CHOOSE YOUR PLAYER

Fall Sports Preview 2023

Ben Stola ’23

Peyton Miller ’25

Rosie Bostian ’24

THE ITHACAN
Grace Hickey ’25

On Nov. 6, 2022, the Ithaca College women’s soccer team claimed the program’s first Liberty League title. This season, the team is ready to solidify its conference champion status once again. With a 13-4-1 overall record – and a 6-2-1 record in conference play – the team fought its way to victory, avenging the championship loss to William Smith College from the previous season and making program history.

The victory was even more significant when noting the gap William Smith had on the rest of the Liberty League prior to 2022. The Bombers only averaged 1.76 goals per game compared to William Smith’s 2.81, but the Bombers impressive goalkeeping notched them ahead of the competition. The Bombers’ 93 saves lead the Liberty League and junior goalkeeper Grace Hickey will look to continue that trend.

Hickey noted the significance of that win and said the team mentality is geared towards success.

“Everyone worked so hard, and I knew that we really deserved that win, especially against William Smith,” Hickey said.

“There’s no other team that we’d rather take down. They had a 14-year win streak going for the league title, and now we’re their owns and we want to keep it that way.”

Senior forward Rosanna Bostian, who scored a team-leading eight goals last season, echoed her belief that this roster has the determination and the talent to have another strong season.

“I think everyone’s just really excited,” Bostian said. “I’m ready to work hard, and I think we have everything we need to succeed.”

The Liberty League is known as a competitive conference, and the Bombers will face multiple difficult opponents this year, such as St. Lawrence University, Vassar College, Skidmore College and nationally ranked No. 10 SUNY Cortland.

“Playing in one of the toughest academic and athletic conferences in the country,” Eldridge said. “Since 2018, I would say that the past few seasons have been the most fun out there,” Hickey said. “I want to keep being a leader on the field and I would love to score personally, but mostly [I want] for the team, everybody, to do well, succeed as a whole and look back on the season with happiness.”

Bostian said Hickey understands the role of the goalkeeper as a leader, especially as a junior, noting the unique and important position she has taken on the field.

“It’s what sets the team up for success,” Bostian said. “I’m the only position on the field that can see everything from the back, have all the way up to the other keeper, so just talking, keeping heads up, always giving positive feedback when something goes wrong, not putting your teammates down but picking them up is key.”

In addition to support from another on the field, Hickey said the team is looking forward to the support of the Bomber community as it kicks off the 2023 season.

“If you’re a guy who wants to continue that trend, that’s great, but you need to play your role really well and not one piece that the team can do without,” Bostian said. “I’ve always served as a role model to the younger class,” Tierney said. “I want to keep being a leader on the field and I would love to score personally, but mostly [I want] for the team, everybody, to do well, succeed as a whole and look back on the season with happiness.”

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Sculling braves competitive waters

BY TESS FERGUSON
SPORTS EDITOR

After closing out the sculling season with strong performances at the Head of the Fish Regatta in October 2022, the Ithaca College women’s rowing team went on to nail down its fifth consecutive Liberty League title May 2023. This fall, the team is looking to build the same momentum that will propel it to success once again.

The Bombers are entering the 2023 season with a young squad after graduating powerhouse rowers Allison Arnott ’23 and Devi de Oliveira ’23 — each of whom competed for the Bombers for six seasons — alongside six other senior rowers.

Head coach Becky Robinson said that although the team is bringing back some experienced rowers, maturing each of the team’s underclassmen will allow new athletes to step into more prominent leadership roles.

“Quite a few returners have had the experience of going to an NCAA Championship and being a part of winning the Liberty League, so that’s definitely on their radar of what they want to achieve this year,” Robinson said. “The flip side of that is we lost a lot of seniors as well as two juniors and a fifth-year, so there’s kind of a nervous excitement with the group because I think they’re finally feeling like they get a chance to practice leadership, take on those roles and fill those shoes.”

