

COLUMBIA SPECTATOR

FOUNDED 1877 • INDEPENDENT SINCE 1962

VOL. CXXXIII—NO. 41

FRIDAY, MARCH 27, 2009

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INSIDE



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Cynthia Nixon trades Sex for motherhood

Barnard alumna and former *Sex and the City* star Cynthia Nixon talks to Laura Hedli about her upcoming role in the off-Broadway production *Disturbed*.

Weekend, page 4

Students become East Village people

This weekend's Neighborhood Watch focuses in on the East Village, where the likes of video-game hot spots intersect with vinyl junkie stomping grounds.



Sports, page 10

Baseball opens Ivy League play at home

The defending Ivy League champions will open their title defense against Harvard and Dartmouth this weekend in their second home game of the season.



Sports, page A8

Softball hosts Ivy foes in league opener

The 7-14 women's softball team will open their Ivy season at home while coming off a double header against Fairleigh Dickinson on Thursday afternoon.

ONLINE

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Week in review: SpecFeed and SpecCast

Check out our Web site for new weekly multimedia features, including a video recap of the week.

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LIGA FILIPINA



Ian Kwok / Senior Staff Photographer

BARRIO 2009 | On Thursday evening, the Liga Filipina performed *Alice in Barrioland*, a full-length play with an original script that adapted the Lewis Carroll classic to showcase both modern and traditional Filipino dance.

Housing lottery losers seek solace elsewhere

BY LIZA WEINGARTEN
Spectator Staff Writer

Last spring, Margot Stuchin, CC '11, was wait-listed for housing.

Upon entrance to her dorm in 600 West 113th—commonly known as Nussbaum—she felt uncomfortable due to the scaffolding and construction crew directly outside her window.

"They could have climbed into my room," Stuchin said.

Eventually, Stuchin was allowed to move to McBain, where she currently resides. Stuchin hoped to be dealt a better hand in this spring's housing lottery, but the rising junior's number was even worse: 2900 out of 3000.

The housing lottery has been known to leave some students elated by their opportunity to choose housing first. As in any lottery, only some can win, and many students are left disappointed with their bleak prospects for the upcoming academic year in Columbia's residential halls.

Judy Kim, SEAS '12, is participating in the lottery for the first time.

She is vying for a six-person suite in general selection. With a lottery number of 2184, she's unsure of how to interpret her situation.

"Some people are telling me I'm screwed and some people are telling me I'm not," Kim said.

In the Columbia housing lottery, registered rising seniors, juniors, and sophomores are first assigned a point value of 30, 20, and 10, respectively, and are then given a random lottery number. Students and groups of students with the highest point values are allowed to choose their housing first. Within each point value, those with the highest lottery numbers take priority.

"It's confusing, but I guess its fair. I mean, how else are you going to do it?" Kim said.

After several negative experiences, Stuchin had a few ideas. "I think that it [Stuchin's experience this year] has basically led me to be obsessed with the housing process and all its problems," she said. Stuchin suggested that if a students are put in the bottom 10 percent one year, they should be promised the top 40 percent the next.

With lottery numbers ranging from 1 to 3000, it is certain that some students will be unhappy with their

lottery numbers. But some Columbia housing residents repeatedly left unlucky feel as though the housing system is out to get them.

This is the second year in which Ari Golub, CC '11, is trying for a suite in Ruggles. Last year, he and six other rising sophomores and one rising junior did not get the suite they hoped for—even with the slight point advantage that comes with having one older member.

This year, Golub and his group are not particularly hopeful. "It turns out we have the worst number of all of the eight-person groups [going for Ruggles]," Golub said.

Now, Golub and his group are thinking of getting an apartment off-campus, which actually costs less for an entire calendar year than does Ruggles for an academic one. Golub seems happy with this plan.

"We can live the way we want," Golub said. "It's like getting the suite we want without having to go through the housing process."

Students who will remain in the room selection process will have to make do with their lottery numbers and know that sometimes, they'll just get screwed.

news@columbiaspectator.com



Maison explores relationship between soccer, politics

BY ANA BARIC
Columbia Daily Spectator

Few things link culture to politics the way soccer does.

On Thursday night, La Maison Française featured Laurent Dubois, Duke professor and author of *Avengers of the New World* and *A Colony of Citizens: Revolution and Slave Emancipation in the French Caribbean, 1784-1804* to discuss "Zidane and the Empire of Soccer in Algeria." The talk was followed by a screening of *Zidane: un portrait du 21e siècle* (translated *Zidane: a portrait of the 21st century*).

Nicole Rudolph, director of La Maison Française, explained that a goal of the night was to provide a "historical context for the idea that sport, particularly soccer, has had a healing and/or uniting influence on the nation [France] since colonialism." By using literary discussion and an avant-garde film to contemplate a sport, Rudolph said the Maison Française worked to create a space where divergent interests could meet.

Dubois used this platform to discuss the way soccer and national spirit have influenced interaction between the Algerians and the French, showing how



Lila Neiswanger / Staff Photographer

LAURENT DUBOIS | On Thursday, Dubois addressed guests of la Maison Française.

the sport has highlighted the complicated relationship. Laurent explained that while French soccer has consistently included multicultural members and recruitment, the political motivations of players' homelands have led to controversy.

When the Algerian national team secretly recruited prized French-based Algerian players in 1958, for example, FIFA declared that any team that played the Algerians would be expelled from the World Cup. This led to tension, but more

SEE ZIDANE, page 2

Cotton robot toys support NYC homeless

Model, toy maker team up for Hearts of Gold

BY SAM LEVIN
Spectator Staff Writer

Kalvin Kauzbot may be a small robot made of cotton, but last month at the International Toy Fair in New York City, this toy proved that it had a heart of gold.

Kauzbots, a toy-making company formed in 2008, joined international supermodel Emme at the Manhattan Javits Center in February to raise funds for a nonprofit organization called Hearts of Gold, which is dedicated to enhancing the lives of New York City's homeless mothers and their children.

One of the direct recipients of these funds is Semiperm, a transitional housing residence located on 102nd Street between Amsterdam and Broadway. Semiperm was formed in April 2008 as an adopted program of Hearts of Gold.

"We call it transformational housing, but it is really supportive housing," Tricia Blanchard, Community Program Coordinator of Semiperm, said.

Semiperm serves 23 families at a time, many of which come directly from homeless shelters. "We work with families to create plans with goals, and we help them manage their goals. At the same time, they learn to empower themselves and get their lives back on track," Blanchard said.

Deborah Koenigsberger, founder of Hearts of Gold, said that her objective with the program at large is to "break the cycle, one mom at a time, giving them a better chance at life."

Koenigsberger added, "We are here to work hands-on and turn their problems around, whether it is a crisis of domestic violence, children who need new clothing, or a mother who needs money for transportation for her first week at a job."

Blanchard said that, along with the long-term goal of finding permanent housing and employment, Koenigsberger makes a personal effort to make the families of Semiperm feel special by "throwing birthday parties, providing presents on all the holidays" and "taking the mothers out to a spa."

Hearts of Gold attracted the attention of David Trotter, co-founder of Kauzbots, when he was looking to fund a New York City program for the homeless.

"We want to create awareness of important causes in the world, while also raising awareness of nonprofits which we will financially support," Trotter said.

SEE ROBOT, page 2



Courtesy of heartsofgold.org

KALVIN KAUBOT | Ten percent of proceeds from the sale of this robot go to support families living at NYC's Semi-

Over 46 percent of New York State's stimulus package allocated to NYC

New York City will receive \$80.8 million of the \$175 million allocated to the state from the national American Recovery and Reinvestment Act that Congress passed in February, according to a statement released Thursday by the office of U.S. Senator Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.).

Columbia has requested stimulus funds for its \$7 billion Manhattanville campus expansion project, which University officials say is expected to proceed as planned despite the recession.

The millions in funding announced Thursday is part of the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant program, which "will provide formula grants for projects that reduce total energy use and fossil fuel emissions, and improve energy efficiency nationwide," the Schumer statement explained.

No information was released on the specific programs that will receive funds, but Columbia has touted the environmental aspects of its Manhattanville development plan.

The project is a part of the U.S. Green Building Council's "Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design" pilot program and of Mayor Michael

Bloomberg's PlaNYC Challenge Partner program, which means Columbia has committed to reduce its greenhouse-gas emissions by 30 percent over the next decade.

The University's Manhattanville development Web site states that "environmental stewardship is a cornerstone of Columbia University's commitment to being a responsible member of the community."

At a February University Senate meeting, President Lee Bollinger said Columbia was "making a case that part of the stimulus package would be well spent on Manhattanville."

"To the extent that funding is appropriately available to Columbia, Columbia has and will continue to seek such funding," Robert Kasdin, executive vice president of the University, said in January.

"Columbia is examining the stimulus bill to identify projects that may be helped by the initiative," Kasdin later added.

The University also maintains that the expansion will create hundreds of construction and other jobs, and benefit the local economy by creating new storefront spaces for neighborhood businesses.

—Maggie Astor

WEATHER

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EVENTS — MARCH 27

Tamasha
Experience South Asian culture with dance performances from CU Bhangra, Dhoom, Taall and CU Raas. Receive giveaways and enjoy Indian food, free with admission. Tickets, \$5.

Roone Auditorium, 7:15 p.m.

RAWcus Breakdance
Attend Raw Elementz’s first-annual breakdancing competition and showcase. Dancers from Columbia and NYC at-large will perform.

Lerner Party Space, 8:30 p.m.

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COMMENT OF THE WEEK

“The University as a whole is making sacrifices in the best interest of preserving its mission.”
—On the faculty wage freeze

GENERAL CONTACT INFORMATION

Columbia Spectator
2875 Broadway, 3rd Floor
New York City, NY 10025
info@columbiaspectator.com
Daily Spectator (212) 854-9555
Editorial Fax (212) 854-9611
Business (212) 854-9550
Business Fax (212) 854-9553

For more information about the Columbia Daily Spectator and editorial policies, visit <http://www.columbiaspectator.com/about>. For more information about advertising visit <http://spc.columbiaspectator.com/>.

