



**Locating sense of Pride:** Hofstra players listen to coach John Danowski. "They've always been good kids through those first three years," he says, "but there was just something missing."

Photos by Ed Betz for USA TODAY

# Hofstra lacrosse finds its way to success

## Pride have won 16 in a row to reach NCAAs as No. 3 seed

By Eddie Timanus  
USA TODAY

Though Hofstra is not a newcomer to collegiate lacrosse, fans of the Hempstead, N.Y., school have waited a long time for the Flying Dutchmen to produce a season like this. But the flying has been mostly under the radar thanks to the extensive coverage of the troubles at Duke, as the Hofstra coach knows all too well.

### In focus

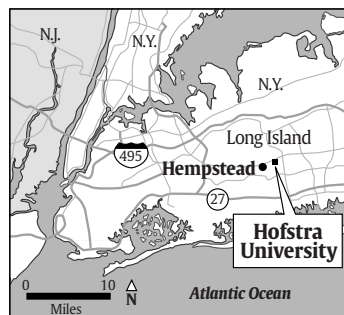
Hofstra, now known as the Pride, enters the NCAA tournament Sunday against Providence riding a school-record 16-game winning streak. Its No. 2 ranking in the polls is also the highest in program history, while its No. 3 seeding ties its previous high from 1973. With a first-round home game and a short trip to Stony Brook, N.Y., for the quarterfinals, Hofstra (16-1) would seem to have a clear path to its first Final Four appearance in the NCAA era.

"I think for most of us in Division I, the goal is the Final Four," Pride coach John Danowski says. "I don't know if everybody sets the goal of winning the national championship, but I think we all try to get to the Final Four because mediawise that's the big stage. And once you get there, anything can happen."

That Hofstra has never been past the quarterfinals might come as a surprise to those familiar with lacrosse geography. Despite its prime location in the lacrosse hotbed of Nassau County on Long Island, N.Y., Hofstra has had trouble keeping up with the short list of elite programs. Long Island's top high school prospects often head south to Johns Hopkins or Virginia or north to Syracuse.

In fact, Danowski's son, Matt, is at Duke where he was one of the Blue Devils' top players before the season was canceled after rape allegations stemming from a team party.

The Pride missed the playoffs altogether the last two years. Their most recent tournament run in 2003 was brief, ending with a first-



USA TODAY

round loss to Massachusetts. "That team had a combination of seniors and freshmen," Danowski says. "Those last two years we were devoid of a lot of experience. In 2004 we were 4-10 and those younger kids were thrust into situations they just weren't ready for. Last year we were 8-8 with two one-goal losses. Those kinds of games can turn your whole season around."

Danowski says he is hopeful that this, his 21st season at the helm of a program that began in 1949, is the one that can put Hofstra consistently in the championship hunt. "That's certainly the hope, that people will recognize the place as providing a great opportunity to get an education and to play at the highest level and have success," he says.

But things didn't look nearly as promising after the season opener, an 11-7 loss at Massachusetts. That night after the trip back, Danowski recalls, the coaches met with the seniors.

"We asked them to write down their personal legacies to the program," he says. "We had them read them to each other. And the guys just started looking around at each other and saying, 'We haven't accomplished much.'"

Recalls senior attackman Chris Unterstein: "That really hit guys hard. We stressed the point about legacies and what we wanted to leave behind. Nobody had much to say. We had a good freshman year, but nobody other than (defenseman) Brett (Moyer) had any individual accolades. It just hit home



**Protecting the net:** Senior Matt Southard, who has started all 17 games, has 104 of the team's 117 saves.

that we could fly through here for four years and not have much to speak of."

Danowski believes the seniors came out of that meeting determined to be not just players but leaders.

"They've always been good kids through those first three years," he says, "but there was just something missing. There was just a lack of confidence in big situations. Nobody wanted to mess up and let their teammates down."

By the Pride's next outing, a 14-4 win against Brown, the confi-

dence was beginning to show.

"You could just feel it and see it," junior attackman Athan Iannucci says. "Guys were just doing the right things at the right times."

