

Swim teams prove there's no sophomore slump

by Kate Levdansky Petrikis assistant sports editor

At the Grove City Invitational last week-end, the women placed sixth out of 10 teams, and the men placed seventh out of 11 teams.

"There was some extremely fast swimming done on our part, along with the other schools in the swim meet," said coach Josh Heynes. "We did what we wanted to, and that was to swim fast and to turn some heads."

Heynes was very satisfied with the results, both individually and as a team.

"The team went above and beyond what they thought they could do for only a second year team," said Heynes.

Heynes was especially proud of the ladies' efforts. The Lions only had eight women, but made a big statement by tying a team that out numbered them.

"These athletes had to go through a lot this year, and sacrifices were made and now they see the results," said Heynes. "So, hopefully next year they will want to work even harder. I was impressed with everyone's times and efforts."

Christine Williams finished in fourth in the 200 backstroke with a time of 2:16.22, exactly one second behind the first-place finisher. Williams, along with Samantha Cibula, Hollie Stash, and Tara Braden, finished fifth in the 400 freestyle relay (3:54.23), the 200 medley relay (2:00.28), and the 800 freestyle relay (8:40.23).



PHOTO BY KEVIN FALLON / BEHREND BEACON

Freshman Christine Williams finished in fourth place in the 200 backstroke at the Grove City Invitational, one second behind the first-place finisher.

Behrend didn't get to play during spring break last year, when the Lions went 5-8 overall. This year, the team doesn't have to jump into the conference season without playing any outdoor matches.

In the overall score, the Behrend men were only behind Washington and Jefferson by 16 points.

"This shows great improvement, given that earlier this year W&J won 128-89. Heynes said. "We hit our taper well and succeeded in our goals." In the AMCC Classic, the women tied for first with Frostburg, and the men took second, only 20 points behind Frostburg. This was a huge step above last year,

when Behrend lost by more than 100 points to Frostburg, and lost to Penn State Altoona, as well. Twenty-five new team records were set. Plus, 29 new AMCC Classic Meet records were set, with Behrend owning 13 of them. Williams tied for most points and shared the AMCC most valuable player award with Kim Love from Altoona.

Lucas Dushac took home third, the highest Behrend score in the meet, in the 200 breaststroke with a time of 2:11.64. He was sixth in the 100 (1:00.39). Casey Doody finished the 100 backstroke with a time of 54.20, good for seventh. He also finished seventh in the 200 backstroke (2:00.43).

The ECAC Championships take place Thursday and Friday. Doody qualified in the 100 and 200 backstroke. Plus, Dushac qualified in the 100 and 200 breaststroke.

"We just missed others qualifying by just a few tenths and hundredths of a second. But, it is great to have two people get their foot in the door," said Heynes. "Next year, we will get more, and the year after that even more. My expectations are not high. I do not want to put pressure on them to swim fast. I want them to have fun, and see how fast they will go by making the atmosphere more relaxed for them."

Doody and Dushac only have a couple more days to rest focus on their events. They will compete against stiff competition, given that this meet has Division I, II, and III swimmers trying to qualify for NCAAs.



PHOTO BY KEVIN FALLON / BEHREND BEACON

Junior Ben Atkins was one of several contributors to the men's seventh-place finish at the Grove City Invitational. The men finished second in the AMCC, 20 points behind Frostburg.

"It will be interesting to see where these two sit among the top swimmers from other schools," said Heynes.

The NCAA women's and men's championships will be held March 14-16, and March 21-23.

Tennis team ready for spring break, Hilton Head style

by Mike Bello sports editor

While most college students will spend their spring breaks in Cancun or somewhere else sunny and warm, the men's tennis team will be at Hilton Head, S.C. for a chance to improve its game outside. On Monday, Behrend begins play against Winona State. The Lions also play Belmont Abbey on Tuesday and Hiram on Friday at one of the country's most popular tennis destinations. "Hilton Head is where the team can focus totally on tennis and forget about school and

exams," said senior Sundeep Bhatia. "The main focus is to work a lot on each person's game during our stay there."

The Lions look to improve at Hilton Head, as the conference season starts March 16, the first game the Lions play after spring break. Behrend didn't get to play during spring break last year, when the Lions went 5-8 overall. This year, the team doesn't have to jump into the conference season without playing any outdoor matches.

"Hilton Head, like all these current matches before spring break, is for experience," said senior Steve Broussard. "So when we start

playing conference matches, the bugs will be gone.

"Every practice we attend, we get better. Every match we play in, we get better," added Broussard.

The men's tennis team went up against another difficult opponent Saturday, with much the same results as Behrend's first two matches of the season. Against Ohio powerhouse Baldwin-Wallace in the final tune-up before their Hilton Head trip, the Lions were shut down 8-1. The lone match win came in Behrend's opening doubles play. Dave Cooper and Mike Oey began things

in singles play with back-to-back losses, 6-0, 6-0 for Cooper and 6-3, 6-3 for Oey. Jacob Hillman and Sheel Galliara then dropped 6-2 and 6-1 decisions before Jacob Cornwell (6-0, 6-0) and Broussard (6-0, 6-1) dropped the final two singles matches at River Oaks Country Club.

Cooper and Oey began doubles play with an 8-6 win over Ward Crane and Mike Wagner; Behrend's only match play win this season. Hillman/Galliara and Broussard/Cornwell both dropped their matches 8-1 against Baldwin-Wallace (2-0). The Yellow Jackets play at Hilton Head beginning March

10. "The loss definitely is a motivation factor because the team knows where they can perform and we did reach that level during our last game," said Bhatia. "So now we are out to show what we really are made of by practicing real hard and bringing about better results."

"I think we need work in doubles, especially in communication and placement," said Cornwell. "Our singles can be strong but we need to stay focused on consistency and placement of our shots."

THE BEACON SCOREBOARD

THE BEHREND SPORTS SCENE

Table with columns for Women's Basketball, Men's Basketball, Women's Basketball Stats, Men's Basketball Stats, and President Cup Standings.

THE NATIONAL SPORTS ARENA

Large table with multiple columns for National Basketball Association, Division I College Basketball, and National Hockey League statistics.