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Semiperm shelter residents benefit from toy sales

ROBOT from front page

Kauzbots already has eight different “robots with a heart” on the market, each standing for a different cause and providing 10-percent benefits for specific nonprofit organizations.
“It has been unbelievable. Kids that we cater to absolutely love it,” Trotter said, adding that his robots “create a mini-activist out of a child.”
Kauzbot’s fundraising for Hearts of Gold was supported by Emme, whom Koenigsberger met at an awards ceremony—a meeting which Koenigsberger described as “love at first talk.”
Despite their excitement over last month’s event, these nonprofit supporters expressed frustration with the current economy.

“Some of our residents have been laid off,” Blanchard said, adding that Semiperm, now more than ever, is highly encouraging education for its mothers. “There are not jobs out there for people who only have a high school diploma,” she said.
“The economy is hitting guys at the bottom,” Koenigsberger said. “People don’t realize that there is a population that literally has nothing. Now they don’t have the basics to survive.”
Regardless of tough times, both agreed that the satisfaction of their jobs makes it all worthwhile. “In this work, I find that I reach out a hand, and soon there are twenty people holding,” Koenigsberger said.

news@columbiaspectator.com

Zidane models social significance of soccer

ZIDANE from front page

importantly to international recognition of the Algerian struggle for independence as the country defined itself through the creation of its first sports team.
Through this athletic context of historical struggle, Dubois showed how Zinedine Zidane—a French-born soccer player of Algerian descent who stepped into the international spotlight while playing on the French national team—has become “an individual crystallized as the collective.”
Dubois described Zidane as a symbol of hope who unified France in ways unseen over recent decades. Dubois replayed footage of Zidane’s goals that contributed to France’s first World Cup championship in 1998, and led to—at least for some time—“two flags, reconciled.”
During the back-and-forth that followed the talk, one of the thirty-or-so audience members argued that Zidane was not accurately depicted in the

presentation, noting that Zidane himself had said “I’m a Kayble first.” With this statement, Zidane acknowledged his loyalty to Northern Algeria—his parents’ homeland—above his loyalty to France. When Dubois replied that Zidane’s immigrant heritage was discussed in greater detail in the book he wrote, the audience member responded, “I haven’t seen it in your presentation.”
Stephen Singer, CC ’64 and former *Spectator* associate sports editor, commented the lecture’s focus on the interaction of sport and culture. He described his bizarre experiences at the 1998 World Cup in France, where he saw “political literature being distributed to fans going in and out of the stadium.”
The talk also brought out the down-sides of glorifying the French soccer team as a means of uniting the country. These concerns included the alienation of women and the function of sport, instead of education, as a social promoter.

news@columbiaspectator.com

Talent fails to lead to wins for Whitaker

TAYLER from back page

2006. There’s virtually no room for error when it comes to Ivy women’s lacrosse, but Columbia continues to fall further behind its league compatriots each and every season.
The problem isn’t Columbia’s talent level. Current players like Holly Glynn, Brittany Shannon, and Rachael Ryan are among the league’s best. As her bio on the Columbia athletics Web site glowingly notes, Whitaker’s players have earned all-Ivy recognition 15 times in her six years as head coach. Kate Lombard and Marisa Marcellino were two of the league’s top players in their careers at Columbia. But Whitaker’s teams have been unable to turn that talent into wins, a damning reflection on the coach.
Given her team’s lackluster performance, how has Whitaker managed to survive so long? Whitaker’s predecessor and first head coach of the program, Celine Cunningham, lasted five seasons and went 0-28 in league play before being ousted. Whitaker’s tally of Ivy losses currently stands at 42, with this weekend’s game against Penn a virtual lock to bump that up to 43. The Lions did keep things close against Cornell—ranked 14th in the country—to start the Ivy campaign this year, but at the end of the day, a loss is still a loss.

What makes Whitaker’s permanence all the more confusing is that Murphy has, with the exception of Chappel, made some excellent hires in her tenure. Baseball head coach Brett Boretta is the most obvious success story. Women’s basketball head coach Paul Nixon and men’s and women’s golf coaches Rich Mueller and Kari Williams have also improved their respective teams substantially. And while the jury is still out on Norries Wilson for football, Ilene Weintraub for women’s tennis, and most recent volleyball hire Jon Wilson, both Wilsons are working with programs that have redefined futility in league history, while Weintraub has been head coach for only two years. Nevertheless, Murphy’s hiring success rate is quite high.
So why hasn’t the trigger been pulled on a replacement for Whitaker? On the surface, it certainly makes no sense that Whitaker gets to keep her job after repeatedly turning in subpar results. That alone should qualify as some kind of miracle in today’s economic climate. Let’s just hope that Murphy’s faith in Whitaker pays off better than investors’ faith in AIG and Bank of America.

Jonathan Tayler is a Columbia College senior majoring in history. Sports@columbiaspectator.com.

Softball will face Harvard, Dartmouth

SOFTBALL from back page

it close,” Noonan said. “Knowing that we have a roster full of people who can compete with Harvard—now that we’re playing better, we’re getting more consistency—our bats have come alive a little bit, we’ve had some outdoor practices to work on things. I’m actually really excited to see what we can bring against Harvard.”
In contrast, this weekend will offer the first matchup of the season between the Light Blue and the Big Green.
“Dartmouth, last year, we played two close games with,” Noonan said. “And their roster is pretty similar to last year, so I think it will be a good matchup for us as well.”
The Big Green swept that double-header against the Light Blue with 5-4 and 2-0 wins.
Sitting at 7-10 this season, Dartmouth defeated San Jose State on Wednesday, 7-6. With three hits apiece, juniors Nikki Yee and Christy Autin and freshman Molly Khalil paced the Big Green. Pitcher Devin Lindsay earned the win, striking out two batters in four and one-third innings. Hillary Barker picked up a save with two strikeouts in two and two-thirds innings.
Despite the recent successes of Harvard and Dartmouth, Noonan will try to keep her players focused—much like she did over the spring break—on their own strengths and weaknesses.
“Most of what we do is about when we’re playing well, what we need to fix,” she said. “When we worry too much about what’s going on the other side of the field, that’s when we get ourselves into trouble.”
Columbia will take on Harvard and Dartmouth at Baker Athletics Complex on March 28 and 29, respectively, at 12:30 p.m.



SARAH JESSICA PARKER
BEAU BRIDGES MIRANDA RICHARDSON MYKELTI WILLIAMSON

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THEATER



Cynthia Nixon's new distraction

Barnard alumna and TV star takes on the stage

BY LAURA HEDLI
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

In the next 830 words, I face an innumerable challenge: holding your attention. My competition: your Blackberry, gchat, YouTube, something cute that just walked by, or maybe the circa '88 photo of one Barnard alum, Cynthia Nixon. (I never said I was above name dropping.)

Just before spring break, I had the pleasure of speaking on the phone with Nixon, BC '88, about her role in Lisa Loomer's new comedy, *Distracted*. Playing at Roundabout's Laura Pels Theatre, Nixon plays Mama—a mother distraught by her son's diagnosis with ADHD, attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder. As her character seeks the advice of numerous professionals and gets lost in the quagmire of literature (à la DSM IV), she wonders what being given the label of ADHD actually means in our hyperactive, over-stimulated society.

"I wouldn't say I'm an ADD person, but I'm a very fast-paced multi-tasker," said the native New Yorker. "That part of the character really resonated with me." Nixon, herself a mother of two, balances parenting with her eight-shows-a-week performance schedule. She assured me that she's always been, well, on the go. Nixon even left her graduation early and hopped the 1 train in order to make a matinee of *Romeo and Juliet*, in which she played the title role.

Booking professional gigs since age 12, "I earned money to pay for college—that was ostensibly part of the reason I started acting," said Nixon. During her first year at Barnard, the English major made theater news when she performed simultaneously in two Broadway shows (*Hurlyburly* and *The Real Thing*). "I had been doing both plays separately for a while, and then I did them together. But I actually quit in December from both plays because I wanted a few weeks to study for my finals," she said.

Although Nixon attended Hunter College High School in Manhattan, it took some time for her to adjust to the demands of college life. Geology labs put a kink in her carefully crafted schedule, but the then-ingénue managed to organize her classes so that she could continue to act professionally and maintain her full-time student status.

"It was crazy," she said. "Monday in the theater is your day off, so I would have classes all day. Then I would try and do no classes after two on Tuesdays and Thursdays so that people could rehearse me in the afternoon." Due to matinee scheduling, Nixon also avoided courses that met on Wednesdays.

Unfortunately, the registrar could not provide me with a comprehensive list of Nixon's classes, citing issues of student confidentiality, but Nixon's activities began to generate considerable buzz 10 years later after she was cast as the no-nonsense red head, Miranda Hobbes, in HBO's *Sex and the City*.

Distracted co-star Josh Stamberg made a guest appearance in the fourth episode of the popular HBO sitcom in 1998. "We had half a scene together on *Sex in the City*," said Stamberg. "I remember it being a really fun, late, NY night of shooting and having absolutely no idea that the show would become this megahit. I just knew that I was surrounded by beautiful women and calling it 'work'...not terrible."

Stamberg first became interested in *Distracted* after seeing the world premiere in L.A. By happy coincidence, he was later approached by director Mark Brokaw for the part of the Dad after Nixon had already been cast as Mama. Learning that he would be starring opposite the Tony Award-winning actress was "one of the major draws" for Stamberg. "I've admired her work for a long time," he said.

