Terriers Compete in the Quidditch World Cup

Muggles gather from around the world

They came from UCLA, Texas, and Toronto. They wore capes and carried wands, cleats, and cameras to the fifth annual Quidditch World Cup, held last November on Randall’s Island, N.Y.

Since its creation at Middlebury College in 2005, quidditch has enjoyed a growth spurt that is appropriately supernatural. In 2007, two colleges played in the first World Cup. In 2008, 12 participated. In 2009, there were 20. In 2010, 45. And on the windy weekend of November 12 and 13, 2011, 96 teams—traveling from as far as Finland—competed in the 2011 Quidditch World Cup.

The BU team, founded in 2008, came to the New York tournament as the 2011 Northeast Regional champion and with a number 12 World Cup ranking. When it was over, the team had come within two games of winning it all, but instead fell to the then and future world champion team from Middlebury. The players drove back to Boston on Sunday night unfilled, but with no doubt that the seven-year-old sport of quidditch is here to stay—and that it is much more than a sport.

“Our generation grew up with the Harry Potter characters and we don’t want to let go of that,” says Kedzie Teller (COM’12), one of five captains of the BU team. “As adults, we start to separate the real from the fictional, but no one wants to let go of their childhood.”

Roughly 10,000 quidditch fans descended on Randall’s Island, just across the East River from Manhattan’s Upper East Side, where games were scheduled on nine grass fields.

Katie Stack (CAS’11), who cofounded BU’s team in her freshman year and is now a member of the International Quidditch Association board, flew in from Spain, where she teaches. For Stack, the tournament offered an opportunity to catch up with her three siblings—Caroline (CAS’12), Brendan (CAS’14), and Ian (CGS’13)—all on the team, and her parents, who came down from Boston.

The BU team, officially a club, has begun the process of transitioning to club sport, which would make funding available for coaches and other benefits. In the spring, they will play in the Northeast Regional tournament, which they hope to host at Nickerson Field.

“People laugh,” says Teller. “But they should come to a game to watch us play. It’s not just a sport; it’s a continuation of the movie and the books for thousands of people.” AMY LASKOWSKI