However, graduate student Taylor Volm- rich’s experience with the Bombers will be imperative for them to take the 2023 season one race at a time. “Winning the Liberty League championship is where I am heading this year,” Robinson said. “The team is absolutely capable, but it was higher than that, so we will build from there. If, as a team, we talk about how we are going to improve, how much we have to work for it, I actually think we’ll be farther than if we try to repeat this previous year.”

Junior rower Lily Babcock said the sculling season is the Bombers’ opportunity to navigate the technical aspects of rowing on their own before heading into the spring season in the spring.

“The goal is to get faster in the single,” Robinson said. “If they can get fast in a single, they’ll like their group goals in the pairs, learn to distribute weight and how to be efficient with their stroke. For us to be fast in the spring, we’re going to need that strong technical base and speed.”

Although Robinson emphasized the importance of consistency in training, she said she understands the importance of pushing a collegiate sport. “In an effort to keep their interest intact throughout the season, Robinson adopted a motto that her athletes have come to live by. “You can start again today,” Robinson said. “We’re gonna mess up and we’re gonna make mistakes, but we can always get back on track and we can always start again today.”

The team will open up its season when they compete at the Cayuga Springs Sept. 24 at the Cayuga Inlet.

BY DAVID SCHURTER
STAFF WRITER

Coming off a 2020 that halted all fall sports, the Ithaca College field hockey program has earned back-to-back trips to the Liberty League playoffs the past two seasons. However, there is one thing that is still missing: a Liberty League Championship.

This season will look a little different, as the team added new competition to its schedule. Head coach Kristin Wahila said she is looking forward to the opportunity for the team to compete against several nationally ranked teams.

“This is the toughest schedule that I have coached since I’ve been here,” Wahila said. “We added three specific games that are going to help build our strength of schedule, so that our attitude and with the work we put in we can compete.”

Wahila said a couple of her biggest goals for the season are making sure her athletes are settled in and building a stronger team as the season rolls on.

“My goal as a coach is to really provide the best and most positive student-athlete experience that we can for everyone that’s on our team,” Wahila said. “We want to make sure our focus with our student-athletes is on the process of getting to that point. It’s going to be vital that we stay day-to-day and be consistent with our attitude and with the work we put in as it’s going to determine our senior seasons.”

Wahila said she believes that each class has the talent, potential and experience to help bring a Liberty League Championship back to South Hill.

“We have five seniors coming into our experience going to be very beneficial for our team, five seniors with very important overall leadership skills, seven seniors who will show leadership on and off the field, five sophomores who took great strides this past spring and nine incoming freshman years,” Wahila said. “We are very excited to see what they will bring to our program.”

One of those leaders is senior captain and goalkeeper Alex Clough. Clough said the coaching staff has played an instrumental role in the development of her defense and the improved play of the rest of the team.

“Sweep, in the spring, we crack down on our individual skills and our coaches really help prepare us as much as they can for the next season,” Clough said. “They’ve helped me and I even begin to feel a little bit more comfortable and more amazing as we work on leadership, team bond- ing and they even reach out just to say ‘Hi’ and keep the team together; they do a lot for us.”

In her first year with the team, Clough started as goaliekeeper in nine games, tallying over 300 minutes in the cage. She has also notched 269 minutes as a field player.

Clough said that this year, it will be valuable for the team’s young roster to utilize its strengths if they want to return to playoffs.

“We are a different team than we were two years ago now that half of the [athletes] are gone,” Clough said. “We have a really big incoming class and you can’t come in with the same game plan, as we have a lot of different strengths now, so hopefully we can keep the momentum of going to leagues with us.”

Junior striker Natalie Descalso was an underclassman the last two seasons when the team made the playoffs. Just like Clough, Des- calso said previous playoff experience helps bring the team together more and relieves the pressure of each game.

“Sometimes I’ve always heard is not to put so much pressure on yourself for the postsea- son,” Descalso said. “Just treating it like it’s another game, rather than putting that extra pressure on yourself.”

