-American by USA Lacrosse Magazine.

The Bombers will also look to graduate student Madison Boutonnetra to make an impact coming off a season in which she posted the team’s third-highest point total. The attacker recorded a total of 46 points and 50 goals. These credentials earned Boutonnetra a spot on the All-Liberty League First-Team and she was honored as an IWLCA Second-Team All-Region player.

This season, the team will rely on its three veteran captains to step- up as leaders, turning to Ritchie, Rosenberg and senior midfielder Megan Motkowski. The senior said the upperclassmen have been making an effort to introduce the group’s freshmen and sophomores to the program’s winning tradition.

“We have a pretty solid culture,” Motkowski said. “So, I think we’re really shown that to the new underclassmen, and they really have all hopped on board. So I don’t think there’s any reason we shouldn’t get to the same standard and success that we had last season.”

Moore, Ritchie and Motkowski each said they are impressed with the year’s sophomore class and believe it will play an integral role this spring. Moore said she is particularly looking forward to seeing what attacker Maizy Veitch and midfielder Sydney Phillips bring to the table.

Phillips saw significant minutes in her first collegiate season, checking into all but one of the Bombers’ 16 games in 2021. The midfielder recorded seven total goals, netting six goals in the process. Veitch played in 11 games during her freshman season, scoring seven goals and posting a total of 10 points.

Ritchie said she has been very impressed by the sophomore class’s ability to seamlessly transition into college lacrosse, especially because of the challenging environment the pandemic has created.

“They just are so knowledgeable on lacrosse in general. Their game IQs are so high,” Ritchie said. “They know so much about our team specifically, like how we run our offense, how we run our defense, the culture and everything. And it’s just translated so well with their skills and they’re a great group to look out for.”

Moore said the team’s mindset entering the season is to focus on each game and improve throughout the course of the season.

“I think we just want to make sure that we take one game at a time and we compete,” Moore said. “I think we’re really just trying to make sure that we are working hard and meeting our own expectations so that we’re raising the bar for ourselves.”

Ritchie echoed a similar sentiment, saying that the team strives to improve each day as it works to compete for both Liberty League and national titles. The midfielder said that while the team focuses on each game, one of its toughest games in the conference will be against William Smith College, which enters the season ranked sixth in the nation. The Bombers are 24-33 in their meetings with the Herons.

“We always say we’re improving every single day and every single game,” Ritchie said. “We talk about miles and a lot instead of goals and basically taking it one day at a time. Of course, we want to win a national championship, before that we want to win a Liberty League title and we’re hungry for it. But we’ve got to worry about practice today at 4 p.m., and we’ve got to worry about practice tomorrow and a scrimmage on Saturday. There are so many steps that go before then.”

The team opened its season against a formidable opponent, as it faced off against rival No. 13 SUNY Cortland March 2. The Bombers were initially scheduled to open their season against No. 16 SUNY Brockport Feb. 26, but the game was postponed and has not yet been rescheduled. Moore said she has been impressed with the way the team began its season in practice and is looking forward to the spring.

“I’m excited about where we are,” Moore said. “We have a lot of potential and we have a lot of room for growth. And I think we have great upperclassmen leadership. I think our sophomores are doing a great job helping the freshmen. And I think as long as we stay on that path, I think we’re going to be really happy with the season.”
Defending the Hill

John Sramac

In a stacked Liberty League conference, the Ithaca College men’s lacrosse team is looking to establish itself as a top team in the league. The Bombers went 6–4 last season, including 4–2 during in-conference play but are still behind competitors like Cornell University last season, won the Division III National Championship while the Bombers fell to the St. Lawrence University Saints 15–8 in the Liberty League semifinals.

The South Hill squad is returning 21 upperclassmen this year, 14 of which are seniors. After losing key players like Jake Hall-Goldman ’21, senior Demetri Lowry will be expected to follow up his strong campaign in 2021 with even better results. The defensemen, who was named a 2022 preseason All-American by both Inside Lacrosse and the United States Intercollegiate Lacrosse Association, forced 1.6 turnovers per game in 2021, which was fourth in the conference.

