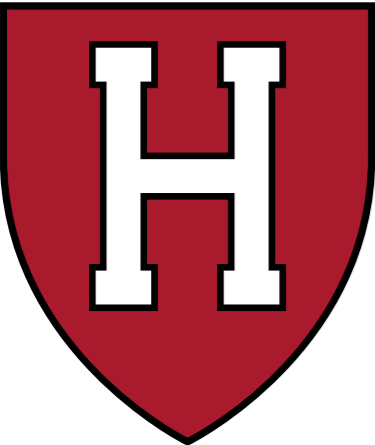




Anna Juul '21 won the Fordham Fiasco at Van Cortlandt Park



Kieran Tuntivate '19-20 won the Battle for Beantown at Franklin Park



OUT OF THE BLOCKS

The Official Newsletter for the Friends of Harvard Track

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A NOTE FROM JASON SARETSKY

I hope you enjoyed your summer and were able to spend time with your family and friends. My summer was great as I was able to start it off with the HYOC Trip to the United Kingdom. As many of you know, it is truly a magical experience for all involved. I was able to extend my trip to spend some time in France with my family. It was a great way to recharge the batteries, and I am ready to dive into the 2019–2020 season!

Our Cross Country season kicked off at one of the most historic cross country courses in the world, Van Cortlandt Park, at the Fordham Fiasco on September 7. We provided our squads a great opportunity to see the course where the Ivy League Heps Championships will be held on November 1. A recap can be found [here](#).

On September 13 we competed against Yale, which provided our student-athletes a unique opportunity to participate in one of the oldest rivalries in sports. It was a good early season competition for us to get some quality work in while we prepare for the championship meets later in the year. Highlights from this historic dual meet are [here](#).

And most recently both squads took on numerous nationally ranked teams at Boston College's Coast to Coast Battle in Beantown. Coming away with a pair of 4th-place team performances, the top billing of the Ivy squads in attendance, and several wins against some of the nation's best, the team is in high spirits heading into a block of training before the next set of competitions. Check out the great photo (which also appears on the cover) of the individual champion, our very own **Kieran Tuntivate '19-20**, and a more detailed report by clicking [here](#).

Another highlight for the Fall season is our trip to the Nuttycombe Invitational in Madison, WI, where we will compete against some of the best teams in the country. After Heps, we will wrap up our season with the NCAA National Championships on November 23 in Terre Haute, Indiana. After sending three runners to the NCAA's last year, we are excited about the possibility to make an even bigger presence at the meet this year. A schedule for the entire season can be found [here](#).

This year's men's roster has a nice mix of upper classmen and first-year students. The defending Ivy League Champion, **Kieran Tunivate '19-20** (Wilmington, DE) will be returning for his senior year looking to make waves at the NCAA Nationals this year. Also returning this year is **Hugo Milner '21** (Derby, UK), who finished third at Heps and made the NCAA Championships last year. This will give us two strong veterans up front. This season will also bring in six new first-year runners to the men's team: **Colin Baker '23** (North Charleston, SC), **Sameer Das '23** (Princeton Junction, NJ), **Kyle Englander '23** (Suffield, CT), **Ben Hartvigsen '23** (Sarasota, FL), **Acer Iverson '23** (Roseville, MN), and **Jack McDonough '23** (Cleveland, OH). Along with our other returning scorers from last year, **Will Battershill '19** (Devon, UK), **David Melville '22** (Greensboro, NC), and **Matthew Pereira '21** (Kildeer, IL), I am confident we will have a very competitive team this season at both the Heps and on the National stage.

On the women's side, our number one runner from last year, **Lisa Tertsch '20-21** (Darmstadt, Germany), is taking a gap year to compete for Germany in the triathlon. Lisa wants to go through the 2020 German Olympic Team qualifying process. This will give her a shot at making the 2020 German team and set her up for the 2024 Olympics. Lisa will return for her senior year in the Fall of 2020. **Anna Juul '21** (West Chester, PA), last year's 1500M Ivy League Champion, returns this year looking to keep that momentum going into the Cross Country season. Seniors **Gillian Meeks '20** (Palo Alto, CA) and **Judy Pendergast '20-21** (Naperville, IL) add veteran leadership to a squad that should place very high at the Ivy League Heptagonal Championships. We also welcome five first-year harriers in **Anna Burt '23** (Bath, UK), **Sylvia Cruz-Albrecht '23** (Oak Park, CA), **Eloise Freitag '23** (New York, NY), **Shaked Leibovitz '23** (Tel Aviv, Israel), and **Iz Sagar '23** (Loyalsock, PA). This is a very strong first-year class and should help the squad immediately.

