

The Spectator's Guide To Squash

By Hameed Ahmed '11

While the squash team is already six matches into the season, it's time for the second home match of the year today. The Yellowjackets (#4) face the Yale Bulldogs (#2) in an important match for both teams. Three days ago, Yale snapped the longest winning streak in college sports history. The Bulldogs defeated Trinity (CT) which had won 252 consecutive matches. John Roberts secured the winning point, 3-2, at #4

To make it easier for spectators to follow the matches, here's a quick guide on the basic rules of the game and what to observe during a match.

In college squash, teams play nine individual matches and whichever team wins more matches, wins the overall tie. To win an individual match, the player has to win three games, each played up to 11. At 10-10, the player has to win by two points.

The ball can hit several walls as long as it hits the front wall before bouncing. Players have to play the ball before the second bounce.

At all times, the ball has to stay within the highest lines on all four walls (out line) and the lowest line on the front wall (tin). The serve has to hit the front wall between the middle line (service line) and the out line.

The most controversial rule in squash is the let/stroke rule. If interference occurs on court, a player can stop the rally and ask the referee for a "let" (a replay of the point). Without going too much into detail, the three possible outcomes are:

Minimal or no interference: No let (point to other player).

Some interference: Yes, let (replay).

A lot of interference: Stroke (point to player who stopped play).

In terms of tactics, players tend to keep the ball as close to the

side walls as possible for most of the time. If the ball is stuck to the side wall, it is hard and frustrating to play it and it is more likely to get a loose ball in the middle of the court.

It is also important to hit the ball deep – ideally so that the second bounce of a straight drive lands close to the corner of the back wall and floor. This puts pressure on the opponent to play the ball before the back wall.

It is helpful to watch, who controls the middle area of the court (T-area). If one player only takes one or two steps off the T while the other one is running from corner to corner, it is safe to say that the player on the T is controlling the game. Recovery is key – players don't want to give up the T and they want to get back to the middle as quickly as possible after their shot.

One good trick to see who is in control is to look for who hits the ball earlier and volleys more. Volleying usually occurs close to the middle of the court so the one volleying more, often dictates the pace of the game and controls the T.

As in any other sport, body language plays a significant role in squash too. If someone is taking more time between rallies to recover, it often shows that the player is tired and likely to be the underdog in the following rallies.

While these tips might help to form a better image of the game, the best way to understand the dynamics of squash is to watch it live.

Hameed Ahmed currently serves as assistant coach of the Rochester squash team. As a player here, Hameed captained the team in the 2010-11 season. He was a three-time All-American.



Rochester "Yellowjackets" vs. Yale "Bulldogs"

Saturday, January 21, 2012 - Peter Lyman Squash Courts

ROCHESTER	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Hometown/Last School
Mohamed Abdel Maksoud	5-10	165	Fr.	Cairo, Egypt / Modern Education School
Bjorn Ahbel	5-11	188	Jr.	Deerfield, MA / Deerfield Academy
Joseph Chapman	6-0	172	Sr.	Tortola, British Virgin Islands / Cedar International
Jesse Cramer	6-3	190	Sr.	Red Creek, NY / Red Creek
Matthew Domenick	5-6	150	Sr.	Philadelphia, PA / William Penn Charter
Andres Duany	6-3	188	Jr.	Lima, Peru
Benjamin Fischer	5-11	150	Sr.	Lucerne, Switzerland / Kaufmannische Berufsschule
Juan Pablo Gaviria	5-7	165	Jr.	Bogota, Columbia / Gimnasio Compestre
Juan Herrera	5-7	155	Jr.	San Salvador, El Salvador / Escuela Americana
Karm Kumar	5-8	160	So.	New Delhi, India / TSRC
Oscar Lopez Hidalgo	5-9	139	Jr.	San Luis Potosi, Mexico / Universidad del Valle
Raymond Moore	5-11	140	Fr.	New York, NY / Thurgood Marshall Academy
Adam Perkiomaki	5-8	155	Jr.	Portland, OR / Lincoln High
Charlie Rockwell	6-0	170	Jr.	Buffalo, NY / The Nichols School

Head Coach: Martin Heath

Assistant Coach: Hameed Ahmed '11



ROCHESTER SCHEDULE & RESULTS				
Nov.	19	Vassar%	9-0	W
	19	St. Lawrence%	5-4	W
	20	Bard%	6-0	W
	20	Hobart%	9-0	W
Jan.	8	PRINCETON	3-6	L
	13	Western Ontario#	8-1	W
	21	YALE, 12 pm		
	25	CORNELL, 6 pm		
	27	at Trinity (CT), 6 pm		
	28	at Harvard, 3 pm		
	29	at Dartmouth, 12 pm		
Feb.	1	HOBART, 6 pm		
	4	FRANK. & MARSH., 12 pm		
	17	CSA Nationals \$		
	18	CSA Nationals \$		
	19	CSA Nationals \$		
Mar.	2	CSA Individual Champs &		
	3	CSA Individual Champs &		
	4	CSA Individual Champs &		

Key:
- in Toronto, Ontario
% - Liberty League Champs (@ St. Lawrence)
\$ - at Princeton University
& - at Amherst College

YALE	Yr.	Hometown/Last School
Robert Berner	Sr	Greenwich, Conn./Brunswick
Eric Caine	So	Blaine, Wash./Phillips Exeter
Kenneth Chan	Jr	Singapore/Raffles Junior College
Samuel Clayman	Sr	Gloucester, Mass./Groton School
Richard Dodd	Jr	Benoni, South Africa/Parktown Boys' High School
Ryan Dowd	Sr	Boston, Mass./Belmont Hill
Sam Haig	Jr	Greenwich, Conn./Brunswick Academy
Neil Martin	So	Belfast, Ireland/Methodist College
John Roberts	Sr	Belfast, Ireland/Methodist College
Joseph Roberts	Fr	Belfast, Ireland/Methodist College
Huw Robinson	Fr	Bridgend, Wales/Brynteg Comprehensive School
Hywel Robinson	Jr	Bridgend, Wales/Brynteg Comprehensive School
Sam Shleifer	Fr	Boston, MA/Milton Academy
Charlie Wyatt	So	Seer Green, U.K./Royal Grammar

Head Coach: David Talbott

Assistant Coaches: Pam Saunders, John Rooney

Captain: Ryan Dowd '12

YALE SCHEDULE & RESULTS				
Dec.	3	at Frank. & Marsh.	6-3	W
		ay Haverford	9-0	W
Jan.	8	at Amherst	9-0	W
	14	CORNELL*	5-4	W
	15	COLUMBIA*	9-0	W
	18	TRINITY (CT)	5-4	W
	20	W. Ontario#	8-1	W
	21	at Rochester, 12 pm		
	24	at Brown*, 4pm		
	28	at Navy, 10 am		
Feb.	4	at Princeton*, 1 pm		
	5	at Pennsylvania*, 1 pm		
	10	at Dartmouth*, 12 pm		
	12	HARVARD*, 1 pm		
	17	CSA NATIONALS\$		
	18	CSA NATIONALS\$		
	19	CSA NATIONALS\$		
Mar.	2	CSA Ind. Champs &		
	3	CSA Ind. Champs &		
	4	CSA Ind. Champs &		

Key:
* - Ivy League matches
\$ - at Princeton University
& - at Amherst College