

# Softball team gains experience for AMCC Tournament play

by Mike Bello  
staff writer

With the weather finally cooperating, the Behrend softball team was finally able to compete on a regular basis with its opponents, giving them a handful of experience in game situations they had been lacking due to the many rainouts and snowouts earlier in the season. Heading into their Wednesday game at Fredonia, the Lions had gone 3-5 the previous week to run their record to 8-12 on the year with three more doubleheaders on tap leading up to the most anticipated part of the season. This is the AMCC tournament, which is scheduled for Wednesday, April 18 and Friday, April 20.

On Wednesday, April 4, Behrend took a road trip to Cleveland to play two games against Baldwin-Wallace (14-10). In the first game, the Lions had a strong pitching performance from senior Mandy Bodnor, but unfortunately for the Lions, B-W got an even stronger performance in a 3-1 win over Behrend. Bodnor pitched six innings, giving up all three runs on five hits with four K's, but the Lions could only push across one run, that on Cheryl Peterson's RBI double to score Becky Corbin.

In the second game, the Lions had nine hits but still had trouble capitalizing on their opportunities, losing 9-2. Corbin and Amy Hunter had three hits with Hunter scoring both runs for Behrend, but for the day the Lions struck out 17 times, missing out on many scoring chances. Stephanie Covert took the loss, allowing five runs in four innings of work.

Behrend then came home to play Thiel (12-11) the next day, a game originally to be played March 19, and this time was able to overcome their offensive struggles they ran into against Baldwin-Wallace. In the first game Behrend smacked 13 hits and plated eight runs in an 8-seven extra inning victory. Behrend followed that up with a 9-1 shellacking that improved their record to 7-9.

Cheryl Peterson was the offensive hero of the day, going 4-4 with 2 RBI's in the first game and 3-3 with two runs scored and two

RBI's in the second game. Kelly Woods, sidelined a month with a broken hand, had three hits, scored two runs, and had three RBI's on the day. Bodnor had three hits and drove in six runs, including five in Game Two, while Brandy Polinick had two hits and two runs scored in the second game of the afternoon. Bodnor picked up the win in Game One, pitching eight innings and giving up seven runs, five earned, on nine hits while striking out eight. Covert gave up only one run in five innings of work to pick up the win in the second game. The Lions were flawless in the field in both games.

The Lions did have to cancel their game against Lake Erie on April 7, this time at least not because of snow. On Sunday, April 8 Behrend was able to get in a twinbill against Frostburg State (8-12, 3-1 AMCC), strong contenders for the conference championship. Bodnor went 3-4 and drove in three runs in the first game, but it was not enough as the Lions dropped a 6-4 decision. Bodnor pitched all seven innings, striking out four and giving up six runs, four earned, while allowing nine hits. The Lions fared worse in the second game, as they were unable to generate any sort of offense in a 4-0 loss. Becky Rishel had two hits in the second game, after scoring two runs in the first, for the Lions who as a team managed only six hits while being shut out for only the second time this year. Covert was the losing pitcher in the second game, giving up four runs, only one earned, on just four hits in six innings of work. The Lions were also hurt by seven errors on the day.

On Tuesday the Lions squared off against Pitt-Greensburg, a make up game pushed back from March 31 that marked the first of three straight doubleheaders the Lions engaged in due to early season postponements. The visiting Lions came out swinging in the first game, piling up nine hits in a 6-1 win. Bodnor and Peterson both had two hits to pace the attack. Bodnor also got the win, running her record to 4-6 on the year, as she gave up only one run and three hits while striking out three.

In the second game, the Lions again scored

six runs but shaky pitching prevented the Lions from gaining the win in a 7-6 loss. Covert started but was pulled after pitching one and two-thirds innings and giving up four runs on five hits. Bodnor came in and shut down Pitt for the next one and one-third innings, who then gave the ball to Jennifer Pinkhouse. Pinkhouse pitched three and two-thirds innings, giving up three runs on two hits while striking out four and issuing four free passes, but took the loss when Pitt scored in the bottom of the seventh inning. The Lions scattered eight hits in the second game, including two each by Rose Boni and Kelly Woods, and walked seven times.