Nixon spoke fondly of the rehearsal process for *Distracted*, commenting that the cast and creative team were constantly

SEE NIXON, page 4

Literary creativity and suicide



REBECCA EVANS
ONE FOR THE BOOKS

One of the most wrenching news items this week was the death of 47-year-old Nicholas Hughes, the son of poets Sylvia Plath and Ted Hughes.

Hughes took his own life on March 16, and the *Times of London* reported his death on March 23.

The literary world has seen perhaps more than its fair share of this heartrending phenomenon. In 1994, when the 92nd Street Y hosted a conference on the confluence of creativity and suicide—which, coincidentally, focused on Hughes' mother Plath—the *New York Times* mused that writers, "perhaps more than other artists... can be seduced by the attractiveness of suicide as a means of controlling their life story."

The *Times* also noted that many books hinge on depressive, self-abusive characters. One participant in the conference, novelist William Styron of *Sophie's Choice* fame, said that he could, in hindsight, identify many warning signs of his mental illness in his early work.

Tempting as it is, this explanation seems rather too neat. Certainly writers draw on their own experiences, but it would be absurd to pin all of a character's qualities on his creator. (The biggest scandal of the month—the American publication of Jonathan Littell's *The Kindly Ones*, which is written from the perspective of an unrepentant Nazi SS officer—should prove that much. Debate may rage, but few have accused Littell of Nazism. It goes without saying that depression has little in common with Nazism, but the point that an author's character is independent of his work stands.)

That said, it's difficult to ignore the ties between creativity and suicidal tendencies—particularly in a year that saw the loss of David Foster Wallace. Perhaps this helps to explain the interest in Hughes' story, whose death would be a private tragedy if not for his family, with its literary gifts and history of self-destruction.

Plath, along with Ernest Hemingway, Virginia Woolf, and Anne Sexton, may be among the most famous literary suicides, but the most profoundly disturbing suicide patterns are found not within her profession, but within her own family. Six years after Plath's death in 1963, her husband's mistress, Assia Wevill, gassed herself and her four-year-old daughter.

The suicides undoubtedly had an impact on Hughes' life, but the specifics of that impact—psychological distress? a genetic link? both?—remain unclear. On March 24, in response to interest in Hughes' death and personal history, *Scientific American* published an article on the question of whether suicidal tendencies run in families. The answer, unsurprisingly, was murky. Studies have shown that suicide is much more likely among families of suicide victims than among others, but studies can't prove a causal connection, and the genetic details have yet to be specified—particularly as other studies suggest that suicide is connected to the number of certain receptors in the brain, which are reduced not by genetic mutation but by life experience.

Hughes' death is intriguing because it links these two

SEE LITERATURE, page 5

FILM

Say hello to CC alumnus Ramin Bahrani's feature film *Goodbye Solo*

BY JACKLYN KATZ
Columbia Daily Spectator

Laughter, tears, friendship, and heartache: Ramin Bahrani captures the human spirit and spectrum of human emotion in his new film *Goodbye Solo*.

Goodbye Solo is the third feature of director and writer Bahrani, CC '96, whose previous features include *Man Push Cart* and *Chop Shop*. Bahrani sat down earlier this week to discuss his film and the influence of his alma mater.

The film follows a Senegalese taxi driver named Solo played by Souleymane Sy Savané, who befriends William, an elderly passenger with a hard exterior played by Red West. He commissions Solo to drive him around Winston-Salem, N.C. until October 20th. On this day, Solo will drive William to his final destination: Blowing Rock in the Blue Ridge Mountains. With every trip and shared experience, Solo and William form an unexpected friendship that is continuously tested.

In addition to the outstanding work of Hollywood veteran West and trained actor Sy Savané, the film includes memorable performances by several non-professional ac-

tors. Diana Franco Galindo, in particular, gives a beautiful performance as Alex, Solo's precocious stepdaughter. In reference to Galindo, Bahrani said, "It's the first time I've ever cast a supporting role before I cast a lead."

In this day and age of big budget films, Hollywood star power, and special effects, *Goodbye Solo* is a refreshing film with breathtaking footage of the Blue Ridge Mountains, but the style requires a moment of adjustment—the pace of the film is much slower than that of films most are used to. But this is not necessarily a negative aspect of the film. Instead, it allows for the full development of William and Solo and sheds light on the complexity of their lives.

Bahrani's film is reminiscent of the neorealist style, in which there are non-professional actors, comic relief incorporated, and the city of Winston-Salem becomes a character in its own right.

For the viewers, Bahrani said that he "wanted people really to think about the nature of friendship and what does it mean to care about someone and love someone and how do you do that selflessly." His film certainly accomplishes this goal.



BIG YELLOW TAXI | Columbia alumnus Ramin Bahrani, who studied film theory at the College, directed his third feature film *Goodbye Solo*, about an unlikely driver-passenger friendship formed in Winston-Salem North

But despite the emotional relationships and events of the film, Bahrani is able to incorporate moments of levity and humor.

Bahrani studied film theory during his four years at Columbia and found inspiration in his courses and professors. He is a fervent supporter of the

Core Curriculum. "The Core Curriculum is amazing. That's something that we're all lucky to have and to have had if you are at Columbia or have been to Columbia," he said. As a humble and generous Columbia alumnus, Bahrani takes the time to support his former Columbia classmates

by promoting Zachary Levy's documentary, *Strongman*, and Aravind Adiga's book, *The White Tiger*, during his interview.

Goodbye Solo is a poignant film that tells a new and intriguing story brought to life on the big screen by one of Columbia's own.

Courtesy of Amy Kass

Courtesy of Roadside Attractions

WEEKEND PICKS

THE EDITORS’ BEST BETS FOR THE WEEKEND AHEAD

THEATER

Finian’s Rainbow at City Center. 131 W. 55th St. (between Sixth and Seventh avenues). Thursday-Friday 8 p.m., Saturday 2 p.m. and 8 p.m., Sunday 6:30 p.m. Tickets start at \$25. The Encores! series at New York City Center presents the concert version of *Finian’s Rainbow*, the tale of an Irishman and his daughter who travel to the mystical state of Mis-situcky to bury their stolen pot of gold in hopes it will grow. The cast features Cheyenne Jackson, recently departed from his starring role in *Xanadu*, Jim Norton, and Kate Baldwin.

FOOD & DRINK

Bacon Takedown. Radegast Hall & Biergarten, 113 N. Third St. (at Barry Street), Williamsburg. Sunday 5 p.m., \$10. Help decide which of 30 competitors is the king of pork at this bacon extravaganza in Brooklyn. Your entry fee gets you a taste of each competitor’s dish, and a hand in choosing the winner. What’s better than 30 different types of bacon?

FILM

Z at Film Forum. 209 W. Houston St. (at Varick Street). Showtimes vary, \$11. Political satire has never sounded sharper than in Costa-Gravas’ *Z*, the 1969 French classic that took on the dangerous world of Greek politics. After the assassination of a peace movement leader, a police investigator and the generals who planned it battle it out in a cat-and-mouse game of conspiracy, exposing the horrors of Greek politics in a way that seems only too familiar these days.

TV

Darrell Hammond at Caroline’s. 1626 Broadway (between 49th and 50th streets). Friday-Sunday 8 p.m. and 10:30 p.m., \$38. Darrell Hammond may be *Saturday Night Live*’s longest-running cast member, but he’s still got time for his stand-up. Though it’s no trip to a taping of *SNL*, it’s probably closer than the average person may get to seeing one of its stars on stage.

ART

Public Art Installation at Vanderbilt Hall, Grand Central Station, 87 E. 42nd St. Through April 6, 7 a.m. - 11 p.m., free. Greenwich, Conn. isn’t the only place beckoning a trip to Grand Central Station. For two weeks only, the train station will display a public art installation, featuring four BMWs designed by artists Andy Warhol, Frank Stella, Roy Lichtenstein, and Robert Rauschenberg, as well as a piece of Robin Rhode’s painting made out of a BMW Z4 Roadster.

MUSIC

Primal Scream at the Music Hall of Williamsburg. 66 N. Sixth St. (near Wythe Avenue), Brooklyn. Sunday 8 p.m., \$36. Started in the mid-80s, Primal Scream set the blueprint for every band hoping to fuse rock with dance music. More than 25 years after their start, the British band is still innovating, and just put out their ninth studio album.

BOOKS

Samuel Menashe and Jon Curley at the Jefferson Market Library. 425 Avenue of the Americas (between Ninth and 10th streets). Saturday 2 p.m., free. Come hear these two critically acclaimed poets discuss their work. Menashe is the first recipient of The Poetry Foundation Neglected Masters prize, and Curley is the co-editor of the *Cultural Society*, an online poetry journal.

STYLE

Valentino: The Last Emperor at Film Forum. 209 W. Houston St. (at Varick Street). Friday-Sunday, showtimes vary, \$11. Get a rare insider look at the world of haute couture with this acclaimed documentary. Focusing on the final years of Valentino’s career, the film has also been praised for its more intimate moments—many of which feature the designer’s adorable gang of pugs.

WILDCARD

Voices of Haiti: A Night of Music, Dance, and Haitian Cuisine. Wien Lounge. Friday 7 p.m., \$5 suggested donation. Experience the flavors of the Caribbean in this cultural event hosted by the InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, Blue Key Society, and African Students Association. Performances by Uptown Vocal and Orisha should make this a night to remember. Best of all, proceeds go to help educate and feed children in Haiti.

SEARCH FOR THE BEST } SPORTS BARS

TV



Courtesy of Bar XII

SETTING THE BAR HIGH | Sports bars around New York offer the perfect opportunity to get out and see the city, while at the same time sitting back and watching the game. Bars such as SideBar and Bar XII provide a relaxing and spirited environment with plenty of cheer and beer.