The stats of our first-year cross country athletes, as well as our first-year track and field athletes can be found [here](#).

I would love to see you at any of our meets this year. In particular, we'd love to see as many of you as possible at Van Cortlandt Park on November 1st for the Ivy League Heptagonal Championships. Please come and cheer on our teams if you are in the area.

As always, thank you for your support of our program. It is our Friends that add to the great spirit that makes Harvard track and field/cross country such a wonderful experience for our student-athletes.

Go Crimson!

Jason Saretsky

The William W. "Bill" McCurdy Director of Track and Field/Cross Country

A NOTE FROM OUR FRIENDS CHAIRS

A friendly welcome from the Friends of Harvard Track to the 2019–2020 school year!

We had an incredible 2018–2019 outdoor campaign, culminating with both teams finishing within the top-3 at Outdoor Heps (men - 3rd & women - 2nd). We sent five athletes to the NCAA Championships (**Will Battershill '20** - steeplechase, **Erick Duffy '21** - pole vault, **Anna Juul '21** - 1500m, **Myles Marshall '19** - 800m, and **Sam Welsh '22** - discus). We graduated both a NCAA collegiate-record holder (**Gabby Thomas '19**) and the first-ever amputee to compete in the history of NCAA Division I Track and Field (**Nicky Maxwell '19**).

Over the summer, we sent a group of student-athletes across the pond to compete in the 125th meeting of Harvard-Yale vs. Oxford-Cambridge. The combined Harvard-Yale contingent defeated the Oxford-Cambridge squad by a commanding amount, with a combined score of 33 to 7.

We continue to be impressed by the accomplishments of the men and women's programs both on and off the field. We wish the team much continued success as the cross country season gets underway. Come to a meet and root for the team. [Click here](#) for the full XC schedule.

As we have done in the past, this year we continue to expand our efforts in terms of fundraising and Friend-raising. We look forward to welcoming alumni back for perennial favorites: the Leslie Golemme FoHT Meet (January 2020) and College Reunions in the Spring. We also hope to schedule a number of regional events. If you want to get more involved with the FoHT, helping to host a regional event is a low-effort way to get involved. Please let us know if you might be interested in helping to coordinate an event in your area!

If you haven't already, be sure to connect with the FoHT through [social media](#). And, if you have suggestions on how we can improve our communications and visibility, we are all ears.

Thank you for your continued support of the Friends! We look forward to another exciting year in the world of Harvard Track & Field.

Joe Ciollo '99 and Evan Favermann Eisert '09

Co-Chairs, Friends of Harvard Track

CRIMSON CLUB -- pledge by June 30, 2020

Join the growing list of 28 members of the Crimson Club and have your name (or someone you want to honor) displayed on a new plaque that will be hung in the Gordon Indoor Track.

Giving levels are included below. Gifts can either be one-time outright gifts or 5-year pledges—both are welcomed and encouraged (levels are spelled out below as 5-year pledges):

