

Sports Bits

by Joe Mottillo
Collegian Staff

Da Bears: Dallas defensive coordinator Dave Wannstedt was named as the Chicago Bears head coach. Wannstedt replaces the popular Mike Ditka, who was fired January 5. The Bears had their worst season in 17 years as they went 5-11 last year.

Route 66 temporarily closed: Hockey god Mario Lemieux will be out indefinitely as he is being treated for Hodgkin's disease. The Pittsburgh Penguin's center was leading the NHL in total points, 105, before the shocking announcement was made.

Schott Update: Cincinnati Reds owner Marge Schott submitted an extensive response to a committee investing her alleged racial slurs. No date has been set for a decision on possible discipline for Schott, who faces fine and/or suspension.

Super Bowl XXVII: The three-time defending AFC champions, the Buffalo Bills, take on the young guns of the NFC, the Dallas Cowboys, in the Super Bowl at Pasadena's Rose Bowl. My pick for the game is that the Cowboys will win 30 to 23 as Emmitt Smith rushes for over 110 yards and captures MVP honors.

On the road again (cubed): The Indiana Hoosiers improved to 16-2 overall and 5-0 in the Big Ten as they defeated Michigan, Illinois and Purdue. The No. 2 ranked Hoosiers got all three victories on the road, the last coming at Purdue, 66-59, on Tuesday.

High School Hoopla: Philadelphia Simon Gratz ended the week as the No. 1, high school basketball team according to the USA today Super 25 poll. The boys from Philly are 19-0 on the season.

In trouble again: Phoenix Sun's forward Charles Barkley is facing a fine, suspension, or both (again) after his postgame tirade and pursuit of official Jim Clark in the Sun's loss to New York Monday. Rod Thorn, the League's vice president of operations, deferred any action until he could meet with Clark.



Arnel Balcita/Collegian Photographer

Hoop it up: Byron Thorne goes up strong in warm ups.

Victories possibly lead Lions to second ECAC playoffs

by Joe Mottillo
Collegian Staff

"Faster than a speeding bullet. More powerful than a locomotive. Able to leap tall buildings in a single bound." Yes, this does describe Superman, but not the one you are thinking of. This Superman is not an individual, but our own Penn State-Behrend Men's Basketball team.

Within a six day swing, they went from a 5-9 team looking for an identity to an 8-9 ECAC-playoff caliber team.

The most recent victim was the Saxons of Alfred University, having defeated them 57-52 Back on November 29 in the Fredonia Tournament. The Lions came in Tuesday night knowing that they had a good chance of victory. Alfred had other plans.

The Saxons came out and silenced the Erie Hall crowd by leading the Lions 30-20 at half-time. The Lions were out rebounded 20 to 11 and outshot 46% to 32%.

The Lions came out in the second half like a new team. They outscored Alfred 28 to 16 and held off the scoring of Sean

McCartney, 17 points (A game high), to post a 48-46 victory.

The roll started on the 13th when the Lions marked up a 60-57 victory over SUNY-Fredonia. The Lions won it in the end, but lost starting point guard and leading scorer, 14.7 points per game, Don Plyler.

The question for the Lions would be, who would take on the scoring load? Fortunately for the Lions, many people responded in the victory over Bethany 68-51 and Alfred.

Rob Hunt, 15 points and 12 rebounds, Stephen Respress, 10 points and 11 rebounds, and John Hawthorne, 17 points and 2 for 2 from 3 point range, led the Lions to victory over Bethany. This was revenge for the loss they received from the Bisons back on December 8th

In the game against Alfred, Steven Berger, 12 points, 8 in the second half; and Tim Cook, 10 points, led the Lions to their eighth victory of the season.

For the rest of the season, the Lions have 8 games remaining, 6 of which are on the road.

If the Lions win at least 6 of those, they should be almost guaranteed a trip to the ECAC playoffs for the second straight season.

Lady Lion named athlete of the week

by Matt Cissne
Co-Editor

Flexibility.

Just as an employer appreciates an employee who will be able to handle a variety of tasks, coaches appreciate an athlete that can step up and play effectively at more than one position.

Becky Swartz, this week's athlete of the week, is an example of someone who possesses this valued quality.

Junior guard/forward Swartz is enjoying her best season as a member of the Lady Lions basketball team, "it's been challenging playing both positions, but I have really enjoyed doing it."

Although she has averaged 8.1 points per game and 4.2 rebounds per game and scored 19 points in the championship game of the King's College Invitational, she feels that she can do better.

"So far my play has been okay but I am not satisfied and I know I can do better," Swartz said.

Assistant coach Paul Benim agreed, "she has the ability to become a dominant player at this level and she is starting to realize that."

"She is very talented and over the last three or four games has been playing more consistently,"

head coach Jenepher Banker said.

The Lady Lions are 11-3 and are ranked number five in the region. "We are playing very well. We are well balanced. On any given night a different player can come through and lead the team," Swartz said.

She started to play basketball in seventh grade, and in her junior year of high school her team won the District 10 championship.

Swartz decided to come to Behrend because she wanted to go to a small school where she would not be just another number, and she wanted to play for Banker.

Swartz is a Psychology major and is from Sharon, Pa. Besides playing basketball, she enjoys drawing and doing volunteer work.

Over the summer, Swartz worked at a YMCA camp for the mentally and physically handicapped in Hermitage, Pa.

"She has a great deal of patience and worked well with the kids. She is a good person and is a good role model for the kids," said freshman Carrie Hoffacker, who worked with Swartz this summer.

Swartz is thinking about teaching or becoming a guidance counselor after she graduates.



Arnel Balcita/Collegian Photographer

Athlete of the week: Becky Swartz standing tall against Alfred University.