A slam dunk finish to March Madness at city bars

BY JASON RAYLESBERG
Columbia Daily Spectator

The heart-wrenching hulla-baloo of this final weekend of March Madness can be much more satisfying to watch while in the presence of a raucous crowd of bracketology-obsessed fans and a little booze. And while JJ’s Place may be convenient and comfortable enough, the short time that this heaven on hardwood lasts each year is hardly the time to be surrounded by students cramming for Frontiers of Science. Enter the sports bar: the perfect locale to bring some friends to watch some of the year’s most exciting basketball games unfold. Thankfully, New York City offers some prime options, like Ship of Fools (Second Avenue between 82nd and 83rd streets). This pirate-themed bar’s 42 satellite televisions, including 13 big screens, will ensure that no one misses a minute of any thrilling game. Pool tables, video games, dart boards, and inflatable footballs hanging from the ceiling enrich a contagiously sporty ambiance. The menu is typical of most pubs in New York—familiar favorites include

their delicious hot wings and their overstuffed grilled chicken and turkey club sandwiches, with individual appetizers generally under \$10 and full entrées ranging from \$13-20. SideBar (corner of 15th Street and Irving Avenue) is a choice destination for a less rowdy setting than Ship of Fools. The menu contains a wider, more sophisticated variety of food to choose from but does not leave out those simple pub delights like chicken wings (\$11) and crispy chicken fingers (\$9). Deemed by its owners (the same owners as The Village Pourhouse) as an “upscale sports lounge,” SideBar has seven flat screen televisions that provide high-definition coverage of the best games. And if people have the overwhelming urge to strut their stuff after an exhilarating game, there is a dance floor conveniently located in the back. For the best of both worlds, Bar XII (34th Street between Second and Park avenues) is sure to please. This stylishly designed sports bar attracts a more raucous crowd than SideBar while maintaining a similarly laid-back ambiance. Bar XII boasts



Courtesy of Bar XII

12-POINTER | For sporty students looking for a different vibe than the freshman fave JJ’s place, sports bars provide a different crowd and nice TVs.

20 plasma screens so everyone can have a good view of the game from anywhere in the bar. Its famous wings and ultimate nachos are sure bets to beat campus food. Plus, the food and prices are still reasonable (free drink coupons are sometimes distributed outside the bar). It’s got a relaxed atmosphere and is located in the middle of Murray Hill, which, though a trek from campus, is situated

right around the corner from the Empire State Building. These sports bars are sure to be overflowing with March Madness energy over the next week. But whether you venture out into the heart of New York this weekend or stay on campus, don’t miss the opportunity to catch some of the games and practice that age-old Columbia basketball fan tradition: rooting for the underdog.

St. Mark’s and the Strand are top-notch literary locales

BOOKSTORES from page 6

media and some great secondhand non-fiction, and attend some of the events the store puts together (artist Jeff Koons and writer Chuck Palahniuk will visit in the near future). To access the riches a bit closer to home, hit up the Strand’s more obscure Central Park Kiosk on Fifth Avenue and 60th Street—or, alternatively, to shop at one of the world’s largest used bookstores without removing yourself from your dorm room, take a look at strandbooks.com. St. Mark’s Bookshop at 31 Third Ave. is nowhere near as grand in scale as the Strand, but it is far more selective in the works it carries, and is probably one of the few bookstores that offers an extensive collection of Communist rags. While you can still pick up a more commonplace text like Rushdie’s latest novel (in cloth hardcover, mind you), St. Mark’s is

most renowned for its indie texts, and houses a variety of art-based books, including unusual graphic novels and works on architecture. According to Sarah Khan, CC ’11, “St. Mark’s Bookshop is a great place to just show up and browse, as long as you have a lot of time on your hands... It has great academically-oriented sections, like regional history and philosophy, which aren’t publicized as much.” St. Mark’s still manages to be fairly well-rounded despite its specialized reputation, and its literature, poetry, and non-fiction collections are all top-notch. Not to be missed: the St. Mark’s Bookshop’s Reading Series at Solas Bar (232 E. Ninth St.), in which local artists and poets will offer up their literary creations to the presumably adoring East Village masses. So next time you get an itch to browse for literary gold, head down to the East Village—it may be a schlep, but the area’s wares won’t disappoint.

Nixon brings focus to off-Broadway show *Distracted*

NIXON from page 3

working to tweak the script and hone performances. “In theater you really have to build a house that you can live in,” she said. “You have to have a thing that you return to night after night, week after week that will support you.” Careening through scenes, Nixon especially appreciates the fragmented, stop-and-start structure of the play. As actors don multiple

personas while projections of Google searches and the nightly news flash on and off moveable backdrops, *Distracted* provides a cultural commentary that transcends one family’s story of dealing with ADD. If we’re sinking in a tub of information, then it seems as though we’ve got just enough time for the headlines, and even those better go down easy. If you’re still tuned in, here’s the dish on what Nixon’s into and the star’s not-so future projects. The stage-o-philic actress gets giddy

discussing this season’s theatrical offerings, so what does she recommend? “I saw the *Garden of Earthly Delights* and I thought it was just amazing,” Nixon said. And while *Distracted* bows in May, the actress recently allayed rumors that she would be returning to the Great White Way in a musical incarnation of *Sex and the City*. Who’s behind the gossip mill, you ask? Probably some twitting lunatic, no doubt. As you were, dear reader, as you were.

East Village records history in choice vinyl havens

VINYL from page 6

wall lined with crates. Off to the side, customers can listen to records on technic turntables and owner Kaz Okura spins Techno music on a DJ booth to his heart’s delight. As a top DJ from Japan, Okura doesn’t speak English that well, but he knows his dance music inside and out. Acting like a friendly but quirky music guru, he not only gives great music recommendations but also gives advice on what records mix well with them, making the crate-digging process that much easier. Be warned, however: Vinyl Market caters to a very niche market of DJs and music lovers and can make for a trying experience. Instead of by style, music is categorized by record label. This can be beneficial for DJs who have go-to record labels from which they regularly buy music, but can be somewhat aggravating for the average music listener who only has a vague idea of what he or she is looking for. Also, the record store is closed for extended periods during the year when Kazu is out of town, so it’s best to call in advance. Granted, the store may pose a few challenges—but nobody ever said digging for buried treasure was easy.

THEATER



Courtesy of Barlow Hartman
STAR-CROSSED LOVERS | Tony and Maria of *West Side Story* bring the tragic tale of Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* to modern-day New York City.

Spiritual eats on the Upper West Side



VALERIYA SAFRONOVA
WEST SIDE FLAVORS

“I think he’s praying,” said my friend as he cautiously glanced at the table next to us. Seated behind a humongous dosa was a man staring very intently at a candle flame.

My first assumption had been that he was just bored, but I found myself nodding in partial agreement. The image of this man—surrounded by candles, photos of yogis, and vaguely spiritual music—could have easily fit into my conception of an ashram. Unfortunately, we were not in India. We were in New York City—more specifically, on 82nd and Amsterdam—at the Hampton Chutney’s newest outpost. The atmosphere in which we found ourselves on Monday night is only one side of the Chutney’s multi-dimensional personality. During the day, mothers clad in yoga pants can relax while their children are amused in the corner by the books and crayons provided by the Chutney. Once night takes over, the playthings are exchanged for silky pillows and dimmed lights, creating a room reminiscent of an *Arabian Nights* fantasy. “You gotta go with supply and demand,” says Gary MacGurn, the owner of the Hampton Chutneys. He adds, “On the Upper West Side, it’s a lot of children and a lot of strollers. We accommodate that. At night, it’s a different crowd. It becomes a place to go with your girlfriend or boyfriend.” Though the visitors might change, they all come looking for one staple—dosas. Made out of lentils and rice, and at only 189 calories for a piece twice the size of my head, the dosa was labeled “the anorexic’s sandwich” by my friend. The traditional filling is a potato masala (meaning with spices), but Gary and Isabel MacGurn have expanded on that concept by fusing typical ingredients with Western ones. The results include delicious combinations such as chicken with goat cheese and tomato, or tuna with avocado and arugula. With each dosa comes a small container of chutney, a spicy sauce made out of fruits or vegetables. The customer can choose one of five flavors: mango, peanut, tomato, cilantro, or curry. These chutneys should not be ignored—with their perfectly balanced flavors, they add the oomph that makes the dosas irresistible. So why dosas? As MacGurn explains, “At the ashram I was eating them everyday. I started to think to myself: what food can I eat every single day and not get tired of? I couldn’t think of another food. Fifteen years later, my wife and I thought it would be a good thing in the West—healthy, fast, and affordable.” MacGurn wanted to share his love with New Yorkers, and from there came the first Hampton Chutney. Despite his success here on the other side of the world, MacGurn has not forgotten the lessons on cooking and eating food that were taught at the ashram. He believes that without the right attitude, the food he presents is worthless. “All the different stages—growing it, preparing it, serving it—should be done with great reverence and with the understanding that food is God. It’s a beautiful thing, a beautiful dance. The high vibrations create a very loving feeling. A lot of people are attracted to that.” This approach is not radical or new. Many chefs consider carefully the attitude they take toward serving the customer. Many others, on the other hand, have forgotten it. MacGurn, who worked at a number of Manhattan restaurants prior to opening his own, says, “A restaurant might be very fancy, but the anger and the fighting turn the food into poison.” Trying to read the spirituality of a dish is outside the realm of a Zagat rating, yet the connection between food and emotions is not to be neglected. Yes, the culinary world of Manhattan is ridiculously fast-paced and demanding, leaving little room for spreading loving vibrations. But a little bit more respect—toward everyone—isn’t too much to ask for, is it?

Valeriya Safronova is a Columbia College first year. West Side Flavors runs alternate Fridays.

