

# Captain's Corner

## Women's Hockey

By Rebecca Sama

"The Only Way You Can Stay on Top is to Forget You've Ever Been There."

Last season ended on a high note, winning the championship following an undefeated ECAC alliance season for the second straight year. Saying goodbye to a talented group of seniors left many people skeptical of our future as a dominating force in the league. But as our returning squad was joined by five young freshman we were reminded of the importance of team and that reason we play is to have fun—and to dance. This year, more than ever, we succeeded in that goal. From the first time we stepped onto the ice to the last time, we played with heart and commitment to each other.

We had no idea what to expect out of the season. Only three seniors, Megan Maloney, Stephi Hill, and Rebecca Sama, returned to compete for their fourth and last season in Nelson Arena and they were more than willing to do everything in their power to attain one more banner.



Rebecca Sama '98

Weeks of training could not combat the nerves felt in the first game; only the 9-1 season opener could do that.

Unlike years in the past, everyone on the team could say that they played a crucial role in the win. We were not resting on the laurels of a couple players this year, instead we relied on our team.

With a season composed mostly of ECAC Alliance games, we dominated the competition ending the year undefeated with a record number of wins in a season and the continuation of a 52 game winning streak in our league.

Each individual's accomplishment this season reflected upon the accomplishments of the entire team. Goalies Beth Dennoncourt '00 and Kristen Hackman '99 had phenomenal seasons in net with the highest save percentages in the league, although forward/goalies Janice O'Neil '99 and Sue "Chep" Chepren '99, despite having the curtain pulled over her eyes against Colgate, proved to be tough competition for that title.

Despite a month long hiatus, Megan Maloney finished the season strong, proving that hard work and commitment pays off. Sylvia Ryan '00 led the team in scoring, since she knew all the goalie moves, and was awarded MVP of the ECAC Alliance Championship tournament. Catherine Pullins '00, a scoring threat with her sick slap shot, was chosen for first team all ECAC.

The dedication of Stephi "The Count" Hill, one of the most hard-working and "clean" players on the team, to the team and her support was greater than could ever be asked of a player. Sarah P. Hall, one of the most aggressive players in the league, stepped up her level of play proving to be one of the most improved players of the year and an announcer's dream. Sarah "The Rock-star" Cotton '99 swept away the competition with her speed. Kelly Hayes '00 defied gravity with her amazing scoring ability and stick skills. Christa McDougall '00 played better than ever with her outstanding vision of the ice.

The freshman on this team hold amazing potential for the future of the sport at Middlebury. The most vocal player, Michelle Labbe a.k.a. 15, was chosen as the ECAC Alliance Rookie of the Year, Sarah "Sporty Spice" Carpenter was selected for the second ECAC team, from figure skater to hockey player Elissa "Eeeeliassa" Burnell proved her ability as a solid defense man and dancing queen. Jen Bahnson "Hanson" showed that the best offense is a good defense while Katie "Yo" Lynch finished her season stronger than ever with a stellar championship performance.

We couldn't have achieved the success that we did without the support and leadership of our coaching staff. Bill Mandigo's dedication to this team was unprecedented. Both Bill's and Amy W.I.B. Carlson's desire to make us the best hockey players we could be was a key factor in our achievements this year.

Out of all the teams I have ever played on, this is the team I will remember the most. We accomplished more than anyone expected of us and everyone in the program contributed to our success. It is so hard to say good-bye to such an incredibly talented team and a sport that has provided so many amazing memories. I wish you guys the best of luck in the future, may you do the new rink justice. Finally, I would like to thank all of our devoted fans for their unbelievable support this year— Russ, Hugh, Tom, and all the rest, you know who you are.

Good luck to all in the coming years.