The University at Albany's athletic programs have catapulted from underdogs to top dogs in just six seasons of competing at the Division I level. Knocking off perennial America East Conference powerhouse Boston University, the Great Danes captured the 2004-05 Stuart P. Haskell Jr. Commissioner's Cup, which recognizes the league's No. 1 program upon completion of varsity competition each spring.

UAlbany, which owns a proud tradition of athletic prowess dating back to its many decades of success at both the non-scholarship Division III and partial-scholarship Division II levels, emphatically proved it belonged in one of the most respected mid-major conference affiliations in the country. The Great Danes won championships in volleyball, men's lacrosse, and men's indoor track and field and softball. In addition, UAlbany was runner-up in men's indoor track and field, and women's golf. The men's soccer, volleyball, men's lacrosse and softball teams either won or shared regular-season titles.

The Commissioner's Cup was determined by the use of a scoring system that distributed points based on a team's finish in the standings and the number of teams competing in that sport.

Albany registered 380 points, followed by three-time defending Commissioner's Cup winner Boston University (368), Binghamton University (357), University of Maine (332), Northeastern University (316), University of New Hampshire (308), Stony Brook University (266), University of Vermont (242), University of Maryland-Baltimore County (236) and University of Hartford (151).

“College athletics has changed a lot since the days when universities operated on the assumption that the students’ primary obligation was to attend classes, do their homework and participate in Greek organizations. Today, the balance of the student-athletes’ responsibilities has shifted from the academic to athletic,” said Director of Athletics Lee McElroy.

Making the news even sweeter was the fact that the Great Danes outscored the conference's longstanding athletic and academic kingpin. “This is an important effort to discuss and address the next steps in shaping the future of intercollegiate athletics,” NCAA President Myles Brand said in announcing the panel in May. “The leadership of presidents and chancellors is critical in this effort.”

The NCAA has named UAlbany President Kermit Hall to a presidential task force charged with studying the future of college sports. The task force of college and university leaders is conducting its work through four subcommittees. President Hall’s ten-member subcommittee, Presidential Leadership of Internal and External Constituencies, is chaired by Gerald Turner, president of Southern Methodist University.

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"College athletics done well is a tremendous asset and service to our student-athletes, university community, alumni and sports in general," President Hall said. "I'm honored to join my colleagues in helping to chart the next level of intercollegiate play."