

# Softball team ready for Florida

## Young squad hopes for bright future

by Brian Gregory  
Collegian Staff

With Spring Break just one week away, the Lady Lion softball team is preparing for their annual trip to Florida to begin the 1997 season.

The Lady Lions have eight games in Florida in just five days. It will be a grueling start to the long season for the team.

"There's an intensity in practice," said Lady Lion Head Coach Sharon Gregory. "We're coming together and really working well as a group...its fun to see."

This year's Lady Lions will be a young team with just three juniors,

Blass is a graduate of nearby McLane High School and should see time at second base this year.

"She does a nice job up the middle for us," said Gregory.

Taking over some of the third base duties for the Lady Lions this year will be Freshman Leah Balmer. Gregory says the Blackhawk graduate, "has an excellent arm and hits the ball well."

The last freshman is Melissa Bennett who will be in the outfield.

Lost from the Lady Lions are twenty-one years of experience. Julie Stocker, Erin Terry, and Amy

are challenged with that task this year."

With the loss of Heather Norder, the Lady Lions lose a solid, overpowering pitcher. Pitching in her place will be Jen Mertz. Calhoun will still be the ace, but Mertz will be counted on very heavily this season. This will be a lot of pressure for a pitcher with no college experience.

Coach Gregory, though, likes what she has seen from Mertz in the practices.

"She has excellent movement, throws hard and is comparable to Calhoun."

The only returners for the Lady Lions this year will be the first-string battery of Calhoun and Casey Koza, the back-up catcher and second baseman Steph Roberts, and centerfielder Lisa Fox.

Coach Gregory has seen a lot of intensity from her young squad in practice sessions this winter. Overall she sees her team's defense to be their number one attribute.

"We're solid all the way around," said Coach Gregory. "They are diving in the gym for the ball...there is no hesitation."



**Leader of the Pack:** Head Softball Coach Sharon Gregory (shown here during volleyball season) will lead young squad to Florida to start their season next week.

### Penn State Behrend Lady Lion Softball 1997

10	Jennie Duchnowski	So.	3B
11	Tammy Marsh	So.	OF
12	Steph Roberts	Jr.	C/2B
13	Beth Calhoun	Jr.	P/OF
15	Lisa Fox	So.	CF
18	Jeannie Dowdy	So.	SS
21	Melissa Bennett	Fr.	OF
22	Stacy Blass	Fr.	2B
24	Casey Koza	Jr.	C
25	Tanya Deats	Fr.	IF
32	Leah Balmer	Fr.	3B
33	Jen Mertz	So.	P

five sophomores, four of which are new to collegiate softball, and four freshmen.

New to the team this year is Tanya Deats. Deats will probably see a lot of time this year at first base for the Lions.

"She does a really nice job at first base and the plate," said Coach Gregory of Deats.

Stranahan are gone from the outfield. Shannon Angel, Becky Reed, and Marlesse Schlott leave the infield, and Heather Norder is gone from the mound.

With the loss of Stocker and Reed the team will lose a lot of run production and hits as well as speed and fielding percentages.

*We're coming together and really working well as a group... it's fun to see*

--Coach Gregory

Stepping out onto the collegiate softball field for the first time this year as well will be Stacy Blass.

"It's a totally new infield," said Gregory. "It's difficult to replace senior experience and our returners

*We're solid all the way around.*

--Coach Gregory

Also strong for the Lady Lions this year will be the pitching and catching. Calhoun and Koza and Mertz and Roberts all are very solid players and feature strong arms and smarts.

Gregory also likes the diversity of the talent that Behrend will have this year. She said that, "each player brings something different that we can utilize."

The Lady Lions will battle Mount Union and Ithaca on Monday. Tuesday they play Mary Washington and St. Ambrose. Wednesday they will play Anderson and Benedictine to complete six

games in three days.

The team will have Thursday off, which means it will probably rain. And on Friday they play SUNY-Cortland and Trenton before leaving the sun behind to return to Erie.

If it doesn't snow, the Lady Lions have a home doubleheader against Mount Union scheduled for March 22nd.

### Lady Lion Softball Schedule 1997

3/10	Mount Union/Ithaca*	9/12
3/11	Mary Washington/St. Ambrose*	9/12
3/12	Anderson/Benedictine*	9/12
3/14	SUNY-Cortland/Trenton*	9/12
3/22	MOUNT UNION	1:00
3/25	Waynesburg	3:00
3/29	BETHANY COLLEGE	2:00
4/2	SUNY-FREDONIA	3:00
4/5	ST. JOHN FISHER	1:00
4/8	Allegheny College	3:00
4/12	WASHINGTON & JEFFERSON	1:00
4/15	WESTMINSTER	3:00
4/17	Baldwin-Wallace	3:00
4/22	Geneva College	3:00
4/24	GROVE CITY	3:00
4/26	Buffalo State	1:00
4/28	LaRoche	3:00
4/30	Gannon	3:00

\* not a doubleheader  
Home game in CAPS

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### BATTLE OF THE BANDS 1997 SURVEY

- Did you attend Battle of the Bands '96? YES NO
- Will you attend Battle of the Bands this year? YES NO
- Would you prefer the event to be 2 days? YES NO
- If the event were 2 days, would you attend both days? YES NO
- Do you live on-campus? YES NO

6. What was the best part of Battle of the Bands?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. What could we improve about Battle of the Bands?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### OPTIONAL INFORMATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Semester Standing \_\_\_\_\_

Major \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Box # \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE RETURN THIS SURVEY TO THE COLLEGIAN IN THE REED UNION BUILDING OR TOM KEEFE @ BOX 1610. YOU CAN E-MAIL YOUR COMMENTS TO [WSTREAKTOM@AOL.COM](mailto:WSTREAKTOM@AOL.COM).