In 2022, Descalso garnered a Liberty League Second Team selection and earned the National Field Hockey Coaches Association offensive player of the week honor Oct. 19, 2022.

Descalso said she is looking to step into a much bigger role this season both on and off the field, aiming to help the team in any way possible.

“I want to be someone everyone can talk to about anything, whether it relates to field hockey or not,” Descalso said. “We talk about leadership and how it can be from any of the classes, leading below me, above me and to my other classmates.”

Wahila said she holds high expectations for the upperclassmen, but also that if there are any bumps in the road ahead, she will help them push through.

“Be supportive of all of them to lead and make sure that this team is positive in a directed way, Wahila said. “I fully expect our senior class to be strong leaders and I think they will receive great help from the junior class as well, leading on and off the field.”

Descalso, like Wahila, said it is important to make sure the veterans on the team are helping the younger players feel welcome.

“Bringing in the [first-year students] and sophomores and making them feel like they are important and help the team feel its strengths,” Descalso said. “Reminding ourselves that our bond on and off the field is going to help us in the postseason, our heart as a whole team is what really separates us from other teams.”

Descalso said she is looking to give her all this season for a championship while also not worry- ing too much and enjoying the ride.

“I want to play field hockey with my friends,” Clough said. “The team goal would be to win the Liberty League championship, but on a personal level, I love this team so much that I want to leave it all out there and have a good time.”

The team will open its 2023 season at home against Keans University at 5 p.m. Sept. 1 at Higgins Stadium.
NOTABLE STATISTICS

Women’s cross country

2022 best team finish: 58 points
Jessica Goode ’26 (pictured): 22:30 6k
Jillian Shae ’25: 23:24 6k

Men’s soccer

2022 record: 3–9–5
Reefe Harrison ’24: One goal, two assists
Connor Tierney ’25 (pictured): Two goals

Sculling

Finished first in the women’s double at the 2022 Head of the Fish Regatta.
Repeat third place finishes in the first and second varsity eight races during the NCAA Championships in 2022 and 2023.

Field hockey

2022 record: 14–4
Accolade: 2022 Liberty League Runner-up
Natalie Descalso ’25 (pictured from left): Nine goals, nine assists
Alex Clough ’24: Two goals allowed
NOTABLE STATISTICS

Volleyball

2022 record: 25–5
Accolade: 2022 Liberty League Champion
Alex Montgomery ’24: 242 kills
Peyton Miller ’25 (pictured): 429 assists

Women’s soccer

2022 record: 13–4–4
Accolade: 2022 Liberty League Champion
Grace Hickey ’25: 2–1 goalkeeping record
Rosie Bostian ’24 (pictured): Eight goals, one assist

Football

2022 record: 12–1
Accolade: 2022 Liberty League Champion
AJ Wingfield ’23 (pictured): 2,090 passing yards, 22 touchdowns
Ben Stola ’23: 48 tackles, two forced fumbles

Men’s cross country

2022 best team finish: 130 points
Drew Taylor ’25: 26:58 8k
Aidan Loughlin ’26 (pictured): 27:58 8k
Following last year’s success, the Ithaca College football team returns with high expectations in their chase for an NCAA Championship.

In his return to South Hill, head coach Michael Stola said his team is excited to see what the year brings for the team.

“Coach Dulfer knows how to win, so I want to learn everything I could from him.”

Senior captain outside hitter Alexandra Montgomery said the team is eager to have Coach Dulfer with the team this season.

“We're all super excited,” Montgomery said. “It's going to be a little bit different from last season when we only had one full-coach practice up to any feedback, so we are making sure we're really open to being coachable, learning new things and having a lot more feedback coming at us.”

Montgomery said she hopes the team can win the Liberty League again and make it further into playoffs. She said she expects hard work from the players so that they can all work together to reach team goals. Since so much was accomplished last season, Montgomery said that readjusting those goals will be a part of continued progress.

Both coaches and players said the team culture is a valuable part of a successful season.

Junior setter Peyton Miller said she was a lot more comfortable leading this season as a starter, I feel really good.”

