

Turning up the heat

by Greg Kristen
Collegian Staff

The Lady Lions showed their strength and determination as they won two more games on their way to justify their chances for an NCAA playoff berth.

At Bethany last Saturday against the Lady Bison, the Lady Lions exploded to a 45-22 halftime lead, shooting 52% from the field.

Coach Roz Fornari said, "That was the best first half we played all year. That was the most determined they've been."

In the second half, the Lady Lions lost their first half thunder.

Fornari said, "In the second half we were playing like we were afraid to lose."

The Lady Lions kept their composure and held on to post a 73-66 win over the Lady Bison. Leading the way for the Lady Lions was Anne Bonner with 22 pts. on 7-12 shooting from the field and 7-8 from the foul line, while Becky Swartz netted 13.

Last week at home against the

Lady Wolverines of Grove City, the Lady Lions defeated a younger, much inexperienced Grove City team 55-32.

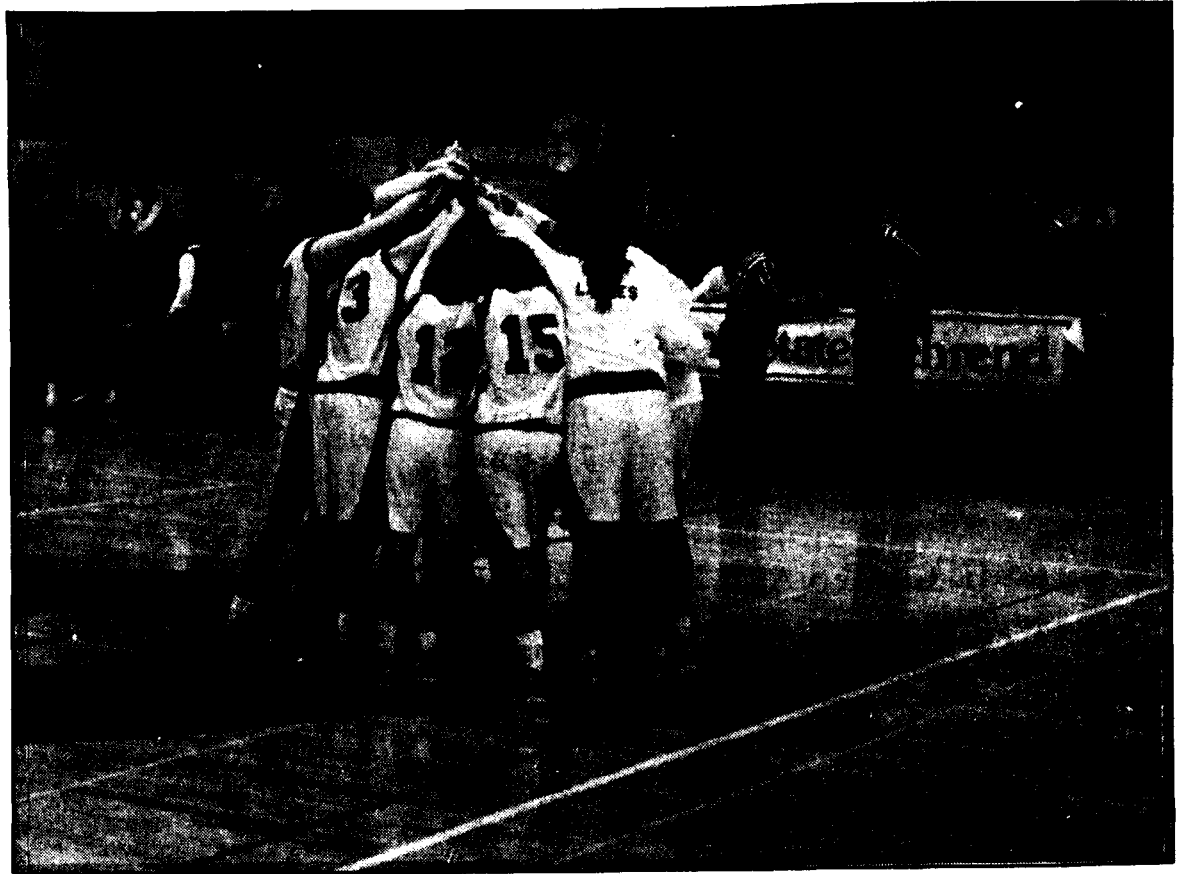
The Lady Lions dominated the first half with a 33-12 halftime lead. In the second half the story was different. The starters sat out most of the second half for rest and because they were in foul trouble.