Lowry said that this year, he wants to leave it all on the field to push the Bombers to the top of the conference.

“We have a lot of seniors on our team, and we really haven't had a full-go season since our freshman year,” Lowry said. “So considering this is most of our last go, we really want to push as far as we can in the Liberty League.”

Lowry added that the overall goal he has for the team is to make it to the Liberty League championship. The program’s only appearance in the conference. In its first season in the league, 2021, when the Bombers lost to RIT.

Head coach Jeff Long also wants his team to make a run at the end of the season, noting that the Liberty League is one of the toughest conferences in Division III in men’s lacrosse. In order to do that, he said the biggest thing the team needs this year is consistency. Long said he puts faith in his senior class to help build that up for the rest of his team, including relying on senior captains Jake Stuhmahn and Lowry.

“I think the biggest thing is consistency and just 60-minute game toughness,” Long said. “No one ever truly dominates for 60 minutes, so you have to be able to deal with a little bit of adversity, not hang your heads and react to mistakes a little bit better.”

On the offensive side of the field, the Bombers will be led by their trio of starting attackmen, sophomore John Sramac, 2021 Liberty League Rookie of the Year; junior Jake Erickson, 2021 All-Liberty League First-Team; and first-year graduate student Connor Brumfield, 2021 All-Liberty League Second-Team. Sramac noted the last time he played a full schedule of games was during his high school playing days due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The sophomore echoed his coach’s comments, emphasizing how important it will be to not get too high or too low after plays or games.

Although the team’s experience is a strength, Sramac said the team has a strong group of underclassmen everyone can rely on as well.

“[Freshman] Kyle Proctor is very vocal which is great to have,” Lowry said. “Proctor, [freshman] Jack Pastore … I’ve been pretty impressed with them. [They] take chances and aren’t afraid to dodge and get physical, which is something I really like to see and I know our coach Jeff Long really likes to see, when guys don’t care about what grade they are and they just want to compete.”

The team has also brought back a familiar face to the program, assistant coach Torin Varn. Varn was a volunteer assistant with the Bombers in 2020 and coached at Cornell University last season. Long said it has been an overall positive experience for everyone on the team to have him back.

“He’s got the advantage of knowing some of the guys and he learned a ton of information working over at Cornell,” Long said. “He’s got both an offensive and defensive mind, so we share a lot of stuff together. I think his approach to the game is really positive and the kids seem to have reacted very, very well to him so far.”

With an overall goal of wanting to establish itself as not just a top team in the Liberty League, but also all of Division III, Lowry said he believes the team has the talent to be ranked inside the top-15 overall. In order to do that, the Bombers will have to knock off some of their biggest rivals,something Sramac said he looks forward to.

“I just look forward to playing against the best competition no matter who it is.” Sramac said. “Whether it’s in-conference like Union, RIT, that’s the best way to measure ourselves. And also [SUNY] Cortland, because we didn’t get to play them last year, so I haven’t been able to experience that rivalry and I’m definitely excited for this this year.”

When people talk about this year’s team, Sramac said he wants people to say that the group plays fearlessly, is confident and has no regrets, adding that is the only way to play the game. Lowry said he wants the team to make a statement to the elite teams in-conference that the Bombers are here for good.

“A lot of the teams that we play that are all really good teams, like RIT, Union and St. Lawrence, they’re all in our league and all very good teams nationally,” Lowry said. “The way we’ve played them in the past has not been up to par with what we should be doing. So, I feel, like, unproven, in a good way, as in we have a chance to show these teams that now we are competitive with you guys, we can play you and beat you guys, and you should be worried about us.”

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RUNNING TOWARD A CHAMPIONSHIP

BY INBAAYINI ANBARASAN

A year after returning to the track and winning the Liberty League, the Ithaca Col-
lege men’s track and field team is looking to repeat as conference champions and con-
tinue to build on its success in its path to the National Championships.