While the sidelines will look different, the Bombers understand greater challenges await them. However, the team will work on being less predictable, more passionate and having fun in their game.

“My hope is that the way we play this year is going to be really fun,” Dulfer said. “It’s part of our philosophy statement for this year that it should be fun for them to play the way we want to play, and I think it's going to be really fun to watch.”

Contact Emma Kersting
emkersting@ithaca.edu

**Volleyball serves continued success**

****BY EMMA KERSTING****
PODCAST EDITOR

Volleyball serves continued success

**Football blitzes past competition**

**BY DANIEL KING**
SENIOR WRITER

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Contact Emma Kersting
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**BY DANIEL KING**
SENIOR WRITER

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Men’s cross country teams fresh

BY BILLY WOOD
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

The 2023 Ithaca College men’s cross country team is striving toward improved results this season. Despite the loss of five seniors, the South Hill squad is looking to rebound and reload with a hopeful youth movement this year.

The Bombers regressed from the steady pace they had maintained in previous seasons, finishing fifth in Liberty League standings in 2022, following two straight seasons finishing third. Last season, the Bombers earned a best finish of 130 points and a 10th place finish at the Atlantic Regional meet.

Head coach Jim Nichols said he believes his returning runners will make a big impact and continue to improve on their 2022 season.

“Patrick [Bierach] is our captain this year,” James [Hughes] is a junior and Drew Taylor is a fourth-year junior,” Nichols said. “I think James and Drew did well at the end of the outdoor season with their performances and if they’ve got a good summer training and if they keep good summer training and if they’ve got a good summer training and if they keep doing that they should do really well.”

Nichols said the team will maintain much of the same approach as previous seasons but: heavily emphasize constant speed throughout training.

“Hopefully we have the base over the summer and we do a little bit more speed oriented type of workouts, more tempo, but we’ll get pretty much stay with the same routine, but we’ll make minor adjustments to try and move in the right direction.,” Nichols said.

While upperclassmen will have an impact on the course this season, the team will go into the season carrying just one senior. The team is young on the roster, the squad will carry 11 underclassmen, six of which are first-year students.

Junior Drew Taylor echoed the idea that the team will be younger and said it is a factor in him and other upperclassmen having to step up.

“We really only have four or five upperclassmen, so in terms of leadership and guys looking up to me, then obviously there’s a little bit more pressure having to perform,” Taylor said. “Last year I was probably our sixth guy, so I was in the top seven, but I didn’t count to the score all the time and this year, barring any injuries, I think I’m in the top five pretty much every race.”

Sophomore Aidan Loughlin is a part of the team’s youth movement and has seen the team’s first-year athletes begin to form into the season all of them are expected to do all four years of high school and he’s proved a lot. Trevor Dix is really good. They’re all really good. Excited to see what they do.”

Taylor said that Bierach has always been a natural leader and that even while it may not be shown, Bierach is making an impact on the team behind the scenes.

“He’s always been a leader and he’s always been a guy, at least for me, that I’ve looked up to,” Taylor said. “I’m sure there’s a ton of stuff behind the scenes that I don’t even know about between him and [Nich- ols] — calling back and forth, coordinating with [Nichols] on a better schedule and training and all that stuff. He’s our guy.”

Coming off an underwhelming 2022 season, Loughlin said the team knows it is not being viewed as the top dog in the Liberty League, but he still thinks it can show itself as a contender.

“I feel like we’re not really looked at as a favorite team,” Loughlin said. “We have good runners, but losing Danny Jagoe [23] and some of our other guys, like, we had a lot of guys that were in the top seven that aren’t here now. I think we’re more of an underdog type ... but we do want to show ourselves as a contender and possible team for getting high positions and team rankings.”

With the team feeling doubts from their competition, Nichols said that the goal for the upcoming season is to focus on improvement and that the team’s talent will show.

