



**CCWW Sports Report No. 531  
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by  
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As I write this, I'm en route to Ithaca for my 50th reunion. With another academic year over, it's time to sum up what happened, athletically, and shut this puppy down until the fall. I'll spread this summary over two or three weeks, starting this week with men's and women's lacrosse, men's and women's tennis, baseball and softball.

### **2018 Men's Lacrosse Season Wrap-up**

On May 20, the Cornell season ended one week earlier than we hoped when the Big Red fell to defending national champion Maryland in the NCAA quarterfinals by a score of 13-8. Like Princeton, Brown and Syracuse in the three prior weeks, the Terrapins employed a strategy of locking off Cornell's offensive star, **Jeff Teat '20**, denying him the ball. Unfortunately for the Red, in this game the strategy pretty much worked. Cornell's offense had difficulty developing a rhythm. Teat was held to no goals and just two assists and Cornell's scoring came mostly from the midfield, led by **Jordan Dowiak '18**'s four goals and an assist, and **Connor Fletcher '19**'s goal and two assists.

While it would have been nice to make it to "championship weekend," as labeled by the ESPN announcers, the 2018 Cornell season was most definitely a success and demonstrated to all that Big Red lacrosse was back on the national stage. The Red finished 13-5, including two victories over Syracuse and a convincing 14-8 win over eventual national champion Yale in the finals of the Ivy League Tournament. After a 3-3 start, the Big Red won seven in a row and 10 of 11 before the loss to the Terps. And consider this: that loss to Cornell in the ILT, was Yale's only loss in regulation time as the Elis cruised to the national championship. (Yale lost two early season games in overtime.) By the end of the season, Yale's offense, led by Tewaaron trophy winner Ben Reeves, was unstoppable—except that the Big Red did stop it, holding the Bulldogs to barely half their season scoring average.

There were several post-season developments. First, and thankfully, a few days after the season ended, **Peter Milliman** was—deservedly—named the Richard M. Moran Head Coach of Men's Lacrosse. The decision a year ago to make Peter the interim coach for a full year was puzzling to just about everyone except, perhaps, Andy Noel and other people who made the decision. As the season progressed, it became apparent that Peter was an excellent coach—perhaps one of the best in the country—and Cornell would be lucky to keep him. I had the opportunity at the ILT tailgate before the Brown game to ask some parents how they felt about the coaching this year. Their eyes literally lit up. This had to happen, and it did. Bravo.

Bravo too to **Jake Pulver '18**, winner of the Men's Lacrosse Senior CLASS award, given to the senior who displays excellent character and excellence on the field and in the community and the classroom.

The USILA announced its All-American team and four Big Red players were honored. Teat made the first team, goaltender **Christian Knight '18** was named to the second team, Pulver made the third team, and Dowiak received honorable mention. Teat was also named to the first All-American team by Inside Lacrosse. He was joined by Knight, a second teamer, and **Jake McCulloch '19**, who received honorable mention. Earlier, Teat, Pulver and Dowiak were named first-team All-Ivy, and were joined on the All-Ivy team by McCulloch, a second teamer, and five players who received honorable mention: Knight, long-stick defenders **Fleet Wallace '19** and **Brandon Salvatore '20**, defensive midfielder **Ryan Bray '19**, and face-off specialist **Paul Rasimowicz '20**, who unfortunately got hurt and missed the end of the regular season and most of the post-season.

Cornell will lose some fine players—including Knight, Pulver and Dowiak—to graduation but the incoming class appears to be excellent. Dowiak is the only significant loss to the offense but the new recruits and the continued development of the returning players should offset that. In particular, it looks like some of the newcomers will take the pressure off of Jeff Teat and reduce the effectiveness of the face-guarding strategy. The defensive losses are more significant, especially Knight and Pulver, but at least in the goal the Red have an obvious successor in **Caelahn Bullen '20**, who filled in admirably when Knight was hurt.

### 2018 Women's Lacrosse Season Wrap-up

After back-to-back NCAA tournament appearances, and faced with heavy graduation losses, the Big Red landed with a thud in 2018, losing five of their last six games to post a losing record (2-5) in Ivy League play and a losing record (7-8) overall. There were some individual honors, led by **Joey Coffy '18**, who finished her career as a first-team All-Ivy and second-team All-Region selection. The Red also had a trio of All-Ivy second teamers in **Taylor Reed '18**, **Hannah O'Reilly '19** and **Caroline Allen '20**.

### 2017-18 Tennis Wrap-up

A year ago the Cornell men and women both shared their respective Ivy League titles and the men advanced to the NCAA tournament and won a first-round match. This year was different. The men weren't bad; they just weren't quite good enough to handle a tough schedule. The Big Red was ranked 45th nationally going into their last match and had a shot at an NCAA tournament bid. The Red lost that match, to Columbia, to finish 3-4 in Ivy play and 10-11 overall. Doubles were a big problem; the Big Red lost the doubles point in nine of their 11 losses. The top three singles players all posted winning records, and **David Volfson '19**, generally playing at the No. 1 spot, was named first-team All-Ivy, while **Alafia Ayeni '21** was named to the second team and was the Ivy Rookie of the Year. With the core of the team returning, next year should be better.

The women, who also played a tough schedule, fell harder, winning just one Ivy match and finishing 7-13 overall. The heart and soul of last year's Ivy champion team, **Marika Cusick '17** and **Alexandra D'Ascenzo '17**, graduated and their losses were felt. One bright spot for the Red was **Priyanka Shah '18**, who finished with a .500 record in singles at the No. 1 position, a winning doubles record, and a second-team All-Ivy selection.

### 2018 Baseball Season Wrap-up

Last year Cornell hit better and pitched better than its opponents, and posted a winning overall record despite some injuries to key players. But a major component of that team was the pitching, and three of those pitchers—two seniors and a junior—wound up being drafted by major league teams. This year, the staff's earned run average was more than half a run higher, while the batters, many of whom were the same players as a year ago, did not hit nearly as well. Then there was the schedule. Opening the season with six games against Texas A&M and Duke, power conference teams that ended up making the NCAA tournament, the Big Red lost them all. In the end, the Red wound up with a 14-22-1 overall record, and a 9-12 Ivy League record. Still, Cornell had a chance to make the Ivy League championship series until the penultimate weekend of the season. The Big Red had five All-Ivy selections, four seniors and a junior. Catcher **Ellis Bitar '18** and second baseman **Ryan Krainz '18** made the first team, third baseman **Will Simoneit '19** was named to the second team and first baseman **Trey Baur '18** and DH **Dale Wickham '18** received honorable mention.

### 2018 Softball Season Wrap-up

Cornell softball showed improvement this year, winning four more Ivy games and a couple more games overall. Their final record was 10-11 in league play and 15-25 overall. Picked for last in the pre-season Ivy poll, the Big Red finished fifth. Four Cornellians made All-Ivy, the most since 2012. Outfielder **Megan Murray '18** was named to the first team for the second time in her career. Shortstop **Erin Rockstroh '20** made the second team, and **Tori Togashi '18** and **Kate Jencarelli '20** received honorable mention as

utility players. Murray, in particular, had an outstanding season, tying for the Ivy lead in hits and finishing third in the Ivy batting race with a .419 average. With just three strikeouts in 137 at bats, Megan was the fourth-toughest player in the entire country to strike out.

That's it for this week. **GO BIG RED!**