Coach Fornari said, "I don't think we played very well together and we didn't play very hard, but they're (the Wolverines) a type of team you can't perform very well against."

The Lady Lions improved their record to 15-5 for the season.

The leading scorers were Karen Strait with 11 pts. and Becky Swartz who chipped in 10 pts. and 4 assists.

As for the rest of the season, Assistant Coach Rob Wittman said, "We need to keep our intensity up and stay focused. We're not going to play the games not to lose, we're going to play the games to win."



Roxanne Scott/ Collegian photographer

All for one: The Lady Lions come together before a recent home game. The lady cagers are 16-5 and are working towards an NCAA bid.

Unstoppable

by Joe Mottillo
Collegian Staff

Through a disastrous 2-9 start, the Lions have regrouped to win five of their last six and improve to 8-12 on the season.

"We're playing with the confidence that a team with its collective ability should've been playing with all season long," said Lions' Head Coach, Chris Gilmartin.

The most recent victim in the Lions' tour of victory was Bethany College. The Lions made the trip to West Virginia to take on the 6-13 Bison.

The Lions fell behind early as they were down by 12 at halftime, 44-32. The second half didn't look much different as they were down by as many as 19 at one point.

"I told them that nothing in my mind said we wouldn't win. The encouraging thing is that all of the players felt the same way," said a victorious Gilmartin.

The Lions outscored the Bison in the second half 45-30 to post a 77-74 win.

Byron Thorne led a balanced attack with 21 points, 9 rebounds, and 6 assists. Todd Sturgen and Don Plyler each had 16 points. Sturgen also added a game high 11 rebounds.

Plyler's 16 put him over the 1,000 point plateau for his career joining his backcourt mate, Thorne, in that category.

The Lions outrebounded the

Bison 38-22 and made ten more free throws to give them the deciding edge in the game.

"It takes time for you to learn to play together. With constant work and improvement, we've done that," said Gilmartin.

Besides leading all Lion scorers against Bethany, Thorne is also leading the Lions in scoring and assists this season with a 22.9 ppg and 4.3 apg. He is second in rebounding with 6.0 rpg behind Rob Hunt's 7.4 rpg.

As a team the Lions are putting up 80.7 ppg, yet are giving up 84.3 ppg. They're also being outrebounded by 6 boards a game.

"I think that defense is an attitude. I think we're developing an attitude that anytime you score against us, it's going to be a chore," said Gilmartin of the Lions' man-to-man defense.

On Saturday, the Lions took on a Washington and Jefferson team that handed the Lions a defeat earlier in the season. In that game, Plyler hit 9 three-pointers which set the single game record for Behrend.

Gilmartin said of the W&J Presidents, "They're a very talented team. The key to victory will be our ability to control tempo and continue to play with the confidence that there is no team that can beat us, provided we put forth the effort."

Strait to the top

by Ilia Belkin
Collegian Staff

This week's Athlete of the Week comes to us from the women's basketball team.

Junior forward Karen Strait collected 8 points, 9 rebounds, and 4 assists in Behrend's 73-66 win against Bethany this past week.

Through 21 games, Strait has been averaging almost 8 points and 5 rebounds per game helping Behrend have another very impressive season. The Lady Lions are 16-5 and are looking forward to a very strong finish.

When Karen was asked about her performance this past week, she said that she was "happy to contribute to the team's winning ways."

Karen is a third year player from Warfordsburg, PA. She comes out of Southern Fulton High School where she played softball and basketball.

When she came to Behrend she had the reputation of being a scrappy player who would do anything would take for the team to win. She has lived up to all those expectations so far.

If you see Karen play, she is usually diving for the basketball or playing great defense at all times.

When Head Women's Basketball Coach Roz Fornari was asked to comment on Karen's play.

She said, "This is a true team player. Any role she is given for the team, she'll take it and do it just for a win."



Holly Beary/ Collegian Photo Coordinator

Ball! ball! ball!: Athlete of the Week, Karen Strait shows off her tenacious defensive skills.

"She's truly a remarkable athlete who doesn't have as much talent as some of the players, but makes up for it with heart and guts." She is the same way when it comes to softball, where she plays second base for the Lady Lions.

When Karen isn't playing basketball or softball she's usually hanging out with her friends.

Karen is a communication major and is planning to graduate next year.