“I want each and every one in the program to improve and get better and hopefully run a personal best during the season,” Nichols said. “I want us to compete to the best of our ability to get the most out of our individual talents and the talents of the team growing together. We have to work together, have to run together, have the same goals and aspirations to be successful and team results should take care of themselves based on that.”

The team will open the season at the annual Jannette Bonrouhi-Zaikain Memorial Alumni Run on Sept. 11 at a.m. Sept. 2.
WOMEN’S SOCCER

SEPTEMBER 1 - VS. ELMIRA COLLEGE AT 4 P.M.
SEPTEMBER 6 - VS. MOUNT ST. MARY AT 4 P.M.
SEPTEMBER 10 - VS. LYCOMING COLLEGE AT 1 P.M.
SEPTEMBER 16 - VS. NAZARETH COLLEGE AT 1 P.M.
OCTOBER 7 - VS. CLARKSON UNIVERSITY AT 3 P.M.
OCTOBER 13 - VS. UNION COLLEGE AT 4 P.M.
OCTOBER 14 - VS. SKIDMORE COLLEGE AT 2 P.M.
OCTOBER 21 - VS. VASSAR COLLEGE AT 3 P.M.
OCTOBER 24 - VS. ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY AT 3:30 P.M.

MEN’S SOCCER

SEPTEMBER 2 - VS. SUNY FREDONIA AT 2 P.M.
SEPTEMBER 4 - VS. WILKES UNIVERSITY AT 2 P.M.
SEPTEMBER 13 - VS. ALFRED STATE COLLEGE AT 4 P.M.
SEPTEMBER 23 - VS. BARD COLLEGE AT 2 P.M.
SEPTEMBER 27 - VS. HOBART COLLEGE AT 4 P.M.
SEPTEMBER 30 - VS. ST. LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY AT 3 P.M.
OCTOBER 28 - VS. RENSSELAER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AT 2 P.M.

FIELD HOCKEY

SEPTEMBER 1 - VS. KEAN UNIVERSITY AT 5 P.M.
SEPTEMBER 8 - VS. OSWEGO STATE AT 4 P.M.
SEPTEMBER 13 - VS. SUNY CORTLAND AT 7 P.M.
SEPTEMBER 20 - VS. SUNY BROCKPORT AT 7 P.M.
SEPTEMBER 27 - VS. UNIVERSITY OF SCRANTON AT 7 P.M.
OCTOBER 4 - VS. SUNY GENEOSE AT 4 P.M.
OCTOBER 7 - VS. ST. LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY AT 3 P.M.
OCTOBER 10 - VS. SUNY NEW PALTZ AT 4 P.M.
OCTOBER 15 - VS. UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER AT 2 P.M.
OCTOBER 20 - VS. RENSSELAER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AT 4 P.M.

FOOTBALL

SEPTEMBER 30 - VS. HOBART COLLEGE AT 1 P.M.
OCTOBER 14 - VS. UNION COLLEGE AT 1 P.M.
OCTOBER 28 - VS. BUFFALO STATE UNIVERSITY AT 1 P.M.
NOVEMBER 11 - VS. SUNY CORTLAND AT 12 P.M.

VOLLEYBALL

SEPTEMBER 15 - VS. JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY AT 6 P.M.
SEPTEMBER 16 - VS. SUNY GENEOSE AT 1 P.M.
SEPTEMBER 16 - VS. SUSQUEHANNA UNIVERSITY AT 6 P.M.
SEPTEMBER 29 - VS. EASTERN UNIVERSITY AT 5 P.M.
OCTOBER 6 - VS. ST. LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY AT 7 P.M.
OCTOBER 7 - VS. SKIDMORE COLLEGE AT 2 P.M.
OCTOBER 17 - VS. WILLIAM SMITH COLLEGE AT 6 P.M.
OCTOBER 27 - VS. CLARKSON UNIVERSITY AT 7 P.M.
OCTOBER 28 - VS. UNIVERSITY OF SCRANTON AT 3:30 P.M.

PHOTO AND DESIGN CREDITS

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