The big breakthrough came with wins against defending national champion Johns Hopkins, North Carolina and Princeton in an eight-day stretch. March ended with a thrilling 10-9 overtime win against perennial Colonial Athletic Association nemesis Towson. The wins kept coming, finally culminating Saturday night with a 12-6 triumph against Delaware for the Pride's

## 2005-06 a banner season for school

A deep tournament run for the men's lacrosse team would cap what has been a successful 2005-06 athletics season at Hofstra. The men's basketball team tied the school record for most wins in a season, finishing 26-7, advancing to the quarterfinals of the NIT and picking up the program's first postseason victories in Division I. The Pride beat fellow Colonial Athletic Association member and eventual Final Four participant George Mason twice late in the season, including in the conference tournament semifinal. Other achievements:

► **Football** — Finished 7-4. Two Pride players were chosen in the 2006 NFL draft, offensive tackle Willie

Colon (fourth round, Pittsburgh Steelers) and receiver Marques Colston (seventh round, New Orleans Saints).

► **Women's basketball** — Reached CAA tournament semifinals and second round of the WNIT.

► **Wrestling** — CAA champion, finished 11th in NCAAs.

► **Soccer** — Men's and women's teams won conference titles and played in NCAA tournament.

► **Women's volleyball** — CAA regular-season champion.

► **Softball** — Second seed in CAA tournament, beginning Thursday.

► **Women's lacrosse** — Won eight in a row before falling in the CAA tournament final.

first ever CAA tournament crown.

"They're for real," Towson coach Tony Seaman says. "You don't beat Hopkins and Princeton like they did without being for real."

But even as the dream season was unfolding, Danowski found himself struggling sometimes to share in his team's joy. Danowski's son, Matt, is one of the top attackers on the Duke squad that has been the subject of so much negative attention since a woman hired to perform as an exotic dancer accused three team members of raping her at a party in March. Matt Danowski is not one of the two players charged.

"I'd be foolish to say it didn't," John Danowski says when asked if the situation with his son's team affected him. "When it first came out and everything was in limbo, that was really hard. Coaching really was a job. You just came and did your job, but your heart was somewhere else. ... There was a day when I said to them (his team), 'Fellas, I'm sorry I haven't been myself. I promise I will be from now on.'"

Unterstein says: "Any normal person in his situation would have a hard time coming in working every day. He's enlightened us about it and just told us to learn from it. I couldn't be happier with the way he's dealt with us. I'd say it's given us a little extra inspiration to win for him now."

Danowski talks to Matt about every other day. Matt, a junior, plans to stay at Duke, his father says. The future of the men's lacrosse team grew a bit brighter last week when

a committee report to the school president recommended against discontinuing the program.

"Matt is only eight classes away from graduation," Danowski says. "He loves his friends, and he loves his classmates, both on and off the team. And he loves the place."

Duke might have a legacy of its own in this tournament. The Hofstra attack resembles the unit that led the Blue Devils to the championship game a year ago. Unterstein, who co-leads the Pride with 72 points on 38 goals and 34 assists, quarterbacked the offense like Duke's Dan Flannery. Iannucci, a right-handed finisher with 57 goals including four in the CAA title game, is the Matt Danowski of the group. Those two were among the 25 remaining players under consideration for the Tewaaraton Trophy, the lacrosse Heisman. Joining the mix this year was freshman Tom Dooley, a prized left-handed shooter with 35 goals who can be compared with Duke's Zack Greer.

"It's funny that we balanced ourselves a little bit after the Duke attack," Danowski says. "Those are their roles, and they've embraced them. They have different styles, and they complement each other."

The Pride defense is also outstanding, allowing 6.2 goals a game. Moyer, the CAA defensive player of the year and also a Tewaaraton candidate, anchors a veteran unit in front of goalie Matt Southard.

With one more victory, Hofstra will reach another milestone by matching the Division I record of 17 wins in a season established in 2005 — by Duke.

