

To The Edge

Athlete of the Week



Coming in next week's issue is this year's first athlete of the week. This is your chance to get to know some of the special sports stars at Behrend. Look for this box every week that our athletic teams are in action. The sport season kicks off with soccer this weekend. Make sure you go out and support your fellow students as they show their Behrend pride and take no prisoners on the field.

Intramural Calendar

- Today -- Deadlines for tennis
Slow pitch softball
Sand volleyball
- Sept. 6 -- Play starts for tennis
(schedules also released)
Play starts for slow pitch softball
- Sept. 7 -- Play starts for sand volleyball
- Sept. 8 -- Deadline for golf

Behrend Sporting Events

Herb Lauffer Soccer Tournament

Men

- September 1**
Behrend Vs. New Paltz 2:00
Hiram Vs. Hobart 4:00
- September 2**
Consolation game 11:00
Championship Game 1:00

Women

- September 2**
Behrend Vs. Albion 3:00
Hiram Vs. Bethany 5:00
- September 3**
Consolation Game 12:00
Championship Game 2:00

Other Events

- September 1-2**
Volleyball at Cortland Tournament
- September 2**
Men's and Women's Cross Country at Buffalo State Invitational
- September 5**
JV Soccer at Westminster 5:30
- September 6**
Volleyball at Brockport 7:00
- Women's soccer Vs. Wooster 4:30
- September 7**
Men's Soccer at Fredonia 4:00

Next week check out the scores for these games in *The Scoreboard*. This spot will still have Behrend events listed.

The Behrend sport season kicks off with a couple of defending AMCC champions

by Douglas Smith
sports editor

The athletic department will be busy this weekend as the soccer season gets underway with the Herb Lauffer Tournament. Both the men's and women's soccer team will be in action over the next three days. *The Beacon* has prepared a preview of these two highly competitive teams to get you ready for the upcoming season. Let us first take a look at the women.

Women

This will be the sixth year that the Behrend Lions soccer team has competed in NCAA Division III action. They have claimed the last three Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference titles and are looking for much more this year. Coach Dan Perritano is 63-23-9 with the Women's team and an impressive 18-0 in AMCC play.

"We haven't lost a conference game yet and it being my last year, I hope that we keep that streak alive because we are the team that the other conference teams want to beat and that makes them very fired up for our games," Jill Barbisch said.

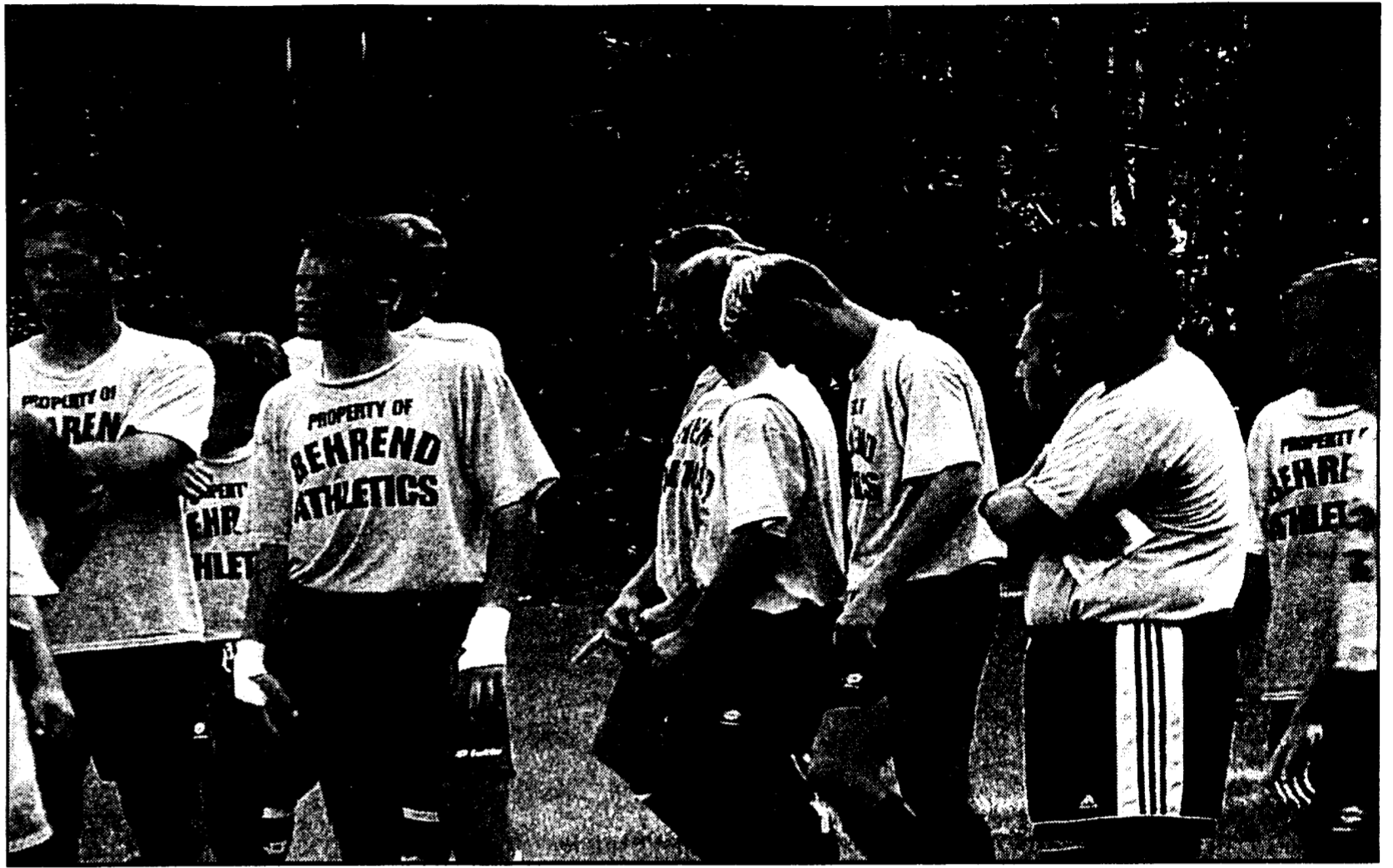
The women return a strong crew of seniors and will show they have enough experience to succeed. They are returning four all conference players from last year. These players are Amy Larocca, Diane Holtsford, Jill Barbisch, and Katie Giles. The team is also guided by 1999 AMCC Player of the Year Laura Furko and Freshmen of the Year Michelle Gutting, who had 18 goals in 1999. The women's soccer team is returning eight starters.

