

## Calendar of Events

### Behrend Athletic Events

#### Saturday

Men's and Women's Swimming  
Alfred  
Junker Center  
1 p.m.

Women's Basketball  
Frostburg  
Junker Center  
2 p.m.

Men's Basketball  
Frostburg  
Junker Center  
4 p.m.

#### Monday

Women's Basketball  
Washington & Jefferson  
Junker Center  
7 p.m.

#### Wednesday

Men's Basketball  
Fredonia  
Junker Center  
7:30 p.m.

#### Thursday

Women's Basketball  
Fredonia  
Junker Center  
7 p.m.

Friday, Jan. 18  
Men's and Women's Swimming  
@ Grove City/Mt. Union  
6 p.m.

## Intramurals Schedule

Friday, Jan. 18  
3-Point Shootout

Friday, Jan. 25  
Intramural Ping Pong:  
Men's and Women's  
Singles, Men's, Women's,  
and Coed Doubles

100 Mile Club

Friday, Feb. 1  
Arena Football: Men's and  
Women's

#### Aerobics Classes

Tae-Robics  
Mondays and Wednesdays, 7 - 8 p.m.  
Step & Pump  
Tuesdays and Thursdays,  
7 - 8 p.m.  
Classes begin Monday,  
Jan. 21  
\$1/ class, \$20/ semester

All entries must be at the  
intramural office  
by 4 p.m.  
on the scheduled date

# Lions pick up steam heading into conference



PHOTO BY JEFF HANKEY / BEHREND BEACON  
Junior Steve Merrill dribbles around his Lake Erie opponent.

by Zoe Rose  
staff writer

The Penn State Behrend men's basketball team heads into the second half of its season energized after posting three consecutive wins and a 2-1 conference mark. The Lions opened 2002 with a 77-67 home win against the Westminster Titans on Saturday, and then handily defeated Lake Erie 70-56 on Wednesday to increase their record to 8-5.

The Lions took a 39-27 halftime lead into the second half against Lake Erie, and then coasted in the second half in front of 242 fans at the Junker Center. Fourteen different players played against the Storm. The Lions shot 50.9 percent from the floor, including 57.7 in the first half. The Lion defense limited the Storm to a 31.8 shooting

percentage.

Sophomore James Curren took advantage of Behrend's height advantage, going 13-of-16 from the field and 3-of-4 from the free throw line for 29 points. Curren, during his all-star night, also grabbed eight rebounds. Sophomore Dave Hairston added 12 rebounds and 14 points, while sophomore Casey Ponsoll contributed nine points.

Never trailing throughout the entire game, the Lions pulled out to a 17-8 lead against the Titans with a little more than 12 minutes left to go in the half. With strong inside play, the biggest lead of the half was at the five-minute mark with a 13-point cushion 31-18. The Titans slashed the lead to seven, 39-32, at the end of the half.

Coming off the bench, Hairston displayed excellent play as he posted team-high totals with 19

points and 13 rebounds. Excluding Hairston, three Lions scored in double figures, led by senior Matt Keith with 14 points in just 19 minutes of action. Other fine performances for Behrend included Steve Merrill's 13 points, seven rebounds, and five assists, and Ponsoll's 12 points and three rebounds.

"The bench has played very well, Jeff Lane, David, Marty, Matt, Joe Lucas, all have been terrific," said coach Dave Niland. "[There] is little difference between the group that starts and the bench."

The Lions hit 16 of 28 field goals in the first half (57.1 percent) compared to the Titans' 13 of 28 (46.4 percent). Behrend improved its shooting in the second half, hitting 15 of 25 (60.0 percent) while the Titans made 14 of 36 (38.9 percent). The Behrend squad was dominant on the boards, outrebounding Westminster 40-26.

"We have been rebounding well. It is like defense, much of it is effort and desire," said Niland.

Freshman guard Tom Lulich has started the past three games, becoming a vital part of the Behrend team. Against Westminster, he grabbed four rebounds and five points. Previously against Wilmington, he had eight points and two boards and scored two points against Lake Erie.

