Will this be seen as the “Year of the Quarterback in the Ivy League,” as a New York Times headline proclaimed last August? It noted that Pennsylvania, Columbia, and Brown would each have former all-Ivy quarterbacks at the helm; that Yale, Princeton, Dartmouth, and Harvard would field battle-tested seniors; and that Harvard’s Winters had outpassed a clutch of elite college quarterbacks in a summer-camp competition run by Archie, Peyton, and Eli Manning.

Coach Murphy was quoted as saying that the season might be “the most competitive in a long time. I don’t think you can look at a single team in our league that doesn’t have an all-Ivy-caliber quarterback back. That’s something I’ve never seen in my 18 years in the league.”

Yet only Yale, with former Nebraska backup Patrick Witt calling signals, was able to post a W in both of its first two outings. On the season’s first weekend, Penn, Columbia, Princeton, and Harvard lost to Patriot League opponents. A week later, Cornell lost to Yale, while Penn lost to Villanova, Columbia lost to Albany, Dartmouth lost to Sacred Heart, and Princeton lost—for the first time ever—to Bucknell. Not an auspicious prologue to the Ivy League wars.

In recent seasons, Penn and Harvard have customarily been the Ivy front-runners, with Brown and Yale a step or two behind and the four also-rans beating up on one another in the league’s second division. Penn, which normally fields the Ivy’s best defense, uncharacteristically yielded 67 points in its first two games, but the Quakers, Ivy champions in 2009 and 2010, still seemed likely to right themselves. Patrick Witt, on pace to break all Yale’s passing records, could keep the Blue in contention for its first Ivy title since the Eli shared it with Princeton in 2006. But if the injury-prone Collier Winters is good to go—and maybe even if he isn’t—Harvard should have something to say about that.

The most trenchant comment in the Times text came from Columbia coach Norries Wilson: “A guy slips in the shower and you’re looking at the second-team guy. I found last year that probably the most important person on the team is the backup quarterback.”

TIDBITS: After the Brown win, backup Colton Chapple said of starter Winters: “I hurt for Collier. No one loves to play the game of football like he does. You can see the intensity—that’s why he gets hurt all the time, he plays so hard. [He’s] a great leader. You can’t replace Collier.”...Winters missed the 2008 season because of a torn leg muscle, and sustained a similar injury in preseason practice a year ago. He played the last five games of the season while his leg was still mending, leading all IVY quarterbacks with a 61 percent pass-completion rate.

New wrinkle: Harvard’s no-huddle offense now features a two-tight-end set, teaming six-foot-five sophomore Cameron Brate and the versatile Kyle Juszczyk ’13. “It’s a quarterback’s dream to have those two [tight ends],” said Chapple after the Brown game. “They’re big, they’re fast, they’ve got great hands...Brate, who did not see varsity action last year, caught 11 passes in the team’s first three games.

New faces: Freshman Seitu Smith III was a special-teams force in the Holy Cross opener, returning four kicks for a total of 124 yards, with a long of 42. Other promising freshmen include defensive lineman Zach Hodges, speedy tailback Zach Boden, and Will Whitman, a 6-6, 260-pound offensive tackle...Hodges, a former competitor who also plays on the kickoff team, was credited with three tackles, three quarterback hurries, and a pass breakup against Brown.

Toughing it out: A crowd of 18,565 braved the Brown game deluge...Crimson teams are now 5-0 in night games at Harvard Stadium.

Resilience: Since 2007, Harvard is 9-0 in games following a loss.

Lagniappe: A 31-yard field goal by kicking specialist David Mothander ’14 gave Harvard its final points in the Brown game.

Leopards skinned: Tough defense enabled Harvard to shut down Lafayette, 31-3, in the season’s third game, but a new reserve quarterback, Michael Pruneau ’14, had to be mobilized when Chapple took a hard hit and was sidelined at halftime by stiffness in his back. Harvard scored its 31 points on a field goal by Mothander, a short run by Scales, a short pass from Chapple to Alex Sarkisian ’12, a short pass from Pruneau to Cameron Brate, and a 43-yard breakaway by Zach Boden, of whom more will likely be heard this season and in seasons to come.