There is a lot of expectation for this team. Barbisch hopes to remain undefeated in the AMCC making sure they beat Allegheny. She also would like post-season play, preferably the NCAA.

"I'll take the ECAC though if that is what we do," says Barbisch reluctantly.

Men

The men's team is coming off a 12-7-1 record from last year and also captured the AMCC title. Their experience level may even be slightly higher than the women's teams as the core group of seniors is really the key to this team's performance. Still each year the conference seems to get



Coach Dan Perritano stands among his players at Thursday's practice.

PHOTO BY JEFF MILLER

harder so the challenge is there.

Co-captains James Martin and Tommy Sieg lead this team. Martin was co-MVP last year. Sieg has a knack for making big saves, which will be depended on for the Behrend Lions to have a great showing this season. Speedy senior Dave Kowalczyk will also be a large part of this team's success.

year we expect more from ourselves, which helps us concentrate on our goals. For myself and others it is our last season to play soccer for Behrend. We want to go out winners and expect a lot from ourselves. Therefore, we have a lot of pressure on us, but love that, and it drives us to play our best every time we step on the

field all around, but both teams will be ready for the weekend," stated Perritano.

Co-captain Martin stated that he is ready for any possible rising pressure level.

"Everyone on the team knows their role, and we all have the expectation that we will try our hardest. With that expectation the results will almost always be positive. It's been that way for the last three years I have been here, and nothing has changed this year. If anything, it's more exciting and fun knowing you have a chance to win every game."

The depth on these teams is unbelievable. Coach Perritano says that there is no real set pattern for substitutions, but he knows he can be confident when someone needs a breather. The bench for both teams is very strong. The bench may be a key element to this weekend's tournament. The Herb Lauffer Memorial Tournament becomes a stepping-stone for the rest of the season. To get that trophy under your belt means to build confidence. The trophy is a very good start and is a sign of things to come in the season. At least that is the premise of winning this initial tournament.

However, midfielder Mark Szweczykowski has much more in mind than just winning the tournament. He says, "With the caliber of players we have this year, I believe our potential is endless. Our first and most important goal is winning our conference, the AMCC. The ultimate goal I am seeking this season is a national championship for Behrend. I want our team to have their picture taken so this picture would be one none of us would ever forget."

Some students may be a little skeptical about watching soccer. Some may even be telling themselves that the walk is longer with the teams playing on the Behrend Fields. Well Coach Perritano has this to say about your skepticism. "Just come watch one game. The teams will play hard for you and it is a wonderful environment up there. You can bring a lunch and sit up on the hill and enjoy hard

work out on the field."

Think about some of the things that these two teams have to go through playing in Erie also. The weather is so unpredictable. Rain will be fierce as the season progresses and at one point last year snowflakes fell on the players. In 1997 in the conference final at Frostburg the teams struggled through ankle deep mud. Support from us seems to be the least you can do.

Martin adds to this point, "The weather in Erie can be bad but there is nothing you can do about it. You just have to play the game the best you can and look forward to a nice hot 45-minute shower after the game."

Laura Furko remembers one hazardous game last year.

"Last season during the ECAC playoff game against Villa Maria really showed how unpredictable and treacherous Erie weather can be. With ice, rain, and hail we struggled through a 90-minute game plus double overtime. It was the worst field conditions we have ever experienced. However, we managed to run with the icicles stuck to our feet and came out with a 2-1 victory."

The men kick off the tournament Friday at 2:00 PM. The tournament goes through Sunday with the women's championship game at 2:00 pm.

Martin knows the importance of a good fan base. He politely states, "The Behrend soccer team would appreciate any support from the faculty and students at Behrend this year. The new Behrend soccer fields provide a great atmosphere to watch a game, and our team will give the fans a great 90 minute experience."

Szweczykowski explains, "You cannot win a playoff spot in September, you can only lose it. We finished last season with eleven straight victories, and no playoff bid. We had four overtime games in our first five games. This is where any support is crucial. We need people to come out and encourage us on the field, especially early on in the season. I can only promise fans two things: one, we will show you good soccer, and two, we will pour our hearts out on the field for 90 minutes or until the very last whistle is blown. Hope to see you out there."



Behrend's fearless net-minder awaits a shot in practice.

PHOTO BY JEFF MILLER

Sieg states, "We have a lot of dedicated players on our team. We all have the same goal, which is to win! I think that the pressure has risen each year since I've been here. When I was a freshman we broke the school record for wins and won the AMCC. Since then we have broke the school record for wins again and won another AMCC title. Each

field knowing it will all be over before we know it."

For both squads winning the AMCC title is the top priority. Coach

Perritano said that there is potential for the postseason, but the teams will not be looking ahead to that. "Our practices have gone very good. The preseason went well. We had some minor inju-



The Behrend men's soccer team relaxes before the Herb Lauffer Tournament.

PHOTO BY JEFF MILLER