Taking it easy over winter break was not part of the hectic Lions' schedule as they faced their first two conference games against Pitt-Bradford and a televised game against Penn State Altoona. After a 61-49 loss at Pitt-Bradford on Dec. 5 dropped the Lions to 4-3, Behrend out-hustled Altoona to pull away with a 80-45 win at home

on Dec 8.

Curren had 19 points, Hairston grabbed nine rebounds, and Merrill had five assists, which were all game highs. Merrill and Keith snatched two steals each, and Curren and Hairston each had one block.

Two losses in a row sank the Lions to 5-5, losing by six at Thiel 58-52 Dec. 17 and a close one against Waynesburg on Dec. 29 in the first round of the Wilmington Tournament 68-67. Merrill dominated the boards, hitting for 23

points, four assists, and snatching one steal to push the Lions out of their slump in a 71-66 win in overtime against the tournament's hosts.

"We are improving a great deal, [and] we have shot the ball well the last three games," said Niland. "Hopefully that will continue."

The Lions will take on Frostburg in another conference game on Saturday at 4 p.m. at home. On Wednesday, the Lions play a non-conference game against Fredonia at 7:30 p.m. at the Junker Center.



PHOTO BY JEFF HANKEY / BEHREND BEACON  
Sophomore James Curren goes up for two of his 29 points against Lake Erie on Wednesday.

## BCS - Buffoonery Calculation System

That loud 'gulp' sound you heard on Jan. 3 was not from the millions of people swallowing their potato chips and pop during the Miami-Nebraska game. It was the BCS realizing the country would be screaming, "Off with their heads!" - without the guillotine.

Why would anyone be mad at the BCS? Oh, maybe because its system is so screwed up that the two games that had implications or the top spots in the country



Personal foul  
Mike Bello

were both blowouts. Miami just dominated Nebraska 37-14, after the Hurricanes coasted in the second half, and Oregon absolutely manhandled Colorado 38-16, albeit a very surprising outcome.

Still, the flip-flop of several top teams during the season magnified 10 times over the flaws in the BCS. There was really no clear-cut No. 2 team in the nation, since each had at least one loss (several times to each other). Colorado, Nebraska, Oregon, Tennessee, Texas, and Florida all could have laid claims to the No. 2 spot. Unfortunately for the BCS, it picked the team that definitely did not belong there.

Speaking of picking the number two team, just who does decide the BCS standards? When the rankings went by the AP and ESPN/USA Today polls, everyone knew who was doing the voting. That's why the system was changed, because many writers always gave credit to Nebraska, Florida State, Florida, and Miami - and neglected schools like Penn State ('95 Rose Bowl, anyone?)

But now, the people behind the BCS live in some far-off fairytale land - which makes sense since

they seem to have no idea what is going on. It is time they rethink what they rely upon, because the ouiji board is definitely giving the wrong messages. Or maybe a better solution for the BCS would be to rethink the ways it ranks the teams.

The BCS uses several factors to determine the final rankings. One is number of losses, which makes sense, since a team with no losses is better than a team with one. It also uses the average of the AP/ESPN polls, which doesn't mean much since they are almost identical. After that, however, is when the rankings get blurry.

Computer rankings are factored in by taking the average of six of eight other rankings (minus the extremes). How those rankings are determined is beyond anyone's knowledge. When they say computer rankings, I'm thinking of some big mathematical calculation. I could have done the computer rankings on a scrap piece of paper.

The last two factors used are schedule ranking and quality win component. The quality win component is a joke because it rewards teams that are lucky enough to play against other teams ranked in the BCS top 15. Illinois, the only Big Ten team in the top 15, really got the shaft on this one, only because no other Big Ten team was strong enough to compete with them. Does that make Illinois a worse team than say Florida, which had two losses (to Illinois' one) but received points because they played top 15 teams?

Finally we come to the stupidest idea of all, the strength of schedule. It takes the cumulative won-loss records of a team's opponents and opponent's opponents. Huh? Anyway, this ranking is messed up because it rewards teams that have played good teams while other teams (Illinois) are penalized for having a weak

conference. What's worse is that the rankings don't say if they just take the opponent's record before they played against a top 15 team or if the rankings include an opponent's record all the way through the end of the year. The BCS, as normal, keeps hush about how its rankings work.