Revisiting the *West Side*: Broadway’s met a girl named Maria

BY RUTHIE FIERBERG
Spectator Staff Writer

With the ominous echo of one finger-snap, a hoodlum captivates the cavernous Palace Theater. An instant sense of urgency radiates through the theater, antsy with high expectations for this latest revival of the revolutionary classic *West Side Story*, which opened last Thursday. Infused with new fervor, the production takes the revamped *Romeo and Juliet*—now Tony and Maria—one step further in both authenticity and theatrical passion. Thanks to Arthur Laurent’s masterful direction (at the impressive age of 91, no less), the mosaic of villainous gangs and forbidden love creates a show that no one should miss. Immediately commanding the entire stage with that single ricocheted snap, Cody Green—who plays Riff—established the show’s aura and summoned his Jets as leader of their gang. Claiming their turf, the Jets seamlessly glided into the precision of Jerome Robbins’ original choreography, restaged by Joey McKneely. They floated over an Upper West Side street corner, only to be jolted by the challenging presence of Bernardo, played by George Akram, and his fellow Puerto Rican Sharks. Dramatic leaps, mocking body language, and sweeping masses of gangsters choreographically attacking each other reproduced the violence of the dingy streets and Robbins’ active choice to employ dance as the primary medium to communicate the full-blown hatred between the Jets and Sharks. After years of productions gradually casting aside the dance of musical theater, *West Side Story* revived the art form in one gulp of much needed air. The unbelievable precision of the



Courtesy of Barlow Hartman
WHEN YOU’RE A JET | Dance scenes exemplify the gang tension in a remake of *West Side Story*.

choreography throughout the show visually emphasized the pervasive oneness of gang mentality through two very distinct styles of movement—Latin for the Sharks and lyrical jazz for the Jets. Though Robbins’ choreography was originally quite subtle and, yes, lyrical, this generation of dancers modernized the presentation with a punching meticulousness. *West Side Story* used the power of the classic to reassert the necessity of a prestigious standard of theater and dance traditionally characteristic of Broadway that over the years has been slipping. With the incredible dancing talent of the cast and vocal ability to match, the production is not only the revival of *West Side Story*, but also of the triple threat. Twenty-one-year-old newcomer Josefina Scaglione illuminated the stage with her lovable innocence as the young star-crossed lover, Maria. Her operatic training lends the soprano the vocal strength to carry the role, but also infused Scaglione’s ability to exude emotion through Stephen Sondheim’s lyrics. Her voice lingered in the air like a lullaby in both “Tonight” and

“One Hand, One Heart,” beautifully complementing the strong vibrato of co-star Matt Cavanaugh’s Tony. But Scaglione’s ability to convey emotion was not limited to her song. Whether fancifully dreaming of her wedding night, reprimanding elders for blatant insensitivity, or mourning her lover’s death with tears pelting his body, Scaglione drew in her audience and yanked on their heartstrings, compelling them to identify with her every whim. Though Cavanaugh’s harmonizing vocals impressed—emoting through gentle falsetto, a sweet lower register and a vigorous but well-used belt—his acting was far too inconsistent. While he adeptly played a hopelessly-in-love Tony, the blinding rage that allegedly overcomes him at the sight of the death of his best friend, Riff, appeared contrived. Karen Olivo gave the true standout performance as Bernardo’s girlfriend, Anita. She commanded the stage with her maturity, both in her character and experience as a performer. From the moment she hit the stage, her comedic timing bit and her sassy attitude

shone through. Olivo’s powerhouse vocals enlivened Leonard Bernstein’s well-known “America,” and deeply resonated in the newly Spanish version of “A Boy Like That,” now “Un Hombre Asi.” While Olivo brought maturity and truthfulness to the stage, so did the infusion of Spanish dialogue and lyrics, unique to this production. The Sharks spoke Spanish everywhere they naturally would. Though mixed opinions have prevailed regarding audience accessibility, and at times the change in lyrics seemed to detract from the original poeticism of Sondheim, the Spanish translations provided by *In the Heights* scribe Lin-Manuel Miranda truly heightened the emotional depth of the show. It preserved the feisty attitude of the Sharks, further defining their separate world within the Upper West Side while escorting the presence of Spanish in our America to the artistic forefront. David C. Woolard’s costumes reflected this theme of separation—Jets were flecked in orange rust and Sharks were coated in deep purple, as in the original production. The vast brilliance of color, especially in “Dance at the Gym,” flooded the stage, inciting excitement and competition and offsetting the appropriately dreary pallet of James Youmans’ decisively simple sets. But the styles in the costuming, especially for the girls, portrayed conflicting time periods. This may have been an attempt to portray the timeless quality of the story, but it was slightly too ambiguous and sparse to read as a conscious choice rather than an accident. While the love story of Tony and Maria truly is ageless, the current revival of *West Side Story* commits to timeliness, talent, and truth.

Exploring death, legacy, and literature

LITERATURE from page 3

popular theories of suicidal frequency: that creative people are more prone to suicide and that it is an inheritable tendency. The extent to which Plath’s children relate to these questions is notable. Hughes’ sister Frieda is herself an author and has publicly addressed her family, her artistic work, and her own mental and emotional issues. Hughes, on the other hand, was a more private figure whose career was not in the arts, but in marine biology. He did not choose to call attention to his family history—students and colleagues at the University of Alaska, where Hughes taught, said that he was all but silent on the subject. Those wishes, expressed in life, are to be respected in death. It is nothing more than sensationalism to use Hughes’ death as an excuse for wild speculation and invasive gossip, and it’s a shame that so many have done so. But it is not illegitimate to explore the issues related to this unusually public tragedy. This is particularly true if exploring those issues could enhance our understanding of factors that can increase the risk of suicide, including emotional trauma, genetic predisposition, and, yes, even the urge to write. Rebecca Evans is a Columbia College junior majoring in English and creative writing. One For the Books runs alternate Fridays.

BOWERY BEATS



Ian Kwok / Senior Staff Photographer
TWIST AND SHOUT | The Bowery Ballroom hosts a variety of music stars from the little known to the world famous on almost a nightly basis. This, along with other staples such as Joe’s Pub, give the East Village a thriving music scene that pays tribute to the neighborhood’s punk roots.

BOOKS



Courtesy of Strand Bookstore
STRANDED! | Historic bookstores like the Strand along with specialty bookshops make for a unique village experience.

Keeping tabs on popular downtown bookstores

BY MALLIKA NARAIN
Columbia Daily Spectator

A conjecture: New York University students live charmed and far more entertaining lives in comparison to Columbians, thanks to the wide array of stores and restaurants at their disposal. This hypothesis definitely contains a grain of truth, because these East Village bookstores will make you reconsider your school of choice—or at least convince you to shop downtown next time you need to buy books. To invoke an age-old cliché, the Strand really needs no introduction. This 80-year-old vendor of all things literary is one of those Manhattan hot spots that tourists literally write home about. Most New Yorkers know the Strand’s mantra by heart—18 miles of books—and its convenient location just off Union Square makes it easy to find. The Strand is one of those bookstores that can lay claim to a royal family of sorts—the store was opened by Ben Bass in 1927, was taken over by his son Fred in the ’50s, and is currently run by the latter’s daughter, Nancy Bass Wyden.

When the Strand was first conceived, it was one of 48 bookstores on Fourth Avenue’s so-called Book Row. Today, however, it is the only bookshop remaining from that period. Entering the Strand is a (semi-claustrophobic) experience in itself—the cramped cashiers and absorbed readers create something of a human obstacle course and ensure that reaching the areas further back will be a challenge, but one with exciting distractions. Exhibit A: Strand merchandise—every dorky teenager is dying to get their hands on one of those legendary tote bags, be it polka-dotted or awkwardly cow-printed. Exhibits B and C: Strand used and new books, all at extremely affordable prices. In particular, the Strand offers cheap faux-leather-bound classics and an unbeatable selection of art books. To wit: pair the former with the \$1650 first-edition *Tocqueville* on sale and enjoy some sort of imperial status in your CC class. Finally, be sure to check out the lower levels of the Strand for

SEE BOOKSTORES, page 4

ART

Art clings to its corner of East Village

BY KIMBERLY RUBIN
Columbia Daily Spectator

It’s hard to believe that abandoned buildings and dirty streets could be so conducive to art. But in the ’80s, the East Village was falling apart on the outside while internally fostering one of the greatest art movements in New York City’s history. Art is fundamental to the East Village. In the ’60s, the thriving art and music scenes developing in the streets north of Houston and east of Broadway caused it to develop a separate identity from that of the Lower East Side. Since then, the neighborhood has been home to artists like Keith Haring, Jean-Michel Basquiat, and Jeff Koons. With such a rich past, one might expect to find the place bursting at its borders with contemporary culture. Yet art seems to be the one thing missing on the streets of Alphabet City and the Bowery today. There are plenty of restaurants and thrift stores, but artists and galleries are few. What happened? According to the E.V. Grieve, a blog devoted to the neighborhood, it’s all connected to housing. The success of the art scene led to a renewal of interest in the area, which ultimately increased rents and drove artists out. Today, NYU controls the real estate while its students influence the business market. “The increasingly sanitized East Village of this era may sadly be remembered for its readily available chain drug stores, frozen yogurt, and high-end hair salons,” said the blogger. There is a plus side to this trend, however. Several of the bars that have sprung up in the area to cater to students use their extra wall space for art. The most generous in size, and the cleanest, is Tom & Jerry’s 288 Bar (288 Elizabeth St. at Houston Street). While the art on display may not come from the area (the current artist, Jess Thorsen, is from Seattle), the bar tries to promote “real art for real people,” said Ika Sobczak-Conover, an employee at the bar. This same philosophy can be found in the few galleries present. PS122 Gallery (150 First Ave., between Ninth and 10th streets), located in the former school building of the same name, exhibits juried shows of emerging New York artists. “PS122 Gallery offers something very special to emerging artists in New York,” said PS122’s director. “To learn from doing, to be seen and hopefully appreciated.” There is currently a dual show of the photographs of Meryl Meisler and Julie A. McConnell, as well as a quirky installation by Joyce Yamada and Joanne Ungar. Another East Village find is the newly opened Zürcher Studio (33 Bleecker St. at Lafayette Street), which exhibits mostly European artists. The studio’s inaugural show, Dan Hays’s *Failing Light*, presents paintings inspired by digital photos of Colorado taken by an American Dan Hays, who the London artist met online. Despite the efforts of the galleries that remain, the art scene that once flourished above Houston seems to have moved below, back to the Lower East Side, where rents are lower. It’s disappointing, but perhaps something good will come of the recession and artists will be able to return. Until then, other neighborhoods will have to do.



