

Volleyball squad captures AMCC crown

by Diane Holtsford
staff writer

Last weekend the Behrend women's volleyball team concluded its spectacular season with its first AMCC Conference Championship ever. The Lady Lions traveled to Altoona for the tournament, where they faced (for the fifth time this season) Pitt-Bradford. And like the four previous meetings, the Lions defeated them easily.

Unexpectedly, in the final, Behrend did not play the first seed, Altoona, which had been upset by Frostburg in the other semi-final. But this surprise did not keep Behrend from emerging victorious as AMCC champions.

Behrend played Pitt-Bradford in their semifinal on Friday. They started off strong in the opening points but ended up dropping the first game 31-29. However, their rocky beginning did not last long, as the Lions won the next three games 30-19, 30-21, 30-20 to clinch the match.

"We came to play, and we were ready [for Bradford]," said coach Kellie Diehl about her team's 12 straight points to open the match.

Senior Sarah Peterson had 11 kills and 21 digs, and Danielle Bemis had 11 kills and 19 digs. Jessica Niedermeyer tallied 13 kills and 10 digs, while senior Brianne Engelbert added 21 digs in addition to her 40 setter assists.

Although the Lions expected to play Altoona in Saturday's final, the Behrend team still found delight in beating Frostburg, the defending conference champion. The Lady Lions went up two games against their opponent, 30-24 and 30-24, but Frostburg fought back to win the third game 30-22. However, a persistent Behrend team (which beat Frostburg twice during the regular season) took the fourth game 30-23 to take the match and the coveted AMCC plaque.

"We were surprised to see Frostburg in the final, after practicing for Altoona, but we were ready to play," said Diehl. "Even though we played catch-up every game, we played with confidence."

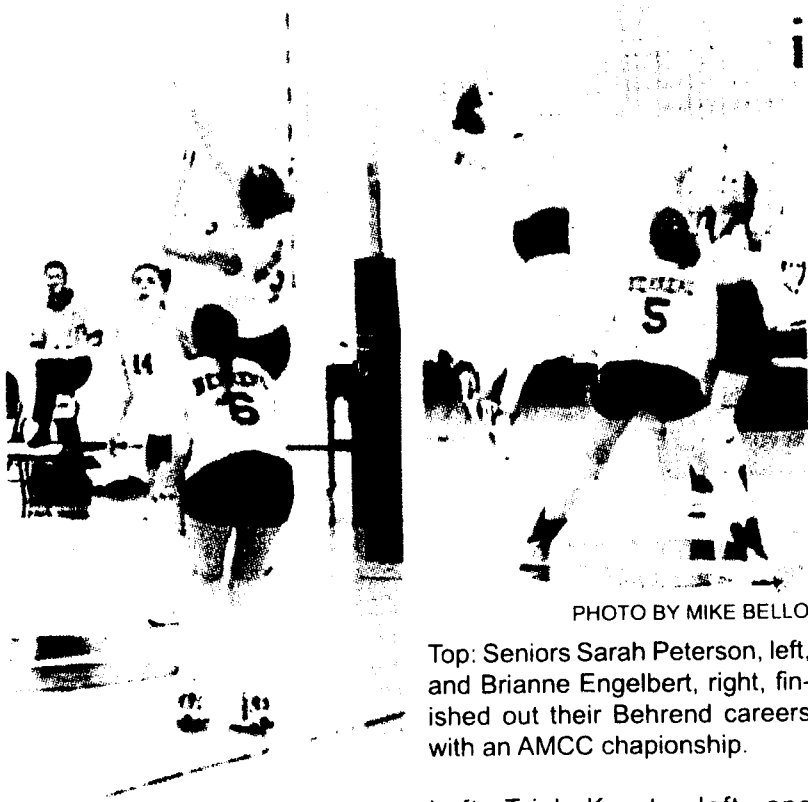


PHOTO BY MIKE BELLO

Top: Seniors Sarah Peterson, left, and Brianne Engelbert, right, finished out their Behrend careers with an AMCC championship.