This is what happened with Miami. The Hurricanes whooped on Penn State the first game of the year, and the Lions started off the season 0-4. Therefore, Miami was gaining points (the team with the lowest number of points is No. 1) because Penn State's record was getting worse. Then, when Penn State improved during the season, Miami lost points because PSU's record was improving.

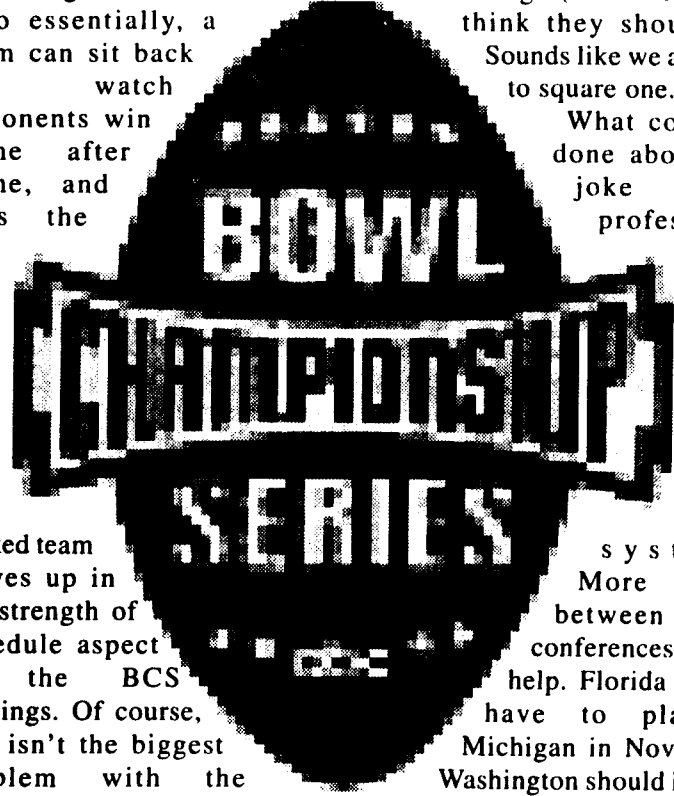
So essentially, a team can sit back and watch opponents win game after game, and thus the

already down eight points from the top spot), the less the above three rankings factor in.

Throw in the computer rankings, which practically mirror the poll rankings, and the No. 1 team is practically guaranteed the title, no matter how it ranks in the other categories (the more important ones). Miami knows this all too well. They were the worst of the top 15 teams in the quality wins department, in the middle of the pack in the strength schedule, and their zero losses don't matter much when other teams had one loss (and thus one point).

So pretty much Miami was No. 1 because the poll people and the people who do the computer rankings (who are they?) think they should be. Sounds like we are back to square one.

What could be done about this joke of a professional



ranked team moves up in the strength of schedule aspect of the BCS rankings. Of course, that isn't the biggest problem with the rankings. What irritates many is that the AP/ESPN polls, which created the havoc before, are relied upon too heavily, and thus we have not gotten away from the troubles of pre-BCS.

The strength of schedule rankings, the loss column, and the quality wins rankings together usually equal the points from the polls. As teams get farther down in the ESPN/AP polls (a team ranked ninth is

system? More games between the conferences would help. Florida should have to play at Michigan in November. Washington should have to lock horns with Oklahoma, and LSU should have to battle it out with Virginia Tech. This way, the conferences can be compared when the top teams play each other.

But, I guess we shouldn't ask too much from the rankers of college football. They haven't gotten it right for a long time, and aren't likely to anytime soon. Oh, well, at least we have something to debate about come Christmas.

### Housing and Food Service Athlete of the Week

PENNSTATE  
Erie

Erin Phillips



Phillips, a senior from McDowell High School, scored 23 points and grabbed 10 rebounds in both games at the Sun Desert Classic in Las Vegas on Dec. 18 and 19. Phillips then added 15 points and nine rebounds against Buffalo State on Saturday, and followed that up with a 20-point night against Lake Erie on Wednesday.

Phillips currently has 1,313 career points, and is chasing Michele Madison's all-time record of 1,409. Next up for the Lions (2-1, 5-8) is a home game against Frostburg Saturday at 2 p.m.