—“CLEAT”

Court Sparks

Two basketball co-captains with a nose for the hoop

Brogan Berry

The point guard—the #1 position—is the quarterback of a basketball team. She’s the floor leader, starting the attack and shouting defensive signals. Much of the team’s success or failure hinges on her performance—and luckily, the Harvard women’s squad is blessed with a quick dynamo of a point guard in Brogan Berry ’12, a woman with a high “court IQ” who knows how to make things happen. “She’s a great facilitator,” says Keith Wright ’12, men’s Ivy League Player of the Year (see opposite). “Brogan is very unselfish, always looking for everyone else. She’s one of those players, like Brandyn [Curry ’13, the men’s starting point guard], who can get wherever she wants to on the court.”

Dishing the ball off is atop Berry’s priority list: “I love passing and getting teammates easy shots,” she says. “My main goal is to get as many assists and as few turnovers as possible. That’s the first stat I look at after a game: the assist/turnover ratio.” She must often have smiled last year in the locker room, as her ratio of 2.25 led the Ivy League and was tenth in the nation. She also led the league in assists per game with 4.6. Berry talks less about her scoring, but in fact she topped the Crimson and was second in the Ivy League, averaging 13.9 points per game (with a .453 field-goal percentage in the Ivies, good for fifth in the league). During a game, she might mentally run a little offense/defense tally with her opponent: “My girl is not going to score more than me.”

The five-foot, eight-inch Berry (“In college, you spend less time in the paint, where there are a lot more trees [tall players]”) has played “thousands of games...
photographs by Stuart Rosner

With different players and coaches since she took up the sport in third grade, she grew up the youngest of four children—her sister and two brothers were all athletes—in Beavercreek, Ohio. Her father, Rob Berry, was a former semipro baseball player who coached the basketball team at Carroll High School, where the squad made regional finals and Brogan collected MVP awards.

“Nobody liked playing the point guard position,” she recalls, “because it’s a lot of work starting the offense—a lot of responsibility. So I got to play a lot.” Furthermore, her dad’s close involvement taught Berry “to see basketball from a coach’s perspective, so I know the game very well. My brain never stops during play—even on the bench, I’m thinking.”

She’ll be thinking plenty of defense this season, along with her co-captain, Lindsay Louie ’12. Princeton has won the Ivies the last two years, with Harvard coming second both times. Last year the Tigers posted a 13-1 record to the Crimson’s 10-4; while Harvard led the Ivies in offense at 69.2 points per game, about one more than Princeton, the Crimson was seventh in defense, allowing 61.8 points per game, while the Tigers held opponents to a 46.4-point average.

Berry, who aspires to play professionally in Europe after college, has been prepping assiduously in the off-season for that first tip-off. She enjoys friendly pickup games, for example, with football and baseball players. “Playing with guys is tremendous practice,” she explains. “They are faster and more athletic, and they make you work harder.” She smiles. “And it adds one more aspect to the satisfaction if you can beat the guys.”

Keith Wright

Last year was historic: the Harvard men secured their first Ivy League basketball championship, tying Princeton for the conference’s best record at 12-2 by beating both the Tigers and Penn on the final weekend. It was a special year, too, for co-captain and power forward (#4 position) Keith Wright ’12, who was chosen Ivy League Player of the Year. “Keith put in a tremendous amount of work, from his conditioning to his skills, and he’s being rewarded for it,” says the women’s starting point guard, Brogan Berry ’12 (see left).

“He is very quick for a big guy, and very powerful. To be chosen Ivy Player of the Year as a junior is a phenomenal achievement.”