Only competing in the outdoor season last spring, the South Hill squad raked
up its first outdoor conference title since
departing the Empire 8 Conference for the Liberty League in 2017. The Bombers have three indoor titles since joining the
Liberty League.

This year’s roster includes 12 newcom-
ers after the team graduated five seniors in
2021. In addition, head coach Jim Nichols
will be coaching at South Hill for his 35th
season. Nichols has personal goals he
would like to reach as well. In his two previous years on
the Bombers’ squad, Frank
recognized that in order for the

[sprint]to return to the national championships, the Bombers will have to face a number of
strong competitors. The team will have to get past Liberty League rival University of Rochester, as well as reigning regional
champions SUNY Geneseo, which pose as
the college’s biggest competitors.

“[My preparation process now is] to
be,” Bernard said. “I think our mindset has changed a little bit
since COVID-19 has happened. Obviously, we always want to be
competitive at the national level. That’s our goal.”

Potter said graduate student Ari
Bernard has the potential to qualify for
nationals this season. Bernard, who is a
thrower on the team, said qualifying for
nationals is one of her personal goals.

“Definitely winning a
national in Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania.
Tobia had much success dur-
ing the 2021 season, including
winning Liberty League Field
Performer of the Week in Janu-
ary and setting personal records (PR) in outdoor shot put, dis-

tance, and hammer
with stats of
14.56 meters, 38.86 meters and
55.00 meters, respectively.
To-
bia said he hopes to set new records while out on the
field this season.
Junior sprinter Andy Frank

In comparison to other
years, Nichols
acknowledges that
every year is dif-
f erent because
maintained that
the end goal is still
the same.

Senior
thrower Luke
Tobia said he felt
similar to Nichols
as he conveyed a desire
to win the Liberty League
again and advance to the
NCAA Championships.

“Definitely winning a
Liberty League [title] again, you
know, last year, I think
we won by over 100 points,
maybe some-
ting like that,” Tobia
said. “I’ll repeat that
or even improve on it
would definitely
be our goal for sure
and junior Rachel Rose, is also looking for
success at the outdoor Liberty League
Championships, aiming to win the same
championships for the fourth time in a row.

Head coach Jennifer Potter said she is
looking forward to returning to the out-
door field once again.

“Just having a season and the ability
to travel and compete and have a na-
tional championship is just the goal in
and of itself,” Potter said. “I think
our mindset has changed a little bit
since COVID-19 has happened. Obviously, we always want to be
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thrower on the team, said qualifying for
nationals is one of her personal goals.

“It has been a goal for me to think
about throughout my entire collegiate career, and this is the
closest that I have felt to actually attaining that goal,”
Bernard said.

Bernard also said that hav-
ing the extended time off from
competition because of the pan-
demic has made the team become
stronger together.

“As someone who’s been
here, this is my fifth year on the team, I real-
ly do feel that change feels more like a family
and that’s kind of what you want your team
to be,” Bernard said.

Hutchison said her goal was to see the
team win a title. Hutchison, who had to
take some time off from track and field for
personal reasons earlier this semester, said
that getting back into competing has been a
stressful process for her.

“My preparation process now is
being raced back into shape, as per
[Potter’s] words, because, you know, usu-
ally you practice to be in shape,” Hutchison
said. “But since I’ve missed so much prac-
tice, we’re just like ‘All right we’re gonna have to race you back into shape’ and I’ve never had that before so it has been a
difficult time.”

Bernard said the team works with
sports psychology graduate students as part of their prepara-
tion for the season.

“Sometimes [sessions are] the
whole team, sometimes it’s by a big
group, sometimes it’s by year, which is re-
ally awesome,” Bernard said. “It’s good
for mental preparation, especially as we get into
these later, more competitive meets.”

In order to reach their goal of winning
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strong competitors. The team will have to
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champions SUNY Geneseo, which pose as
the college’s biggest competitors.