## Devil Rays prospect whose bat hit ump out for 50 games

By Paul White  
USA TODAY

Tampa Bay Devil Rays prospect Delmon Young received a 50-game suspension, longest in the history of the International League, for an April 26 bat-throwing incident.

The suspension, announced Tuesday by league President Randy Mobley, is without pay and retroactive to April 27, meaning Young can return to his Durham (N.C.) Bulls team June 19. It will cost him about \$145,000, according to ESPN.

Young, 20, had been on indefinite suspension since the game, in which his bat hit an umpire who had just ejected Young for arguing a called third strike. Mobley said in a release the punishment also includes a minimum of 50 hours of community service divided between the Durham Bulls Youth Athletic League for needy inner-city children and the Miracle League of Gulf Beaches, a program for handicapped children in the Tampa Bay area. The Devil Rays, who said they expect Young to report later this week to their minor league training facility in St. Petersburg, Fla., for workouts, issued a statement saying they "fully support the decision. ... We do not tolerate this type conduct."

Young, the first pick of the 2003 draft and the USA



By Al Behrman, AP

**Costly flip of the bat:** Class AAA Durham (N.C.) outfielder Delmon Young is suspended until June 19.

TODAY high school player of the year that season, was batting .329 in 21 games before the incident, which involved an umpire working as a replacement for striking minor league umpires.

Mobley said suspending Young for the remainder of the season was not considered because clear intent to hit the umpire was difficult to prove. Young was walking away from home plate when ejected. He flipped the bat underhanded in the direction of the umpire.

## NBA reading program for young adults, too

By Carol Herwig  
USA TODAY

Dwyane Wade and Becky Hammon are helping to take the NBA's literacy campaign to a new, older audience through a partnership with Penguin Classics, which is celebrating its 60th anniversary.

"I think everyone had to do a book report on one of those Penguin classics," Hammon says.

Wade, the Miami Heat guard, chose *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen. He first read the book in an English class at Marquette. "I liked the story," Wade says. "It had love and loss. I just liked it — the whole story line — how people overcame stereotypes."

Hammon of the New York Liberty also chose an old favorite, *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller. "It has a little bit of a love triangle in it. There are things that take place in the book that can take place in our lives today."

Penguin and the NBA linked, Penguin publisher and President Kathryn Court says, after they learned the NBA wanted to take its Read to Achieve program beyond children to young adults 16 to 24.

### Books

Siddhartha.

Hammon, who graduated from Colorado State, says she reads more now than when she was in school.

Wade, who spent an off day last month talking about *Pride and Prejudice* to a crowd of 450 at Books and Books, a store at Miami-Dade College, says he always has a book when he goes on the road. He recently finished a Michael Jordan book and moved onto one coach Pat Riley gave him.

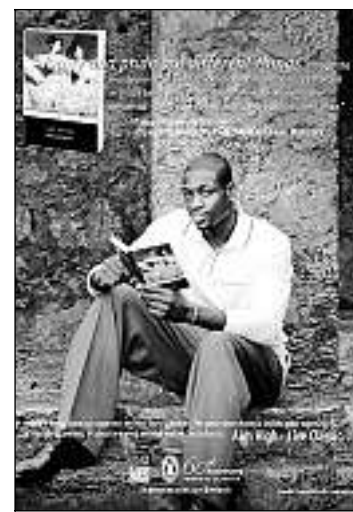
"He gives a lot of books," Wade says.

When he meets with younger children in the Read to Achieve program, Wade says they're interested in the story.

"The older kids want to know about life in the NBA, your cars. I tell them I wouldn't have the car or be in the NBA if it wasn't for going to school and being able to read."

"The main thing about reading, why I wanted to (be a part of this program), is just trying to get young people to read to show even cool people read."

He practices what he preaches, reading bedtime stories to his son, Zaire, who's 4. "He likes for me to act it (the story) out."



Penguin Classics

**Love of books:** Dwyane Wade likes *Pride and Prejudice*.

The NBA connected them with Wade; Hammon; Magic Johnson, who read Frederick Douglass' *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*; and Ray Allen, who chose Herman Hesse's