VIDEO

Playing in New York City’s gamer paradise

BY KEVIN CIOK
Senior Staff Writer

Morningside Heights is limited in the number of hot spots in which gamers can congregate, trade, and talk about games, but the East Village is definitely chock full of places for gamers to explore and meet other gamers. The two big locales in the East Village are *Spectator* favorite Video Games New York on 202 E. Sixth St. and fast-growing video game powerhouse Play N Trade Video Games on 137 E. 13th St. On top of that, the East Village’s proximity to Chinatown offers an even greater variety of gamer-friendly hangouts in the area, including J&L Game Trading and Elizabeth Center. Video Games New York (videogamesnewyork.com) has pretty much anything you could ask for—popular games, games from before you were born, wacky games from overseas, and everything else. They usually get stuff in early, their stock is huge, and they restock quickly. The staff is friendly, knowledgeable, and suitably nerdy for a video-gaming hot spot. Visitors can tell that the clerk behind the counter can tell the difference between classic *Street Fighter* and *King of Fighters*, and, providing the clerk is having a bad day and he or she can’t, surely someone



Ian Kwok / Senior Staff Photographer

PLAY THE GAME | The East Village is home to some of the City’s hottest hangouts for video game addicts.

else in the store can. Frequently hosted tournaments and launch events attract the gaming illuminati from around the city, and its noteworthiness has made it a veritable mecca for traveling gamers. The store is also looking to further integrate itself in the gaming community by promoting the development and distribution of indie games, a movement that has many gamers excited. Video Games New York is not the only gaming epicenter in the East Village, though: Play N Trade Video Games (get-ready-to-game.com) offers almost everything Video Games New York offers often at lower prices, and, comparatively, they offer very fair trade-in values for used games. Like some of the other stores in the area, they also do console repairs (and

other hardware “augmentation”) right on premises and with great turnaround times. They’re also great for private parties and they sometimes host gaming leagues. Like the competition they host, Play N Trade is a fierce competitor that is gaining notoriety for its great catalog of games. Located closer to Chinatown are J&L Game Trading at 28 Elizabeth St. and the Elizabeth Center across the street—they’re both remarkable for their enormous selections, though prices can be pretty steep. No gamer can really go wrong with any of these stores—thinking about them makes me wish one would relocate to Morningside Heights. But, since Columbians do enjoy not being kicked out, it’s probably for the best that there’s some distance between the two neighborhoods.

MUSIC



Ian Kwok / Senior Staff Photographer

SCRATCH AND SPIN | Record stores in the East Village such as Etheria and Vinyl Markt attract DJs and civilians alike in that ritual act of crate-digging.

East Village record stores disc jockey to be number one in New York City’s spin market

BY LINH TRUONG
Columbia Daily Spectator

Every true music nerd is familiar with the seemingly anachronistic activity of crate-digging. Laborious and tiresome, it’s worth it for those rare finds and there is no city quite like New York City for the vinyl lover. Unfortunately, record stores, especially in the genre of electronic dance music, had been dropping like flies all

over the city long before the recession ever hit. In the East Village, the beloved record store Etheria on Avenue A closed last month, to the dismay of DJs and lay music lovers alike. Luckily, music dorks have a savior. Vinyl Market, located at 241 E. 10th St. (between First and Second avenues), sells electronic music from House to Minimal Techno to Experimental with new releases imported from Europe and Japan. Consistently stocking freshly pressed records from the best electronic music labels around, Vinyl Market has become an El Dorado for many serious DJs in NYC. With such a healthy patronage, the record store is coming up on its tenth year and doesn’t seem to be going anywhere anytime soon. The store itself is on the small side, with the newest records lining the walls and one

SEE VINYL, page 4

Neighborhood Watch

Conference play opens as men’s tennis hosts Cornell

BY KUNAL GUPTA
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

Two streaks will come to a head this weekend as the men’s tennis team begins its quest for an Ivy League title. Columbia welcomes Cornell to the Dick Savitt Tennis Center on Saturday with a 10-4 record on the season and a perfect 5-0 record at home. The Big Red, on the other hand, will travel to Morningside Heights toting a six-match winning streak, with the last three wins all on the road.

The Lions are coming off a spring break trip in Texas which saw them go 1-2 against quality competition. Columbia was downed 7-0 by 38th-ranked Texas Christian University—the top four matches each went to three sets, all ending in Light Blue defeat. Against Southern Methodist University, the Lions fell 6-1. Once again, all four matches went the distance. Columbia did garner a victory on its final stop against UT Arlington, winning the doubles point and four singles points for a 5-2 win. The Lions played all three matches outdoors for the first time this spring after playing and practicing indoors nearly all season.

“We actually had a very good trip,” head coach Bid Goswami said. “I felt we went for playing a lot of outdoor matches and we got some good schools to play. The results for the first two were not satisfactory, but I felt that we could have beaten them at home.”

Cornell, meanwhile, picked up three wins at home before traveling to California and defeating Chapman, Loyola Marymount, and Point Loma handily. The Big Red won all three home matches 7-0 and dropped a grand total of five points in three matches in California. The final two matches on the spring break trip were cancelled, so Cornell will be in action for the first time since March 17 when it faces Columbia.

“I saw that Cornell had a good break as well,” Goswami said, “as did Yale and Princeton, and it will be a very interesting Ivy season. I just want to focus on Cornell first, and take it one match at a time, which is what I told the boys also. We can’t take them lightly, they played well at the ECACs and I think it will be a good match. They match up well against us, they play good doubles.”

Two Big Red players have played No. 1 singles this season: Josh Goldstein and

Jon Jaklitsch. Playing No. 4 singles for Cornell is Jeremy Feldman, last season’s Ivy League Rookie of the Year. Feldman went 12-2 last season and 7-0 in Ivy play, playing mostly at No. 4 and No. 5 singles last season.

The Lions have had consistent play from their singles players all season, maintaining an equally consistent lineup at the top. Bogdan Borta and Jon Wong have split time at No. 1 and No. 2 singles, with Wong playing almost the entire spring at the helm. Junior transfer Mihai Nichifor plays No. 3 singles, suffering his first loss of the season against TCU. At No. 4 is stand-out freshman Ekin Sezgen, joined by fellow freshman Haig Schneiderman at No.5. Manning No. 6 singles have been sophomore Kevin Kung and freshman Rajeev Deb-Sen, who picked up a win against UT Arlington.

Columbia and Cornell met last season in their first Ivy match in a heated affair in Ithaca. The Lions lost the doubles point but got quick wins at Nos. 1, 3, and 5 singles to go up 3-1. The Big Red came back, however, to tie at 3-3, and the match came down to the No. 2 singles, which featured Mark Clemente



File Photo

ON THE PROWL | Columbia will begin its chase of an Ivy title against Cornell.

and Goldstein. Clemente lost the first set in a tiebreak, but came back to win the second set in a dramatic breaker, cruising the third set 6-1 to give Columbia a 4-3, come-from-behind win.

The Lions will be in action on Saturday at noon at the Dick Savitt Tennis Center.

Rowing takes Governor’s Cup to begin spring season

BY MICHELE CLEARY
Spectator Staff Writer

Both the women’s rowing team and the men’s heavyweight team will be racing this weekend after returning from a successful spring-break training trip to Melbourne, Fla. After a week of intense training, both teams were able to take home the Governor’s Cup on March 21.

The women’s team looked impressive at the event, finishing first and second in every race except for the novice four. In the varsity eight race, the A boat came in at a time of 7:20.50 and the B boat finished just over eight seconds later, with both boats finishing before Florida Tech. In the varsity four race, the B boat finished first, with a time of 8:02.30, with the A boat finishing over 20 seconds later, just beating the Panthers.

“I think that the performance was really solid from all of the boats,” head coach Melanie Onufrieff said. “I think that they did all of the things that we have been working on during the time that we were in Florida. Now, we’ll just try to hone them, do things a little bit better, tweak little things here and there, and just try to clean and sharpen things up as we go.”

Columbia will need to be very sharp this weekend, as it will face Yale—reigning varsity eight NCAA champions—and Penn, a strong Ivy foe, in the Connell Cup.

“Certainly we have to go as fast as we can, there’s no doubt about it,” Onufrieff said. “Can we win? I don’t know.”

The Lions will rely on experienced rowers to try and knock off the reigning champs, as five of the nine rowers in the varsity eight boat rowed first varsity last season. Seniors Christine Kwon—coxswain—and Genevieve Joy, juniors Francesca Crozier-Fitzgerald and Kate Haley, and sophomore Meredith Mead are all returning from last season, and will be joined by juniors Rebecca Hasley, Anne Comfort-Cole, and Alex Murata, and sophomore Kara Bess.

Looking further into the season, Onufrieff predicted that Princeton, Brown, and Harvard will also prove to be difficult Ivy opponents.

The heavyweight team also had a commanding victory at the Governor’s Cup, winning every race except for the freshman eight, which it lost to Columbia’s lightweight team. The varsity eight finished first in Flight 1 with a time of 6:12.60 and first in Flight 4 with a time of 6:01.40.

The Light Blue’s strong performance was the result of an intensive winter training program.

