

Errors plague Lions

Total 23 errors in only five games

by Nick Zulovich
Sports Editor

You might say the wheels came off the wagon for the Penn State Behrend baseball team. Last weekend at the Capital College tournament, Coach Paul Benim and his Lions went from 8-3 to 8-8 in the abbreviated tournament. Behrend was scheduled to play eight games over three days, but the weather changed the schedule, allowing for just five games in two days.

The biggest reason for the Lions' demise, errors. Behrend committed a whopping 23 errors including eight in one game in the five game losing streak.

The weekend started with an 8-1 loss to Shawnee State, in which the Lions committed the mentioned eight errors in one game. Bob Vadala took the loss on the hill while Marc Burchanowski drove in the lone run.

The second game of the day saw the Lions fall to host Capital 12-2. The fielding was not much better in this game either with the Lions committing six errors.

The final game of the Lions triple-header on Saturday saw Behrend fall to Capital again, this time by a 10-0 count.

Sunday did not prove to be a much better day for the Lions as they were to play a double header with Division III power Ohio Wesleyan.

The first game featured Behrend freshman Daryl Schmidt, who allowed just three runs on seven hits, but the Lions' bats did not come to play as they were shutout 3-0.

In the second game against Ohio Wesleyan, who is ranked number 15 in the country, they put up a 7-1 lead going into the top of the seventh inning. Then Behrend erupted for seven runs in the top of the seventh to take an 8-7 lead going into Wesleyan's final at-bat.

The bullpen could not hold the lead and Wesleyan tied the game

up at eight in the bottom of the seventh. It would stay that way until the thirteenth when Wesleyan scored the winning run to take Behrend's final game of the tournament 9-8.

Not surprising, Benim felt it was a tough weekend for his team.

"We made way too many mistakes and it cost us some ball games. Saturday was just an awful day for us. We made a lot of mental and physical errors. Sunday we played much better baseball, but we didn't get the clutch hit we needed to win the ball game," Benim said.

First baseman Jeff Hortsman had to agree with his coach.

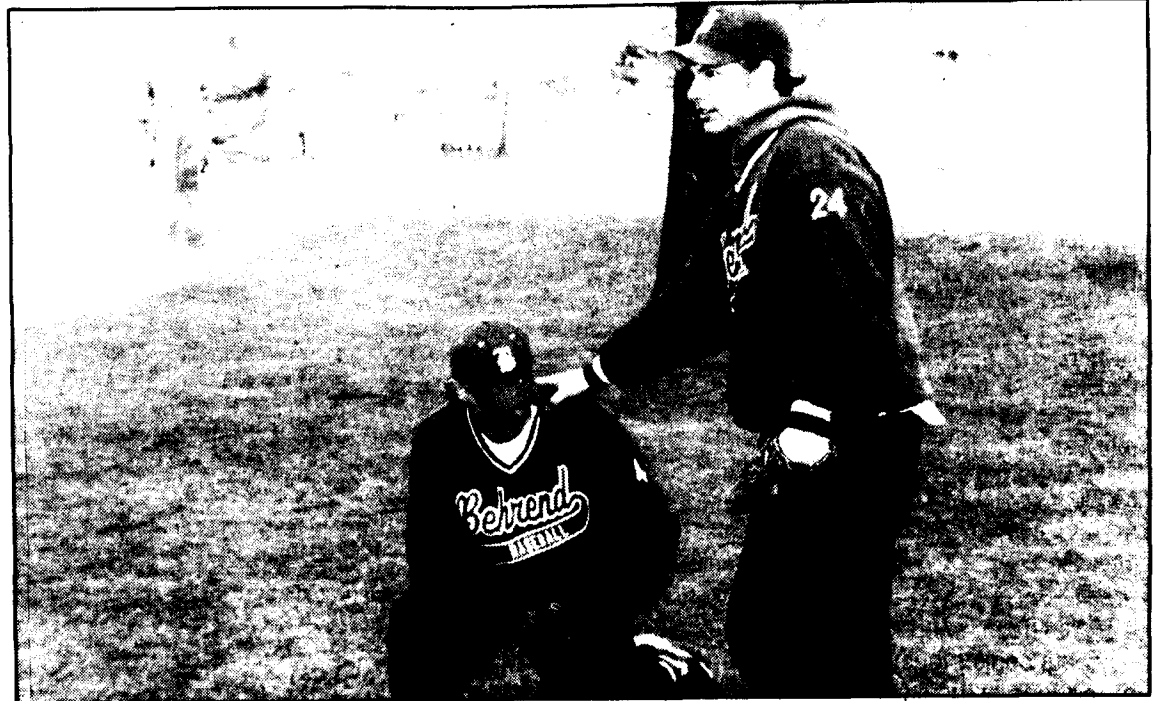


Photo Bob Misulich/Collegian Photographer

That's o.k. I forgive you: Freshman pitcher Bart Gaskey (right) and Nate Orend at a recent practice. This was one of the few times the Lions have been able to practice outside because of the weather. The Lions take on Bethany this Sunday for their first home game of the season. First pitch is 1 p.m.

"We are going to rest some arms. I think we'll be fired up for Sunday."

- Jeff Hortsman, first base

"We couldn't gel together. It seemed like when one person made a mistake, another person would make a mistake on the next play," explained Hortsman.

Benim had high praise for Ohio Wesleyan.

"[They are] a great program. They do not make mistakes. They did not make an error in either game and are very fundamentally sound."

Behrend's bats, who had been very hot to begin the year, have tailed off. The Lions hit just .235 in five games with only three extra-base hits. Behrend's running game also did not have

its way with the opponents. Behrend had four stolen bases on nine attempts.

The Lions have some time to recuperate from playing five games in two days. Behrend plays their next game at home this Sunday against Bethany, weather permitting.

Hortsman feels the rest is really needed.

"We are going to rest some arms. It really hurt us over the weekend that we ran out of pitchers. Everybody will come back full strength, and I think we'll be fired up for Sunday," Hortsman said.

First pitch is at 1 p.m.



Photo Bob Misulich/Collegian Photographer

Heating it up: One of the Behrend pitchers does some warm up tosses. The Behrend pitchers were pushed to the limit this past weekend in the Capital College Tournament. Fortunately the Lions have had this week off to recuperate. Head Coach Paul Benim used all of his pitchers since the Lions were forced to play five games in just two days. Benim hopes his troops can rebound this weekend after losing all five of their games in the tournament.

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