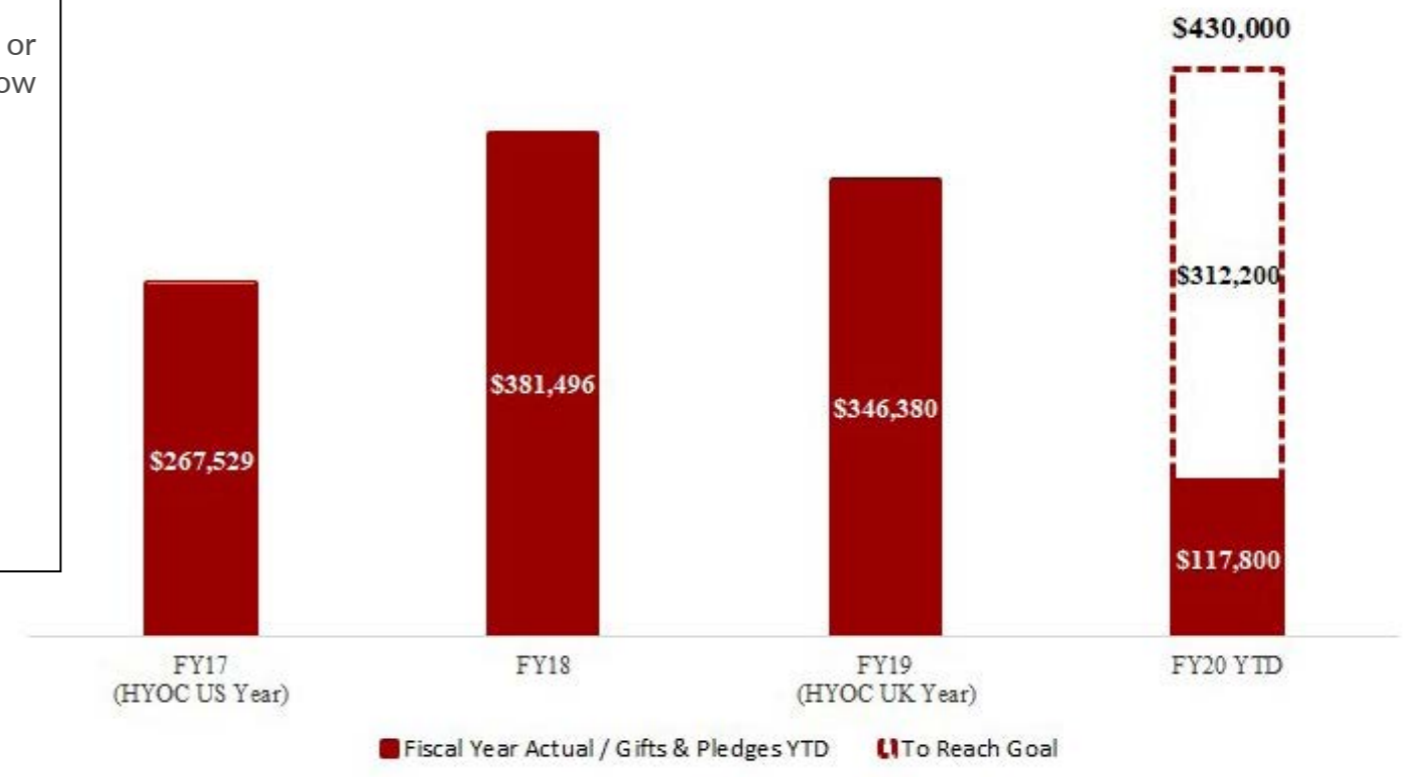
- Varsity Member - for gifts starting at \$2,000/yr for 5 years
- All-Ivy Member - for gifts starting at \$5,000/yr for 5 years
- All-East Member - for gifts starting at \$10,000/yr for 5 years
- All-American Member - for gifts starting at \$20,000/yr for 5 years
- NCAA Champion Member - for gifts starting at \$50,000/yr for 5 years

Let us know of your interest by clicking [HERE](#).

FOLLOW THE TEAM!



Friends of Harvard Track Annual Contributions



GILLIAN MEEKS '20

Hometown: Palo Alto, CA

High School: Gunn

Event: Distance

Concentration: Human Evolutionary Biology

As any of my teammates will tell you, I'm a BIG track nerd. Keeping up to date with the Ivy League, NCAA, and professional track world is a serious hobby of mine, and I spend a lot of my free (and not so free) time following the latest news in the sport. I'll routinely head out to local meets to watch top collegians and professionals run. I was even fortunate enough to watch the indoor mile world record fall at Boston University this past winter. As exciting as that race and many other professional races have been to watch, I can honestly say none of them would crack my top 10 favorite races I've spectated. Those spots all belong to races in which I've watched my Harvard teammates compete. No spectator experience rivals watching a teammate and best friend have a great race. After training everyday with my teammates, through all the struggles, injuries, setbacks, and grueling training days, I am so thrilled to watch when my teammates succeed. In considering what I'll miss most about Harvard track and cross country after I graduate in the Spring, I've realized what will be virtually impossible to replace—being part of a group of fiercely competitive individuals pushing each other in practice every day, but at the same time genuinely wanting each other to succeed.

Track and field and cross country are often mistaken as individual sports; there's no ball to pass around, and frankly, many times you won't even have a teammate in your same race. People who say this don't realize that even though during a race each individual is powering their own legs, it's their teammates who help power them during 99% of the running that is not racing. Every day during the school year I'm running with my teammates—literally in the wind, rain, snow, and humidity (Boston keeps us tough, that's for sure). Anyone who knows anything about running will agree that it's so much easier to get through those tough workouts when you have teammates to push you and support you when the going gets tough. Even on our off days from practice, I almost never end up running alone, but instead will finagle my schedule in order to run with a teammate or two. Not to be dramatic, but I've heard it said that suffering brings people together; in some ways, I think that's why I feel so close to my Harvard teammates. Inevitably, distance running is a grind. Training through every season of the year, racing through mud halfway up your shins in the bitter cold, and cranking out the miles year-round at certain points does come with a sprinkle of suffering. I believe that getting through these tough days with my teammates has brought us so close together, perhaps even closer together than members of more traditional "non-individual" sports. All I can say is that for an "individual" sport I sure feel a heck of a lot of pride in what my teammates and I accomplish as a team and in what my teammates accomplish individually.