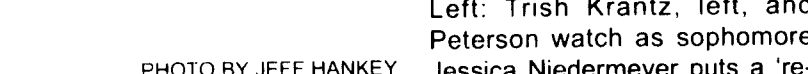


PHOTO BY JEFF HANKEY

Left: Trish Krantz, left, and Peterson watch as sophomore Jessica Niedermeyer puts a 'return-to-sender' on the ball.

Niedermeyer amassed 13 kills and 26 digs, and Bemis added 15 kills and 14 digs. Peterson added 11 kills and 15 digs, while Engelbert had 13 digs to go along with her 47 setter assists.

This is head coach Kellie Diehl and assistant coach Greg Diehl's first season coaching the team, and they are both excited with this special, unique season.

"The girls are special and unique, and we are proud of how they stuck together through the season; it was an unforgettable season," said Diehl.

The Behrend Lions also had individual honors to go along with the team's victory. Engelbert and Niedermeyer were selected to the all-conference first-team, and Bemis had an honorable mention. Also, Peterson was selected as AMCC Athlete of the Week for her outstanding performance in the conference tournament. The Lions ended their season with an impressive 22-10 overall record.

Housing and Food Service Athlete of the Week

PENNSSTATE



Trish Krantz



Krantz, a freshman from Grove City High School, was instrumental in helping Behrend win its first-ever AMCC Volleyball Championship. The Lions (22-10) entered the tournament as the No. 2 seed and dropped Pitt-Bradford 30-19, 30-21, and 30-20 on Friday in the semifinals after losing game one, 31-29. The AMCC Championship on Saturday went in Behrend's favor. After opening with consecutive 30-24 wins in games one and two, Frostburg rallied for a 30-22 victory before the Blue and White won the championship via a 30-23 score. Krantz had five crucial serving aces that changed the flow of the game.

YANKEES

win. The city certainly had its spirit lifted after this win, and it had every right to go out and party. New Yorkers just had no idea what was in store for them.

In Game Four, the Yankees were down to their last out when up to the plate stepped Tino Martinez. He immediately smacked a two-run home run to send the game into extra innings. Then, in the 10th, Derek Jeter belted a solo home run to bring New York back into the series and send the 55,000+ fans into a frenzy. It was a magical evening for all of New York, but no one would have thought that magic would repeat itself the next night.

Game Five was almost a mirror image of Game Four, as once again the Yankees were down to their last out in the ninth. This time the hero was Brosius, who blasted a two-run homer off Arizona closer Byung-Hyun Kim to send the game into extra innings. When Alfonso Soriano singled home the winning run in the 12th inning, that was almost too much for the crowd to handle. Stunned was about the only word that could describe New York on this day.

Of course, Game Six was another blowout by Arizona, but the best was left for last. Game Seven culminated the entire series' intense moments into an unbelievable turn of events in less than an hour.

Soriano hit a home run in the eighth to give New York a 2-1 lead, and it seemed the Yankees were on their way to a huge celebration in New York, especially with Mariano Rivera on the mound in the ninth. Arizona must have gotten a hold of that Yankee magic, because shortly after Tony Womack doubled home the tying run, Luis Gonzalez singled home Jay Bell to give Arizona the series win.

Sure, it would have been great if the Yankees had won, the whole city would have turned out for the parade. A Yankee win would have symbolized a win for the city of New York. But the loss did not matter. The players were already heroes to New Yorkers, and they, in turn, are heroes to the rest of us. It all came together through the game of baseball and the exhilaration it brought us all. What a series! What a game! What a country!

senior athletic profile

Chris Lightner: Brotherly love propels him to victory



PHOTO BY PAIGE MILES

Chris Lightner broke the all-time Behrend records for goals and points in a career, which had stood for more than 20 years.

by Kate Levinsky Petrikis
assistant sports editor

Chris Lightner, Behrend soccer player, was recently named the Most Valuable Player in the AMCC Conference after finishing a very successful career at Behrend.

