

As the end of the season nears, the Lions begin to roar



Ron Van Duinen/Collegian photographer

Big Mac: Pitcher Bob McLaren gave up one run in a 3-1 victory over Grove City at home on Monday.

"Even though a .500 season isn't possible... there is a lot we've accomplished...", said coach Peritano.

by Joe Mottillo
Collegian Staff

With four consecutive wins in two days, the Lions improved to 10-15 on the season.

"I've enjoyed it," said first year coach Dan Peritano. "Even though a .500 season isn't possible now, there is a lot we've accomplished in comparison to people's expectations of Behrend baseball."

On April 25, the Lions hosted Grove City in an afternoon doubleheader. Behrend lit up Grove City early with three runs in the first inning as Derrick Haynes, Dan Shrock and Dave Mazur all had RBIs to pace the Lions in their opening frame. Bob McLaren took the 3-1 win for the Lions on the mound. Dave Shrock led the Lions with two hits.

The Lions kept up the

intensity in the second game as they held off Grove City to post a 4-3 win. Dave Shrock came through again as the only multi-hit player with two hits for the Lions. Dan Shrock picked up the pitching victory for the Lions as he went all seven innings giving up only one earned run with five strikeouts.

"We're playing well. We're running the bases well and we're hitting the ball when we need to," said Peritano. "An overall strength is our team attitude. We've responded very positive to a lot of things such as rain-outs and losses."

On April 24 the Lions took on Hilbert. Hilbert wasn't enough for the Lions as Behrend scored 31 runs in the doubleheader. They captured the first game 20-15 as Fred "the Cat" Veith and Tommy Gardner had 5 and 4 RBIs respectively to

lead the Lions to victory. The Lions clinched the second game with an 11-4 win.

"Gardner had an outstanding day," said Peritano of the junior from McDowell High School in Erie.

Coach Peritano credits much of the team's success and attitude to his assistant, Matt Palasin. "He's got a great demeanor. He's a tremendous baseball person. Not only has he taught our players a lot, but he has also taught me a lot."

"Our attitude has changed the most," said Peritano of the biggest change since the start of the year. "We realize that we can win ball games. We're going to be in games going into the sixth and seventh inning."

The Lions have four remaining games, all of which are on the road. Their next doubleheader is against Fredonia

Looking forward to stretch run

by Bill Graham
Collegian Staff

The Lady Lions, surviving one of their toughest weeks ever, have managed to turn things around and are looking forward to the stretch run.

After dropping six games, the Lady Lions have won five of their last six to post a 21-9 record with one week remaining on the schedule.

It also marks the third season in a row in which Behrend has won 20 or more games.

"It definitely shows the tradition and success this program has had over the years," commented Head Coach Paul Benim. "But it boils down to the players. They deserve the credit because they get it done."

On Saturday, the Lady Lions traveled to Waynesburg to conclude a most hectic week. Marlesse Schott got Behrend off to a 1-0 lead with a solo homer in the first inning. The big blow, though, was delivered by Molly Samuels, who hit a grand

slam in the third. The Lady Lions went on to defeat the Lady Jackets 7-3.

The second game was a tightly contested pitchers duel. Julie Stocker's two run single in the fifth inning proved to be the difference as Behrend posted a 3-1 victory. Jen Leone rapped out two hits to aid the cause, and Shari Robinson went the distance, limiting Waynesburg to only one hit. It was Robinson's first collegiate win.

On Friday Behrend traveled to Geneseo and received outstanding pitching performances en route to two shutout victories. Cherie Varrassa struck out seven in the opener, giving her 81 for the season. She got plenty of support from Samuels, Stocker, Terry Pegher and Shannon Persing, all of whom had two hits. Samuels included a three run homer.

Julie Chimera picked up where Varrassa left off checking Geneseo on three hits to raise her record to 3-1. Samuels again

drove in Julie Stocker for the winning run and the Lady Lions went on to win 1-0.

Last Thursday the Lady Lions played at home against John Carroll. The first game saw the continued hot hitting of Samuels and Stocker with two hits each, including one double. Varrassa struck out seven and walked only one in picking up her eighth victory.

John Carroll, however, benefited from four Lady Lions errors for six unearned runs and held off a late charge for a 7-5 victory in the nightcap. Stocker, Chimera and Schlott all had two runs for the Lady Lions.

Coach Benim added, "Many people stepped up late in the season to deliver clutch hits or great pitching. It was a demanding week and we're glad we have people who can step up and produce."

The Lady Lions traveled to Hilbert on Tuesday, Bethany yesterday, and will host Grove City tomorrow and Gannon on Saturday.

Clutch performer

by Greg Kristen
Collegian Staff

"Clutch performer" is the phrase that comes to mind to describe Julie Stocker, Penn State-Behrend's Athlete of the Week.

Head Softball Coach Paul Benim said, "Stocker has been clutch all season; however this week she has been absolutely amazing going 15-31 while carrying our team."

He added, "Stocker constantly ignited our team this past week by coming up with huge two-out hits."

Stocker earned Athlete of the Week honors by hitting nearly .500 from the plate with 5 doubles, a triple, 3 runs scored and 13 RBIs. That performance raised her team leading average to .427.

She leads the team in RBIs with 25 and hits with 38.

Asked about her own goals Stocker said, "I want to break the school record (49) for most hits in a season."

She added, "I feel I am consistent offensively and that has a lot to do with the people on this team."

Stocker is from Pittsburgh, Pa. where she attended Mt. Lebanon High School. She began playing softball at the age of nine. During her time off from softball she likes working at the campus radio station, WPSE, and is Assistant Student Station Manager. In the off-season she is a voice of the Lady Lions basketball team as a play-by-play announcer.

She has set high goals for the team this year. "I want to get an NCAA playoff berth or win the BCAC Championship."

Sen. Mauer, her teammate said, "I think Julie has been consistent the whole year. She's been one of our best hitters and has played great in right field. She's really brought us through and helped us win a lot of games."

Stocker is a sophomore communication major. In the future she plans to graduate from Behrend and fulfill her dream of television broadcasting.