Photographs courtesy of Brian Panoff '98



WILL BATTERSHILL '20

Hometown: Devon, UK

High School: Ivybridge Community College

Event: Distance

Concentration: Economics

I was fortunate that my running journey before Harvard was one of relatively linear progress. The depth of competition in England was low relative to NCAA Division I, which meant that a bit of dedication put you near the top. Increasing training (which wasn't difficult from the twenty miles per week I was doing aged 15) led to faster times. However, this experience led to the development of an oversimplified mindset: better training is sufficient for increasing success.

This mindset was something which I continued into Harvard through my first two-and-a-half years. I now believe that it was central to the relative mediocrity I had at high-level NCAA competition over that period.

Coming into outdoor track season this past year I was doing the best training of my life with consistent 70+ mile weeks and believed that this would guarantee improvement. Purely ticking off the training log was, in my mind, the way to a breakthrough in the steeple and some fast 5000s. I was the fittest I'd ever been, yet my first 5000 of the season was a tough one, where my hopes of a fast time faded with my legs in a poor last km. After a decent steeple at HY, my second 5000m attempt of the season at UVA featured an even more spectacular blow up in the last two laps.

Two days after the race at UVA I went for a training run and managed 56 seconds before having to stop. My right IT band was too inflamed at the knee to run. This was the first day that I had deviated from the training plan, with over 1100 consistent miles logged so far that season. I went to the pool hoping it would be a two-day thing.

At Heps two weeks later I had managed to run 30 miles, almost all of them painful. Coach Gibby and I decided that since the injury didn't hurt to run at race pace I might as well try to fake a good performance. I finished 6th.

It was at this point in the season that I began to doubt myself. The consistency of my training had evaporated and I felt I had no chance at achieving my goal of making the final at NCAAs. I had a meeting with Coach Gibby where one of the possibilities discussed was ending the season. Eventually he convinced me that if I only did anaerobic track sessions (which didn't hurt the IT band as much) and cross trained the rest of the time I could still rescue the season, provided that I wanted it enough. 15 miles of running per week. The rest was mental. Well, plus some swimming.

From then on, while unsure if it would work, I just relaxed about being so far removed from the original training plan. With no training numbers to go off I went into Regionals with no expectations. Rather than being a negative thing, this meant I had no mental boundaries. I qualified to nationals with 4th in my heat, a personal best, and a new Harvard school record. At nationals I missed the final but placed 17th.

The nonlinearity of last season gave me an opportunity to run the final races with an open mind, unrestricted by the mental projections derived from training splits. It taught me that often, if you focus on what you think you can do, you limit yourself by implicitly establishing what you believe is beyond reach.

In future seasons, while consistently improving training, I will focus on maintaining an unhindered mindset in order to be free to push my limits. It is a lesson I hope to pass on to my fellow teammates as we look on to this cross-country season.



Photographs courtesy of Brian Panoff '98



BLOGGING HYOC: NGOZI MUSA '19

It's **Ngozi Musa '19** reporting live! I am a rising Harvard track and field alumna (aka graduated senior who is officially washed-up) or as Harvard Athletics likes to say I am a "friend of Harvard Track and Field," and I am here to report to you about our team's international trip - HYOC 19.

As many of you are probably wondering, what does HYOC stand for exactly? H-Y-O-C is short for Harvard - Yale - Oxford - Cambridge. This trip takes place every four years and it is the oldest transcontinental ongoing international track and field meet in the world!

The trip is a total of 10 days, spanning five different places and everything and anything track and field... [CONTINUE READING](#)

GABBY THOMAS '19 NOMINATED FOR 2019 NCAA WOMAN OF THE YEAR

The NCAA formally announced a record 585 female college athletes that have been nominated by NCAA member schools for the 2019 NCAA Woman of the Year award. **Gabby Thomas '19** of women's track and field was among the nominations, which span NCAA Divisions I, II, and III.

Thomas, a native of Florence, Massachusetts, set numerous records at Harvard and currently holds the indoor records in the 60m (7.25), 200m (22.38), 300m (37.47), and is a member of the record holding 4x400m relay team. Gabby was just as prolific on the outdoor track, holding Harvard records in the 100m (11.19), 200m (22.32), long jump (6.27m), and setting school marks as a member of the 4x100m, 4x200m, and 4x400m relays. She was a five-time Heps Outstanding Performer of the Meet honoree, earning Most Outstanding Track Performer of the Meet four times (two indoor, two outdoor) and the 2018 Outdoor Heps Most Outstanding Field Performer of the Meet award... [CONTINUE READING](#)