“I just know for a fact that, like, we’re
more than capable of taking the champions-

ship trophy home,” Hutchison said. “It’ll be
a fight, but I know that it’s definitely pos-
ible for us to do so.”

After the Bombers wrap up the
in-
door season at the NCAA Division III
Championships on March 11 and 12, it
will begin its outdoor season March 25 at Susquehanna University.

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BRENDAN IANUCCI/THE ITHACAN

A young man who has more
school records across the
board, and you know, send a couple of more
guys to nationals and get some more guys there as
well in a relay,” Frank said. “I promised
these guys that I’ll show them the top, and
I’m gonna show them this year what it’s like.
I’m gonna show them this year what it’s like.
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whole team, sometimes it’s by a big
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ANDREWS

REBECCA

complete season since the 2019 outing, which is hard at work, gearing up for the start of its upcoming season. It will be its first competitive season in three years, along with all of the practices and meets, do team bonding activities with your teammates, spend time with them and just have fun.”

Davis also is ready to give full effort for the entire season. “I know one thing we’re all looking forward to is having spectators [back],” Wachs said. “We’re also excited to actually finally be able to play the entire Liberty League.”

BY ORI JORDAAN-GRADY

The Ithaca College women’s tennis team is hard at work, gearing up for the start of its upcoming season. It will be its first complete season since the 2019 outing, which

means there are lots of new faces ready to compete for the first time. Out of the 15 players on the roster, six are freshmen, but there is still the necessary core leadership from the upperclassmen on the team. The team finished the shortened Spring 2021 eight-game schedule at 2-6 but is expecting much better results this year.

Head coach Chris Hayes ’16 said he is excited for the season to begin and has aspirations for each player on the talented roster. He recognizes the new talent on the team and the necessary work it needs to do to keep on improving.

“We’ve got a really strong group of women,” Hayes said. “A lot of upperclassmen, a great freshman class, as well as one of the bigger rosters we’ve had.”

Junior Rebecca Andrews and Zoe Davis, team captains, said they have been very impressed by the new members and how well they have been able to adjust to the collegiate level. During the winter break, they were able to hold practices and do team bonding chemistry on and off the court.

“It’s really a great atmosphere that we have going right now,” Andrews said. “Everyone is very excited to keep on practicing as much as possible during practice six days a week.”

Davis is also ready to give full effort all season long and said she has been motivated by the strong effort she sees every other player giving to make the team as successful as possible. She wants to enjoy the time with her teammates, but most importantly, she wants to win. “I want everyone to give 100% every match and more,” Davis said. “I want them to feel comfortable on the court because I think that produces the best results.”

Since arriving back on campus, Andrews said the team has been conditioning to get ready for the season. However, she said it has been spending much time with “challenging matches,” which determine the singles positions. Andrews admitted that competing against her teammates for roster positions is not the easiest.

The team has also been focusing on its mental preparation together. Tennis is a game that requires just as many mental strategies as physical. Hayes believes it will be key in the success of the team this year. “For 90% of our sport is really my foot and behind the baseline,” Wachs said. “And then, off the court, just being a role model for the younger guys and energizing everybody and keeping everybody motivated.”

Hayes said another part of the Bombers’ strategy during the offseason was to use the assistance of two sport psychology graduate students. “Tennis is such a mental sport,” Hayes said. “They say about 90% of tennis is the mental game, and the other 10% is the physical game, so it was a no-brainer.”

Khaybullin said his goal for the team is for it to make a run at the Liberty League playoffs and to play well against its conference opponents.

“We’re trying to really push ourselves this season,” Khaybullin said. “There’s some really hard teams that we’re going to be competing against like Skidmore [College] and [Benedaera Polytechnic Institute (BPI)]. But we are going to be trying our best.”

For the team to break into the top of the conference, it will have to contend with a talented slate of opponents. Skidmore, the reigning Liberty League champions, have won the league 12 times since the 2004-05 season, including six out of the last seven.