“The primary focus for winter training is physical preparation,” head coach Mike Zimmer said, “really getting everybody to a physiological level where they are going to be able to train and race at a very high intensity during the spring. So the focus of the wintertime is almost entirely on really good quality of training.”

The team did not focus on race preparation as much during the winter, which is why Zimmer was so impressed with his team’s performance in Florida.

“I was really pleased to see the guys race with a lot of intensity despite the fact that we haven’t done much to actually actively prepare for that,” he said.

This weekend, Columbia will travel to New Brunswick, N.J. to compete against Rutgers in the Collins Cup. According to Zimmer, the Lions will have to focus on their own race plan in order to beat the Scarlet Knights.

“We want to adhere to our plan as best as possible,” Zimmer said, “and try to create as much boat speed in the body of the race as we can, and then, when and if there’s an opportunity to put the bow in front, that the guys all respond and do that when their coxswain asks them to.”

The varsity eight will consist of seniors Madeleine Desmond—coxswain—Richard Joyce, and Henry Cooper and juniors Evan Cassidy, Brian Dunn, Timm Baur, Tom Eichler, Matt Celano, and Sebastian Kirwan.

Cassidy, captain and stroke—the rower sitting nearest to the coxswain who sets the length and rhythm of the stroke for the rest of the crew—is a major asset to the team.

“He’s a guy that has set very high standards for training and for racing,” Zimmer said.

Baur, Cooper, and Joyce are also important rowers for the Lions, but not the only ones who contribute.

“One of the things that marks this group is that there is a very high level across the board,” Zimmer said. “Everyone holds each other to a pretty high standard in terms of their training and their racing. I think in that regard, we have a lot of guys responsible for making crews go fast.”

The Connell Cup is scheduled to begin at 11:40 a.m. on Saturday in Pelham, N.Y.

The Collins Cup is scheduled to begin at 9:40 a.m. on Saturday in New Brunswick, N.J.



File Photo

FORWARD CHARGE | The Columbia women’s lacrosse team will host No. 3 Penn at Baker Field this Friday. Senior attacker Holly Glynn—the Lions’ leading scorer—and the rest of the team will need to pull off a major upset if they want to break the team’s 26-game Ivy League losing streak.

Lacrosse seeks first Ivy win against No. 3 Penn

BY SABINE SCHULZ
Spectator Staff Writer

The Columbia women’s lacrosse team resumes competition in the Ivy League at home today against Penn, the defending Ivy champ, after dropping a 15-13 decision to Lehigh on March 25. Although the Lions initially rallied against the Mountain Hawks, the latter attained a lead early on and sustained it until the

end of the game. The loss against Lehigh put Columbia 5-2 (0-1 Ivy).

Defending Ivy champion Penn (7-0, 2-0 Ivy) has won the conference title four times, with back-to-back titles in 2007 and 2008. Last year, when Columbia and Penn met on the field, the Lions fell 13-2 to the Quakers. Only two of Columbia’s top scorers, Brittany Shannon and Holly Glynn, were able to clear shots, scoring one goal each.

Penn’s strength lies in its ability to win draw controls and cross-turnovers, as well as to scoop ground balls. This aggressive form allows the Quakers to control the tempo of play and limit their opposition’s opportunities.

“We emphasize with the team the need to execute in all 60 minutes of the game,” head coach Kerri Whitaker said.

“The big challenge right now is finishing all plays. That is indicative to

commitment to winning,” she said. “The biggest thing is 50-50 balls and turnovers. We need to win more possessions. We have to perform well in all aspects of the game.”

The outcome of today’s match will depend entirely on the Lions’ ability to control the game and play with their style and pace, despite the fierce competition.

The game against Penn will take place March 26 at Baker Field at 3:30 p.m.



File Photo

FOCUSED LIONS | Senior co-captain Nina Suda will look to lead the Lions to their first Ivy win since 2006 against the Big Red in Ithaca.

W. tennis seeks revenge for earlier defeat by rival Cornell

BY KUNAL GUPTA
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

Women’s tennis head coach Ilene Weintraub has to hope that the third time will prove a charm for Columbia this weekend.

For the Lions, the last two matchups against Cornell have been carbon copies of each other. Last season, the Big Red topped the Light Blue 6-1. Earlier this season at the Eastern College Athletic Conference Championships, Cornell and Columbia (4-8) faced off once more, only to play to the exact same 6-1 finish. Weintraub, however, believes that her team should fare better this weekend in its 2009 Ivy opener.

“I think just having more match play experience will help us,” she said. “Over break, we played to the best of our ability.”

That spring-break training trip in California only netted Columbia a 1-2 record, with a 5-2 loss to Loyola Marymount and a 5-2 loss to Cal State Northridge bookending a 7-0 win over Cal State Fullerton. Two players in particular, Nicole Stanzola and Eliza Matache, turned in strong performances, with Matache going undefeated in singles play for the trip.

“The freshmen have been making a huge impact on our program,” Weintraub said. “They fight hard on the court, and are committed and dedicated to turning this program around. I know they will continue to help in Ivy play.”

The Big Red (4-9), coming off its own spring-break training trip in California, crushed

Azusa Pacific University 7-0 in its first match, sweeping the singles and the doubles matches without dropping a set. But that luck turned in Cornell’s next two matches, which culminated in a 7-0 loss to Long Beach State University and a 6-1 defeat by Loyola Marymount. Cornell won the doubles point against Loyola, but fell in each of the six singles matches, winning only one set.

The last time Columbia and Cornell met, the former was competitive in nearly every match, but failed to come through in most. The Lions put up a good fight in the doubles competition, losing at Nos. 1 and 3 doubles but winning an 8-6 tussle at No. 2 doubles played by senior Marlena Hall and sophomore Stephanie Zilberman. Singles were close as well: Natasha Makarova, at No. 1, won her first set 6-2 but was defeated in three sets, 2-6, 6-3, and 6-3. Zilberman, at No. 2 singles, fell in straight sets. Stanzola, at No. 3, won the second set after losing the first, but was unable to pull out the victory. Matache also fell in three tightly contested sets at No. 5 singles. The Lions earned their only point of the day from Hall, who won her match in straight sets.

Health is an issue for the Lions—Zilberman did not play on the team’s spring-break trip due to an injury.

“We have a few injuries and illnesses, which is unfortunate,” Weintraub said, “but what can we do except try our hardest?”

The match will be played at the Reis Tennis Center at noon on Saturday.

The men's tennis team will open up their Ivy season against rival Cornell this weekend in a home contest.

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SPORTS

FRIDAY, MARCH 27, 2009 • PAGE 10



The women's lacrosse team will take on the No. 2 ranked Penn Quakers this weekend in a League matchup.

PAGE 9

Why isn't Whitaker on the hot seat?



JONATHAN TAYLER

YOU'RE WITH ME, LEATHER

Turn on the TV or open a newspaper and you won't be able to escape the sad truth about the economy—jobs are scarce and layoffs are happening with alarming regularity. But as jobless figures rise, there's one person who, if the last six years provide any indica-

tor, won't have to worry about cashing an unemployment check any time soon: women's lacrosse head coach Kerri Whitaker.

Much like Wall Street's recent output, the numbers from Whitaker's coaching career are sobering: one conference win in her six seasons at the helm, 26 straight Ivy games lost—a streak dating back nearly four years. In 2008, Columbia was outscored in league play by 61 goals, almost nine goals per game. And behind it all is Whitaker, apparently unable to turn the tide in Columbia's favor.

Given Whitaker's achievements before Columbia, it's a mystery why she's struggled so much in Morningside Heights. During her playing career at Brown she was a first-team all-Ivy honoree four years running and a first-team All-American. Whitaker not only coached at the national level, but she also helped Syracuse break in a women's lacrosse program in 1998. In fact, she helped Syracuse develop a nationally ranked team that made the NCAA Tournament twice in her time up north. But now, in her seventh season as head coach, Whitaker can't seem to find the right combination for her team, repeatedly coming up short in the league.

Athletics Director Dianne Murphy has already rid herself of one underperforming coach in Leo Chappel, the much-heralded UC Santa Barbara assistant who won only two Ivy matches in his three years as the Columbia men's soccer head coach. Under Chappel, a program that had settled into mediocrity began a full-fledged free fall into the basement. No one can state with any precision how much damage Chappel did to Columbia soccer in his brief time as coach. But while men's soccer floundered, the rest of the Ivy League became stronger. Three Ancient Eight teams qualified for the NCAA Tournament last year, while only Cornell continues to struggle alongside Columbia. New head coach Kevin Anderson now faces the unenviable task of rebuilding in an increasingly difficult league.

