

Weather keeping Lady Lions inside

Lack of games allow injuries to heal



Collegian File Photo
Why I oughta...Heather Norder takes aim at an innocent ball at practice. Norder and the rest of the Lady Lions have been forced to practice inside due to friendly and predictable Erie Weather.

by Nick Zulovich
Sports Editor

Rain, rain [and snow] go away. Come back another day. This rhyme is just what Head Coach Sharon Gregory and the rest of the Lady Lions Softball team is thinking about. The team has not played since returning from spring training in Florida on March 10.

The lack of playing time might help the Lady Lions as they returned from Florida with some injuries that needed time to heal. Shannon Angel and Julie Stocker both returned from Florida with injured fingers.

"It has helped our injuries to heal up," said Gregory.

"Angel is back, but still having a little difficulty throwing. Stocker is back to the

best of her abilities, but she still has a lot of pain with a fractured finger on her glove hand."

Stocker has made adjustments to her glove to try to accommodate her injured finger.

"Missing a game is not an option," said Stocker. "Most of this team has played through pain, I am not going to be any different."

Angel on the other hand, has been able to avoid the injury bug most of her career. She said "Its really frustrating [this season] since I never had to play through much pain before."

Both Angel and Stocker are forced to tape fingers together in order play left field and right field respectively.

Even though the roster consists of just 13 players, Gregory is confident that the lack of depth and the possibility of more injuries will not hinder the team from having a successful season.

"[Depth] could be a problem, but I think we are quite versatile. If, by chance, we lose an outfielder, either one of my pitchers [Heather Norder and Beth Calhoun] can play out there. I think the team is very versatile with my options with the lineup even though we are low in numbers," explained Gregory.

Gregory has no fear that only two starting pitchers are on the roster. In fact, Gregory might even prefer it that way.

"It was advantageous to us to have two starters when we were in Florida. They both knew going in who had the starting assignment. I think it helped us to prepare better. They [Calhoun and Norder] know they have to get the job done. We played nine games in Florida and it worked out fine," stated Gregory.

The mechanics of the game also allow for pitchers to be able to play more regularly. The underhanded pitch is not as stressful to the arm.

"It is a lot more of a natural motion. There are no requirements as far as time needed

to rest between starts. There are some teams that have just one dominant pitcher who plays 80 percent of their games," said Gregory.

The Lady Lions have been able to practice just twice outside on their own field. They hope to

improve on their 4-5 record against Geneva next Tuesday here at Behrend. Mother Nature will be the final determinate on whether or not the Lady Lions can take the field.

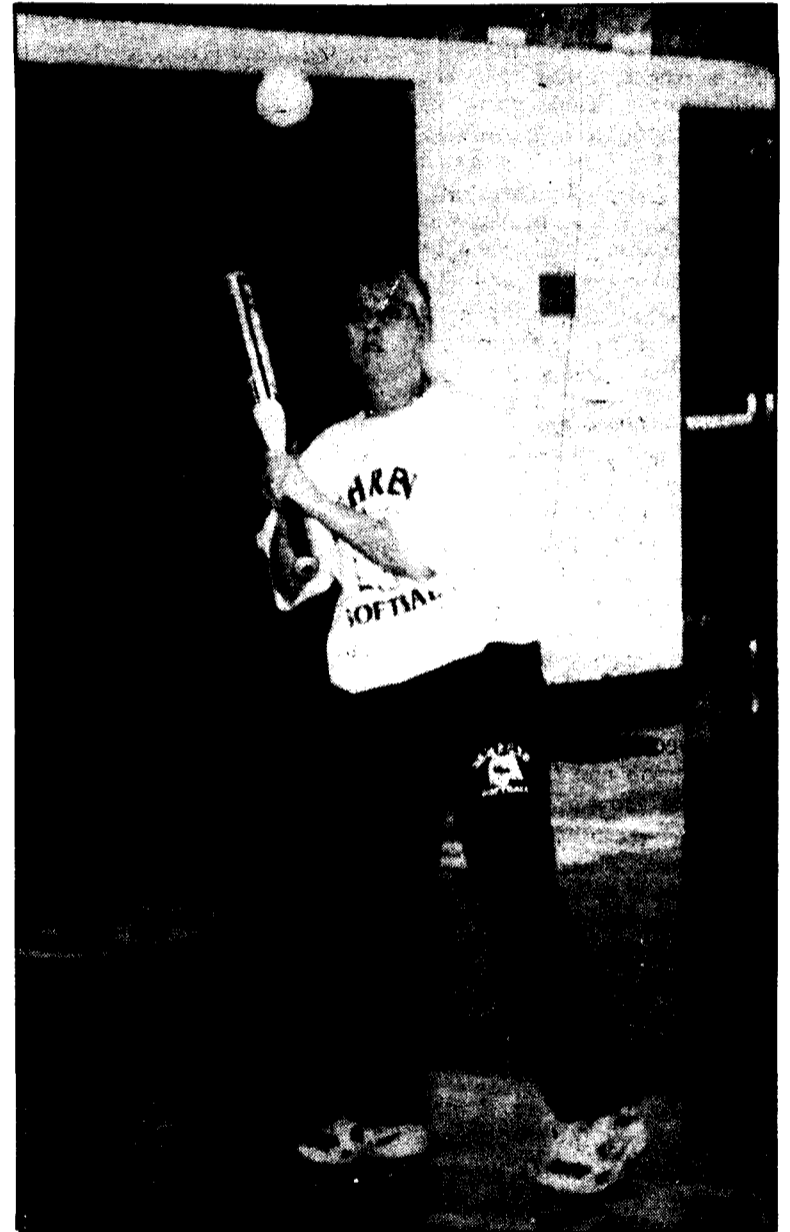


Photo by Brian Charnock/Collegian Staff
Watch the bouncing ball: Infielder Steph Roberts looks to smack a ground ball in a recent practice. The Lady Lions look to improve their 4-5 slate and start their northern schedule Tuesday, as Behrend will host Geneva.

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