Even with the tough competition the team will face this season, Wachs said the team is looking forward to its first full spring season in three years, along with all of the specta-

tors being allowed to attend matches this season.

“I know one thing we’re all looking forward to is having spectators [back],” Wachs said. “We’re also excited to actually finally be able to play the entire Liberty League.”

BY TOBIAH ZBORAY

After a shortened eight-game schedule in Spring 2021, the Ithaca College men’s tennis team is looking to improve its record in its first full season of play since Spring 2019. The team is hoping to build upon its results from the shortened season last year made his transition into his role more difficult. “Last season was definitely something,” Hayes said. “We were very limited, not just in terms of practices and all of that, but the amount of matches we played. We only played eight or nine matches in the spring, which is obviously a lot different than what we have this semester. . . I really feel like this is my first full year as head coach.”

To help ease the Bombers back into competition after such a long break, Hayes said he is looking for the more experienced members of the team to be role models for a roster that has mostly underclassmen. Of the 10 players, six are freshmen or sophomores.

“[Senior] Artem [Khaybullin] and [second-year graduate student] Minos [Stavrakas] are the captains of this team,” Hayes said. “They’ve been around the block a while now, so they’re leading by example. We do have a fairly young team . . . so really setting the example is vital.”

Khaybullin has been a consistent member of the team since his freshman season in 2018, winning eight singles matches and two doubles matches during his time at the college. For him, the goal for this year is to enjoy his final season while being a leader for the younger players.

“Since I’m a senior, this is going to be my last season,” Khaybullin said. “So for this season, I mainly want to perform the best I possibly can. . . So I’m just going to try my best, go to all the practices and meets, do team bonding activities with my teammates, spend time with them and just have fun.”

Adding to the experienced depth of Khaybullin and Stavrakas, Hayes said the sophomore class of players is looking to take a big step forward this season on the court. Sophomore Jacob Wachs said he used the offseason to work on fine-tuning his skills to try to make an impact on the team on and off the court.

“I worked on staying a lot more consistent, getting the heavy ball deep, keeping my opponents on their back foot and behind the baseline,” Wachs said. “And then, off the court, just being a role model for the younger guys and energizing everybody and keeping everybody motivated.”

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Khaybullin said his goal for the team is for it to make a run at the Liberty League playoffs and to play well against its conference opponents.

“We’re trying to really push ourselves this season,” Khaybullin said. “There’s some really hard teams that we’re going to be competing against like Skidmore [College] and [Benedaera Polytechnic Institute (BPI)]. But we are going to be trying our best.”

For the team to break into the top of the conference, it will have to contend with a talented slate of opponents. Skidmore, the reigning Liberty League champions, have won the league 12 times since the 2004-05 season, including six out of the last seven.

Even with the tough competition the team will face this season, Wachs said the team is looking forward to its first full spring season in three years, along with all of the spectators being allowed to attend matches this season.

“I know one thing we’re all looking forward to is having spectators [back],” Wachs said. “We’re also excited to actually finally be able to play the entire Liberty League.”

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REBECCA ANDREWS

BY ORI JORDAAN-GRADY

The Ithaca College women’s tennis team is hard at work, gearing up for the start of its upcoming season. It will be its first complete season since the 2019 outing, which
BY LAURA IILIOAEI

The 2022 Ithaca College golf team is a tightknit group primed to defend its 2021 Liberty League title. The tournament win was the first conference title for the college since moving to the Liberty League in 2017.

The team consists of five members, including its seniors, Katie Chan and Caitlin McGrinder. The two have been playing for the team since they were freshmen. As they get set for their final season, they have also taken on mentorship roles for their teammates.

“This is my fourth year, so it’s nice to see my other teammates grow, especially the younger ones,” Chan said. “We do have a freshman, and it’s really nice to see how she’s experiencing as I have.”

McGrinder said she hopes that the younger players know they can come to her or Chan for anything, on and off the course.

“I’ve definitely learned a lot going through the years, so I’ve definitely changed from freshman year to now,” McGrinder said. “So it just always make sure to help them out where I can and avoid where I went wrong my first couple of years when it comes to games, practice and mentality towards the sport.”

