

Coach's Notes: Wellesley Invitational 1/31/2009

A very positive showing by our women's team at the Wellesley Invitational, in which we split the two meets, defeating Hunter College (NYC), but falling to Wellesley College. Two other teams, Cornell University and New Jersey Institute of Technology, were unable to make the trip.

The hard work put in by the team last semester and over hell week showed in wonderfully striking moments today. Pieces finally fell in place, resulting in some wonderful touches. I was particularly impressed with improvements by **Carrie Roberts '11**, **Lauren Murphy '09**, and **Junelle Shepard '12**. Foilist **Carrie** has started to chip away at the single largest barrier to her improvement, control of her own tempo during a bout. Epéeist **Lauren's** overall technique and control have improved dramatically, allowing strip-side coaching for her to consist mostly of tactical and strategic adjustments, and not technical corrections. Sabreuse **Junelle**, already a veteran of dozens of bouts this season, is showing a clear grasp of the tactical flexibility critical to sabre.

Leading the way for UMass were sabre women **Laura Brassard '08 MS '10** (6-0) and **Caitlin Coughlan '11** (5-1). Their performances helped push us to a sabre squad victory over Wellesley, as well as a team victory over Hunter.

Though the men were not fencing, many members of our men's team made the trip to cheer and coach. After UMass was done at 11:30am, the team enjoyed a rare lunch together at a local restaurant.

Our next competition: Northeast Fencing Conference (NFC) meets at Tufts University on Sat 2/7/2009.

UMass vs. Wellesley College

	Women (L 8-19)
F	0-9
E	2-7
S	6-3

Interestingly, this is the exact same result as our meet earlier in the season against Wellesley College: same overall team score, and same squad scores! While we had hoped for better results, the status quo result indicates that UMass is improving at the same rate as Wellesley College is. We are still grossly overmatched in foil and epee, and still dominate in sabre. Epee looks to be where we could make up the most ground on Wellesley by next season, though **Lauren's** imminent graduation could alter that assessment.

UMass vs. Hunter College

	Women (W 15-12)
F	5-4
E	4-5
S	6-3

This was a very good meet for us both competitively and developmentally. Every UMass fencer contributed at least one victory toward the win, and all showed good competitive presence throughout the meet. In foil and épée, Hunter lags behind UMass technically very slightly, but they are tactically slightly more advanced. In sabre, UMass is both technically and tactically superior.