posing setter’s position and posture, the location of the ball, the speed of her pass—to predict where the set is going. Teams scan game videos of opponents to scout who tends to hit where. On a block, the best outcome is a “roof”—blocking the attempted kill directly back for a kill of your own. Ogbechie estimates that good blocking can foil up to 50 percent of possible kills, but says that 10 percent is closer to the average.

Harvard’s game strategy includes about 30 plays, all of them ending in kill shots, which involve finesse as well as power; one effective kill is tipping the ball softly over a blocker to drop on the floor behind. Of course, teams also win points on the serve, although it is no longer necessary to serve to score. (The NCAA adopted “rally” scoring, which allows either the serving or receiving team to score, in 2001. College teams now play best-of-five-game matches, with the first four games played to 30 points and the fifth game to 15.) The Crimson have often used “float” serves, a softly hit, flat ball that may wobble, but this year Ogbechie and teammates will do some jump serving, which means hitting balls harder (after a run and leap), with topspin that makes them dip into the court.

Ogbechie’s preparation for this season, given the long rehabilitation of her right knee, has been both careful and vigorous. This summer, she had a wild schedule: working 12-hour days as a summer analyst at the global-marketing division of Merrill Lynch in New York (she earned a post-graduation job offer), then going straight to the gym for lifting, stretching, and cardio workouts to rehabilitate that knee. An economics concentrator (she began in biology, aiming for pediatrics, but “an internship after freshman year changed all that”), Ogbechie has also directed a Harvard Student Agencies program geared toward spawning undergraduate businesses and entrepreneurship. Her short-term goals include leading Harvard to its first-ever Ivy championship in women’s volleyball, a sport in which Princeton and Penn have amassed 20 titles between them since 1977. It’s a tall order, but Ogbechie is pretty tall herself. And elevation definitely matters.

—Craig Lambert

### One for the Books

**De profundis:** Whatever else the football team may accomplish this fall, its second-half comeback in the season’s Ivy League opener at Brown Stadium was a monumental endorsement of the tautological old saw that it’s never over until it’s over. Down 31-10 at the half, Harvard tamed Brown’s potent offense, reeled off 25 unanswered points to take a fourth-quarter lead, and, with a little help from the football gods, prevailed in a 35-34 squeaker.

Wineless against Harvard since 1999, Brown had taken a 52-14 beating at the Stadium a year earlier. But the upwardly mobile Bears had finished in a four-way tie for second place in the Ivy standings, and this season’s Crimson squad appeared unprepared for the fury of the new-model Bruin offense. After only 11 minutes of play Brown had built a 21-0 lead, pulling off two spectacular touchdowns—a 53-yard breakaway by sophomore quarterback Joe DiGiacomo and an 83-yard pass from DiGiacomo to split end Jarrett Schreck—and a short one by all-Ivy tailback Nick Hartigan, set up by a 49-yard pass from Fitzpatrick.

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### THE Game

The Harvard-Yale football rivalry constitutes a seemingly inexhaustible mine for historians. In *The Only Game That Matters* (Crown, $24.95), Bernard Corbett and Paul Simpson chronicle the two teams’ campaigns of 2002, when a climactic Harvard victory left them deadlocked, 23-23-1, in games played since the Ivy League was formed in 1956. Intercutting the narrative are flashbacks to notable contests of the past—among them the initial roundball game, played at Hamilton College, New Haven, in November 1875 (Harvard 4, Yale 0); the titanic Barry Wood-Albie Booth matchups of 1929–31; and Harvard’s miracle finish in the 29-29 tie of 1968.

Corbett covers Harvard football as a radio play-by-play announcer, and the book’s recounts of pregame chalk talks and sideline decision-making come across with authenticity. Though the text is marred by a few minor errors, the even-handed narrations move along with the pace of a no-huddle offense. Massachusetts senator Edward M. Kennedy ’54 (who caught a pass for Harvard’s sole touchdown in the 1955 game) and New York governor George Pataki, Yale ’67, provide forewords.

The 121st game in the series kicks off at the Stadium on November 20, at 12:30. And yes, *The Only Game That Matters* takes note of the curious historical fact that in presidential election years since 1940—with the exceptions of 1960 and 1976—the electoral result has telegraphed the outcome of The Game. If a Republican wins, so does Yale. If a Democrat is victorious, the Crimson prevails.

N.B. Harvard has won the last three games in the series. It’s been 57 years since either team has won four straight.
wide receiver Corey Mazza, who finished the game with nine receptions for 140 yards. Brown went three-and-out on its first possession of the half, and forfeited its next by fumbling a punt on its own 12-yard line. Harvard cashed in with a 22-yard field goal, and at the start of the next offensive series Dawson burst off tackle and raced 80 yards for a score. Harvard coach Tim Murphy then made a shrewed call, directing Fitzpatrick to try for a two-point conversion. The nimble quarterback’s dash to the end zone closed the gap to 31-28 and provided the eventual one-point margin of victory.

As the final period opened, a one-yard touchdown by Dawson—his third score of the day—put Harvard ahead. But Brown still had time on its side. With almost six minutes left, kicker Steve Morgan’s 28-yard field goal cut the Harvard lead to 35-28. Brown still had one more series of downs, but failed on three last-ditch passing efforts. Surrendering the ball at midfield, the Bears had to watch Harvard run out the clock.

Some game.

Tidbits: Coach Murphy described the Brown contest as one that “neither team deserved to lose.” He added, “There is one adage we live by, as corny as some people think it is, and that is, never, ever, give up.”

Dawson scored the team’s first three touchdowns on runs of 1, 14, and 74 yards. Senior Brian Edwards, an ace receiver, turned in an 87-yard punt return—the second-longest in Harvard annals—for another touchdown. With Harvard ahead 29-0 at halftime, much of the second half was left to the reserves. The Stadium attendance, officially stated as 9,513, was so sparse that the Harvard and Holy Cross band members probably outnumbered the spectators.

Running wild: In the team’s second non-league win, a 38-23 shootout at Lafayette, Dawson again scored three times. With nine touchdowns on runs of 1, 14, and 74 yards. Brown still had more than five yards per carry, Brown coach Phil Estes brought in Morgan for a field-goal try. The freshman kicking specialist, who had seen a second-quarter attempt bounce off an upright, missed this one by inches.

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