Cold weather does not prevent the team from practicing because it also goes to the Athletics and Events Center to utilize golf simulators machines. In addition, during spring break, the team will travel to Florida for practices before the spring season commences in April.

Head coach Keith Batson said he expects juniors Mary Gencer and Cristea Park to have strong performances this season. He said the pair of golfers have been improving during their first two years at the college and expects even more improvement this year.

“I am really looking at Mary Gencer and Cristea Park to be our 1A and 1B players,” Batson said. “They both have continued to improve their averages during their career at the college, both of them are on the cusp of breaking [below] 80 for their average score. I am expecting big things from both Mary and Cristea this spring.”

Batson added that he has high hopes for freshman Rheanna Decrow’s play this spring and hopes that she will be an integral part of the season.

“Rheanna is really one of my toughest battles freshman year, so it’s nice to see her going through the same experiences as I have,” McGrinder said. She hopes that the younger players know they can come to her or Chan for anything, on and off the course.

“The primary goal for the team entering this season is to continue the momentum from the end of last season, McGrinder said. “We won [the Liberty League championship], which was really exciting for us,” McGrinder said. “It was one of our biggest accomplishments as a whole.”

Chan said she wants the team to get closer so the members can provide better support for each other. Golf is an individual sport, but the team earns wins or losses based on the sum of each golfer’s score.

“Our team goals are, since golf is so individualized, for everyone to come together,” Chan said. “We are a very close team — there’s only five of us — so we know each other well and we understand everyone’s individual goals. But as a team, I think that we can work together on encouraging one another in achieving our personal goals and making sure we’re pushing each other to make sure we’re making those improvements for our personal records.”

McGrinder said a major differentiator in this season is the reintroduction of two-day competitions, where teams play the same course two days in a row and scores are added at the end of the second day. Previously, one-day competitions had been implemented due to COVID-19 regulations.

And with this greater competition comes the return of greater rivalry. The Bombers’ conference tournament victory in 2021 broke the five-year streak by New York University (NYU).

Guidance and lessons learned from senior golfers may guide the team to greater victory this semester, McGrinder said.

“Golf is very mental, so if you’re not mentally in it, it’s going to be the worst time of your life,” McGrinder said. “And that was one of my toughest battles freshman year. If you have a bad hole, it’s really hard to get out of it. Learning just how to approach, each shot is a new one and just moving on from a bad hole, I’ve gotten better at controlling my emotions and not getting upset about the first hole.”

The team is going to open its upcoming season April 2 when it is scheduled to travel to New Castle, Pennsylvania, for the Westminster College Invitational.

That’s something that just comes with maturity with the sport.”

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That’s something that just comes with maturity with the sport.”

Spring Calendar

MARCH

2 3 PM ST Lawrince University
3 3 PM Williams College
4 2 PM Union College
5 3 PM Union College
6 3 PM SUNY Geneseo
7 4 PM Hamilton College
8 4 PM Bard College
9 TBA Bard College (Doubleheader)
10 TBA Vassar College
11 TBA Bard College
12 TBA
13 5 PM Alfred University (Doubleheader)
14 4 PM SUNY Cortland
15 4 PM Williams Smith College
16 7 PM RIT
17 TBA RIT
18 TBA RIT (Doubleheader)
19 TBA RIT (Doubleheader)
20 TBA
21 TBA
22 TBA
23 1 PM & 3 PM Skidmore College (Doubleheader)
24 TBA
25 1 PM & 3 PM Skidmore College (Doubleheader)
26 TBA
27 TBA
28 TBA
29 TBA
30 TBA
31 TBA
APRIL

1 TBA Cayuga Duals
2 TBA Cayuga Duals
3 12 PM Union College
4 TBA
5 12 PM Union College
6 TBA
7 TBA
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THURSDAY, MARCH 3, 2022
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A8 | SPRING SPORTS PREVIEW

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