"I was very surprised to be awarded this honor," said Lightner. "There are many good players in this conference, and there are even better

players on my own team, who also deserved this award."

The Lions had a number of players make the All-Conference team. The first team included Chris Lightner along with Chad Droz, Dan Falk, and Mark Steigerwald. The second team consisted of Travis Lightner and Jake Hordych. The honorable mention includes Andy McCormick, Andy Laver, and Mark Szcwyczkowski.

"I felt good hearing that I made the first team. I have made it my two

years prior to this, but coming back this year I thought I might have lost some skill or speed," said Lightner. "This makes me feel good about myself, and it shows that I have yet to lose my soccer skills. I am also very proud of the other players who made the teams, and I am very happy for my brother and his accomplishments."

This year, Lightner had his younger brother Travis, as a teammate for Behrend.

"Playing with my brother, Travis, is something that I have always wanted to do. It is fun," said Lightner. "He plays defense, so I have to go up against him all the time. He is a tough defender, but I usually win (just kidding). We play much harder when we go against each other, but, I am the older brother so I have to have the upper hand on him," said Chris.

"Chris is terrible when it comes to him versus me," said Travis. "I do not think I have ever lost when I have faced him. He is only second best compared to me."

"Do not believe anything my brother says," said Chris. "But, we seriously get along great together. We are together so much that people cannot understand how we never fight. I just see him as a great friend who I like to hang out with."

"He is one of my best friends," said Travis.

Not only does Chris win awards, but he breaks records, too. Lightner broke the record for goals with 28 in a career in his last regular season game at Buffalo State. The record had stood since 1971.

"I had to score two goals to beat the record and I was lucky enough to do so," said Lightner. "This was also very special for me because my parents, uncle, and cousins, came to see the game. Especially because, my Dad has done so much for me."

"I have seen the path he has taken in life, and I would like to follow his path and be as happy in my life and in my family. The reason they were there was to see if I could break the record. I really did not think I would ever be able to break that record. I have been very lucky with soccer."

Maybe he calls it "luck", but others would call it talent.

Not only did Lightner break that record, he recently broke the career points record this season with 62, which had stood since 1978.

"I broke the record against Thiel in my last home game ever," said Lightner. "It was very exciting. I

knew I was close to breaking it, but I did not know I was that close. It was especially nice because it was senior night, and both of my parents were there to watch the game."

"The goal was not anything special, and I have to thank Ryan Ohl for not kicking it in. I shot it and it was somewhat blocked and was rolling slowly toward the goal and he let it go so I could score. It was very nice of him, and pretty funny at the same time."

According to Ohl, he did not even know it was the record-breaking goal.

"I just did not want to 'steal' the goal on Senior Night," said Ohl. "I'm really glad Chris broke the record, he's a tremendous soccer player and a great teammate."

"While playing for Behrend, my coaches have given me self confidence, and have taught me a lot of 'off the field knowledge,'" said Lightner. "Classes always come first, because that is why I am in school. However, soccer is a close second."

Soccer kept Lightner busy with practices everyday at 3:15 unless there was a game.

"Every game, I just try to joke around with the other guys. As long as I am having fun, then I am feel I am playing well," said Lightner. "I do not need to get pumped up to play."

In his spare time, Lightner likes to spend the weeknights at home with his Mom and Dad. But, weekends are another story.

"I love to go out to the bars, or to parties with my friends," said Lightner.

Lightner's college milestones include winning the AMCC championship in 1997 and 1999. Lightner's freshman year in 1997 was the first year Behrend ever won the AMCC championship, which was against Frostburg.

"It was a very close game, but it was so nice to go play as the No. 3 seed and win," said Lightner.

The win made Behrend and Frostburg rivals. The second year Lightner played was in 1999, which ended up being the second year Behrend won the conference crown.

"It was much the same as 1997. We traveled to Frostburg, and were the underdogs," said Lightner. "The final was against Frostburg and we won by a goal."

Lightner started playing indoor soccer when he was 4 years old. He played forward, who tries to score or to set up other players on the team for shooting opportunities. Lightner