Even with all this success, Wright remains hungry. “There was so much excitement on campus—students, professors, dining-hall staff,” he says, recollecting the past season. “Students were upset that they couldn’t get tickets to games. Last year was great, but it still leaves a bad taste—losing by one to Princeton at Yale [in a postseason playoff game to decide the Ivies’ entry to the NCAA tournament]. We feel we have so much more to accomplish.”

There is pressure to do so, because analysts have already declared that this is Harvard’s year to win it all outright. The Crimson graduated no one from last year’s starting five, and Wright returns to co-captain and power forward (#4 position) Keith Wright, who was chosen Ivy League Player of the Year. “Keith put in a tremendous amount of work, from his conditioning to his skills, and he’s being rewarded for it,” says the women’s starting point guard, Brogan Berry ’12 (see left).

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John Harvard’s Journal

Collegiate and was player of the year in its independent-schools conference.

At Harvard, mononucleosis freshman year and an Achilles tendon injury the next season slowed Wright’s start, but he did get to enjoy the memorable senior campaign of teammate Jeremy Lin ’10 (see “Hoops Houdini,” March-April 2009, page 54), whom Wright describes as “a spectacular player and a spectacular human being. Jeremy has a phenomenal work ethic, something I try to mirror.” (Lin currently plays for the NBA’s Golden State Warriors.) That season Harvard made waves by posting its first win over a nationally ranked opponent, an 82-70 thrashing of Boston College. “Winning that game solidified us as a legitimate basketball team,” Wright says.

After college, he would love to play professional ball; a psychology concentrator, he’s also interested in sports psychology and relationship counseling. “I don’t know what vibe I give off, but people want to tell me about their relationships with their girlfriends or boyfriends,” he says, smiling. He has also joined his friend Devin Saxon ’12 of the football team to record some rap numbers that hoops teammate Andrew Van Nest ’12 has featured on his music blog, Nesty’s Eggs. A big Harry Potter fan, Wright was sad to see the Potter movie series come to an end this past summer. It’s not surprising, though, that he could identify with Harry: on the court, he’s something of a wizard himself. —CRAIG LAMBERT

ALUMNI

“More As People Than Dating Objects”

The class of 1971 reflects on the coeducational living experiment.

“Virginity and parietals were all falling apart,” reports Helen Snively ’71, “and no sweet dean from Fay House was going to prevent it.” Such was the mood in the spring of 1970, when a group of Harvard and Radcliffe students volunteered for a radical (at least for Harvard College) social experiment: coeducational living—the product of tumultuous cultural and political change that was quickly altering the lives of undergraduates, and the core nature of the College.

Snively took part in that experiment and attended her fortieth reunion this September, where a lively, well-attended symposium was dedicated to “Coed Housing and the Gender Revolution.” Freshman year was still like the 1950s, said Carol Sternhell ’71, a symposium panelist, along with classmates (and fellow Harvard Crimson writers and editors) Tom Southwick and Deborah Johnson. “My memory was that boys were only allowed up in the rooms on Sundays—with the door open and three feet on the floor at all times,” she added. “We had curfews: we had to sign out in the evenings…if we got in late we were in big trouble. Men still had to wear jackets and ties to dinner in the Freshman Union.” By sophomore year, the class had entered the 1970s. Women were living (unofficially) with their boyfriends, and by junior year, some of the dorms were coed. “All of this was in the wider context of the anti-war movement and then the women’s movement,” she explained. The cultural shifts were shockingly sudden: “a change of values and morality, of politics, of possibilities, and of our most fundamental beliefs about ourselves. Overnight!”

That spring about 150 men from Adams, Lowell, and Winthrop Houses traded places with 150 women from South, East, and North Houses. The experiment was continued and expanded through the following academic year, and by 1972, co-residency had become an official option for undergraduates.

It was hardly the first move toward full coeducation at the Colleges. Talks about a Harvard-Radcliffe merger were under way among University leaders; males and females had been sharing classes for two decades and participating in most extracurricular activities together, including work on the Crimson. (Women first became “Radcliffe correspondents” in 1957, but were not allowed to vote or hold office until two years later;