The Lions were scheduled to go on the road on Wednesday to compete against Fredonia (11-6-1), a rescheduled contest from March 28 that could not be played at the Behrend field. Fredonia comes in ranked number one in their New York conference, SUNYAC, despite having only one senior on the team. The Lions then are tentatively scheduled to play Pitt-Bradford the following day (April 12), although that could change since the Fredonia game had to be shifted to Fredonia's field. Pitt-Bradford brings in a 5-3 record and like Behrend, has a 3-3 AMCC record, tied for 4th place in the league. Bradford has had to rely on a majority of underclassmen, with only one junior and two seniors on the squad.

The Lions' last tune-up before the AMCC tournament will be on Saturday against defending champ La Roche. After going 22-3 with a 15-1 conference record last year, La Roche has shown no signs of slowing down. This year the team is 15-5 and has a 5-1 AMCC record, good for first place and represents the biggest obstacle the Lions will have to face should they get past their other opponents in the tournament. The Lions will have four days rest before the tournament, but with a flurry of games this past week, the Lions will no longer be required to depend on indoor practices for their 2001 season experience.

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## WOODS

There's been an overwhelming tendency in the past two years to name the greatest athletes ever. The most consistent names that appear are those three. So to put Tiger on that list isn't anything small or insignificant. But does he belong?

Right now, it's too early to tell. But if Woods is to continue this incredible streak of excellence, then there is no doubt that he belongs. An achievement that high would put him above names like Jesse Owens, Jim

beginning to play with less desire but with more emotion. There are no traditions in most sports where athletes today are required to follow some sort of code of ethics.

Golf, however, is different, which makes Tiger an exception from the young talent in other sports. In a sports world plagued with cockiness and arrogance, he has been able to keep himself humbled behind golf's tradition of sportsmanship.

When asked after his Master's victory this past weekend where he ranks among golf's greatest, Woods would not answer. Even though we already know the answer, Tiger claimed it wasn't his call to make. It's tough to dislike a man who makes comments like that.

Perhaps more incredible than Tiger's demeanor and accomplishments is his age.

Never in sports could an athlete retire at the age of 25, and be considered the greatest ever. Tiger is the exception.

If Woods announced tomorrow that he has played his last tournament, the world would celebrate him as the greatest golfer ever. He hasn't even reached his prime, or at least the age where most golfers truly understand the game.

There is no other athlete in history who has accomplished as much in such a short amount of time. At 25, Woods is almost halfway to Nicklaus' record 18 major championships. The span of time it took Nicklaus to win his 18 majors was 24 years from his first win in 1962 to his last in 1986.

If Woods continues at this pace (which is likely given he hasn't reached his prime yet) for 20 more years, he will win 36 majors. That would double Nicklaus' mark.

Right now, Tiger Woods is sports greatest competitor. He will be the one to carry sports competitive spirit throughout the next 25 years. Ruth had his days to become legend, Ali had his days to talk of his greatness and Jordan had his days to capture the hearts of anyone who watched.

Today, it's Tiger's turn to shine.

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Brown and Wayne Gretzky. That should give you an idea of this man's importance to golf, and his potential to be seen as a legendary figure.

Before last weekend, comparisons were being made between Tiger and "The Golden Bear" Jack Nicklaus. Now, Tiger has surpassed Nicklaus. He has done what no golfer has ever done by winning his fourth straight major championship. There is nothing we can do to put that in perspective. I can't think of an individual that has ever achieved such an accomplishment in golf or anywhere else for that matter.

Woods is redefining golf with every tournament he conquers. He's mastered a sport, at age 25, that takes most golfers an entire career to fully learn. He's been able to do this while maintaining support and admiration from fans.

Today in sports, younger athletes are

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