But while the Ivy League has only recently begun to assert itself as a national contender in men's soccer, the conference long ago became the top dog in women's lacrosse. Four Ivy teams are ranked in the top 20 of Division I, with defending league champion Penn sitting at No. 3. Only the Atlantic Coast Conference and the Big East can approach the Ivy League's dominance, and the schools in those conferences are established athletic powers with scholarships at their disposal. The Quakers advanced to last year's championship game only to fall to Northwestern—Dartmouth pulled the same trick in

SEE TAYLER, page 2

WEEKEND SCHEDULE

LACROSSE

vs. Penn

Baker Field, 3:30 p.m., March 27

TRACK AND FIELD

Dick Shea Invitational

Pelham, N.Y., 9 a.m., March 27

WOMEN'S ROWING

Connell Cup

Pelham, N.Y., 11:40 a.m., March 28

WOMEN'S TENNIS

vs. Cornell

Ithaca, N.Y., 12 p.m., March 28

MEN'S TENNIS

vs. Cornell

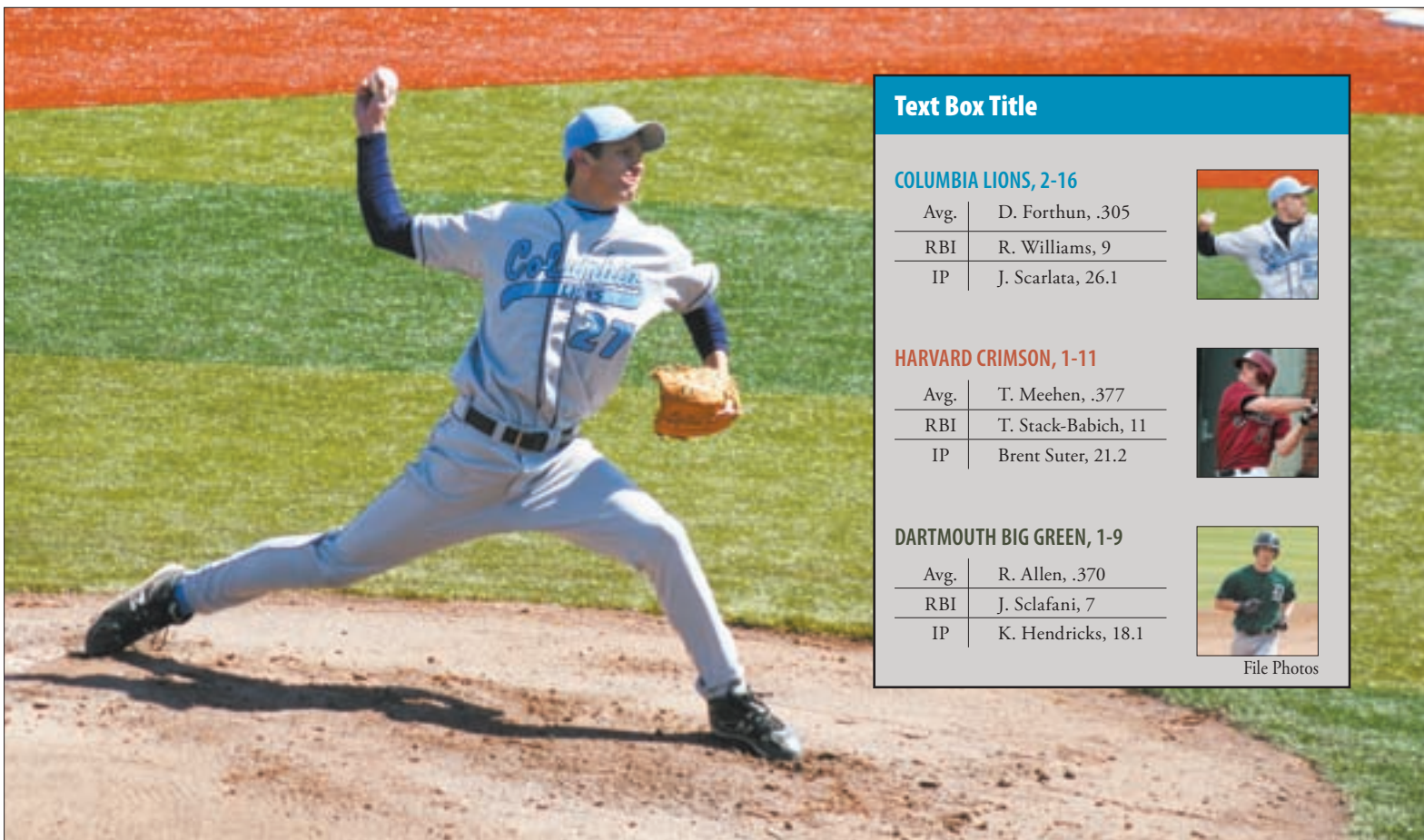
Baker Complex, 12 p.m., March 28

HEAVYWEIGHT ROWING

Collins Cup

New Brunswick, N.J.,

9:40 a.m., March 28



File Photo

STRETCH, DELIVER | Ivy League Pitcher of the Week Dan Bracey will lead the Lions as they begin their quest to defend their Ivy League title. The Light Blue will play a double-header against Harvard on Saturday before playing a pair of games against Dartmouth on Sunday, both at Robertson Field.

Defending champs open Ivy season

Baseball to host Rolfe foes Harvard, Dartmouth

BY JACOB LEVENFELD

Spectator Staff Writer

The Columbia baseball team has visited Texas, North Carolina, and California this season, and has also hosted a game at Robertson Field. But when Ivy League play begins Saturday against Harvard after 18 games of nonconference action, the Lions will face the first challenge to their title defense.

A year after capturing the conference crown, the Light Blue opens the 2009 Ivy season with doubleheaders against Harvard and Dartmouth at home this weekend. Columbia will seek to regain last season's winning culture, when the team capped off a division title with a 2-1 Ivy League championship series win over the Big Green.

Most recently, the Lions fell 2-1 in their home opener on March 24 against St. John's. The loss came on the heels of a 10-game West Coast road trip, where Columbia faced three tough opponents and emerged with just one victory.

The Lions have not been slacking in practice or on the field. Stronger, deeper teams have simply been overpowering them in early season play, and head coach Brett Boretti said he feels no need to make any major adjustments.

"We approach these games just like we approach every other game," he said. "There should not be a big difference in intensity level from how we've gone about our business so far."

Pitching and defense have not been a problem. Against St. John's, nine hurlers each went

an inning and limited the Red Storm to just two runs. Sophomore Dan Bracey, meanwhile, brought home Ivy League Pitcher of the Week honors after pitching the Light Blue to its only victory on the California trip. Bracey, who shared the award with Princeton's David Hale, limited the Cal State Northridge Matadors to just one run and four hits over seven innings of work on March 20. The Lions came away with a 10-1 win.

"I think we saw some things positive-wise for us—our pitching and defense was pretty consistent throughout the whole week," Boretti said.

Boretti also knows that hitting has been a weak spot this season. "We have the ability with our athleticism to run the bases well," he said. "Right now, our inconsistency offensively is just the inability to get on base." Boretti's concerns were crystallized in the St. John's game—the Lions were defeated even after yielding only two runs on the afternoon.

Columbia's weekend opponents have faced similar road difficulties of late. The Crimson finished 1-11 on a 12-game road trip that took them through Florida, Alabama, and Louisiana. They will have had a quick turnaround between their March 26 loss to the University of New Orleans and Saturday afternoon's twin bill.

Dartmouth, too, has struggled in the campaign's early stages. The Big Green is just 1-9 on the season, and is coming off a 1-7 California road swing.

Against Harvard, Columbia pitchers will have to exercise caution when facing outfielder Matt Rogers, who leads the Crimson with a .542 slugging percentage. With five doubles and 11 RBI already, Rogers has been a dangerous component of Harvard's offense. On the mound, Brent Suter has racked up 21 2/3 innings over four starts, though his ERA is over 8.

For Dartmouth, junior Nick Santomauro is always dangerous, though his numbers are

PITCHING PROBABLES



COLUMBIA vs. HARVARD

Saturday, March 28, noon

Game 1

Scarlata vs. Berardo

Game 2

Whitaker vs. Zailskas



COLUMBIA vs. DARTMOUTH

Sunday, March 29, noon

Game 1

Bracey vs. Young

Game 2

Aquino vs. Hendricks

COLUMBIA STARTING LINEUP

Player	Position
Dean Forthun	C
Ron Williams	1B
Jon Eisen	2B
Mike Roberts	3B
Alex Ferrera	SS
Nick Cox	CF
Billy Rumpke	RF
Anthony Potter	LF
Alex Aurichio	DH

unimpressive so far this season. In 10 games, he has put up 11 runs and a homer, but he is only hitting .275 and has fanned 10 times.

The first pitch for the first game on both days is scheduled for noon at Robertson Field.

Lions beat FDU, open Ivy League season at home

BY SARA SALZBANK

Spectator Staff Writer

The Columbia softball team got its revenge against Fairleigh Dickinson yesterday with a 4-2 win in the first game of a scheduled doubleheader, improving to 8-14 for the season.

The Knights went up early, putting two runs on the board in the bottom of the first, and held the lead until the Lions broke away in the top of the seventh. Power put the Light Blue in the lead, as a home run by sophomore Maggie Johnson and a two-run double by sophomore Stephanie Yagi sealed the win. Erica Clauss allowed no earned runs and struck out three in seven innings.

The second game of the scheduled double-header was called after four innings due to rain, with the Lions up 7-4.

Momentum on their side after Thursday's victory, the Lions will begin their Ivy season against Ancient Eight foes Harvard and Dartmouth this weekend. Nonconference play has certainly helped head coach Kayla Noonan discover what needs to be tweaked with her new, young roster.

"When we got back [from the Rebel Spring Games], we had lots of things to work on," Noonan said. "Small things, not things that would seem like, to the outside observer, that are going to make or break us. But when you accumulate a bunch of those little things together it makes a pretty big impact."

Upcoming opponent Harvard (10-6) most recently took on UNC Greensboro in a double-header, winning the second game of the split series 10-5. Nine Crimson players had hits in the win, including sophomore Ellen Macadam and junior Jessica Pledger, who each had two. Macadam paced Harvard for the victory with two hits, two RBI, and three runs, while freshman Whitney Shaw drove in three runs.

"Harvard is a really seasoned team," Noonan said. "They have a lot of veterans and they had a pretty good



File Photo

DOUBLE PLAY | After defeating Fairleigh Dickinson on Thursday, Columbia will get ready to take on Harvard and Dartmouth in two double headers on Saturday and Sunday, respectively.

recruiting class last year, so they have a really talented freshman class. It's just going to become about us executing what we need to do for ourselves, and not getting intimidated by who's on the other side of the field."

Columbia faced Harvard at the start of the season in Florida, suffering a 5-0 loss. Noonan, however,

remains cautiously confident that the Lions can capture the win.

"We played them at Florida Atlantic when we weren't really playing our best softball, and we kept

SEE SOFTBALL, page 2