



Softball
The Lions are getting their money's worth out of the new softball field. How have Brandi Polinick, left, and the rest of the team played during that time? Turn to page 4B for this week's recap.

Section B Sports

Mike Bello, Sports Editor

Baseball
The snow is gone, and the Lions are ready for the meat of their AMCC season. Find out how well the baseball team did this past week on Page 2B.



Calendar of Events

Behrend Athletic Events

Friday
Men's Tennis
Alfred, 3:30 p.m.
Behrend Tennis Courts

Saturday
Men's Tennis
Behrend Invitational
Behrend Tennis Courts
vs. Alfred, Thiel, Frostburg
9 a.m., 11 a.m., 1 p.m.
(Round Robin)

Men's and Women's Track and Field @ Case Western Reserve Invitational, 9 a.m.

Women's Water Polo @ Indiana Bloomington Tournament, vs. Mercyhurst 12:45 p.m. vs. Gannon, 5:45 p.m.

Men's Baseball
Lake Erie (DH)
Behrend Baseball Field, 1 p.m.

Women's Softball
Lake Erie (DH)
Behrend Softball Field, 1 p.m.

Sunday
Men's Tennis
Frostburg/Lake Erie
Behrend Tennis Courts, 9 a.m.

Men's and Women's Track and Field @ Case Western Reserve Invitational 9 a.m.

Women's Water Polo @ Indiana Bloomington Tournament vs. Washington & Jefferson, 10:45 a.m. vs. Indiana, 2:30 p.m.

Men's Baseball
@ Case Western Reserve (DH)
1 p.m.

Monday
Men's Baseball
Pitt-Greensburg (DH)
Behrend Baseball Field, 1 p.m.

Women's Softball
Frostburg (DH)
Behrend Softball Field, 1 p.m.

Wednesday
Men's Golf
@ Washington @ Jefferson @ Lone Pine Golf Club, 1 p.m.

Women's Softball
@ Thiel (DH)
3 p.m.

Men's Tennis
Fredonia, 3:30 p.m.
Behrend Tennis Courts

Thursday
Men's Baseball
La Roche (DH)
Behrend Baseball Field, 1 p.m.

Women's Softball
@ Pitt-Bradford (DH)
3 p.m.

Friday, April 12
Men's Tennis
@ Pitt-Greensburg
4 p.m.

Women's Water Polo
@ Grove City Invitational
TBA

Intramurals Schedule

Friday
Intramural Badminton: Men's, and Women's; Men's, Women's and Coed Doubles - \$3 - Teams must pick Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday games.

Friday, April 12
Team Triathlon: Three persons to a team, each perform one of three exercises - swimming, biking, and running

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

Lions prove themselves at UP

by Scott Soltis
staff writer

Anyone who said that the Penn State Behrend track and field team might be intimidated competing against Division I athletes was silenced last Saturday when the team traveled to the Jim Thorpe Invitational at University Park.

The team excelled alongside some very skilled competition, qualifying six athletes for the ECAC championships. This was the very first outdoor meet due to cancellations, and the team took advantage of the opportunity.

The team faced competition from Penn State University Park, Wheeling Jesuit (which won the West Virginia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Championships last year), and St. Francis (which won its fifth straight Indoor Northeast Conference title this year).

Behrend's Jessica Sarver won the women's 1500 at UP. She also qualified for the ECACs with her time of 4:57.10. Not only did she win the race, she won it convincingly, beating second place finisher Kate Curran (UP) by 10 seconds. In addition to winning the race and qualifying for ECACs, Sarver also established a new school record in the event.

Sarver went into her races with a chip on her shoulder.

"I felt going there I had something to prove, like just because I go to a Division III school, there's no reason why I shouldn't be as good as those girls," said Sarver. She proved to the rest of the competition that not only was she as good as those girls, but better than the other 1500 runners.

Lynn Herrmann also had an outstanding day for the women's team, as the lone senior qualified for the ECACs in the javelin. She



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Jessica Sarver, left, Jessica Knapp, third from right, Suzie Szafran, second from right, and Claire Manelick, right compete in the 800 in the Jim Thorpe Invitational at University Park last Saturday. Sarver took first place in the 1500 against fierce Division I competition.

captured third place in the event with a throw of 109-2.

On the men's side, there were four ECAC qualifiers and many other outstanding performances. Isaiah Meek had a busy day, qualifying in one event and setting new school records in two. In the 110 hurdles, Meek finished with a time of 15.28 to qualify for the ECACs and broke the previous school record. Meek finished in third place in the event behind two talented UP runners. In the 400 hurdles, Meek set a new school record with a time of 58.81.

Freshman phenom Mike Barlett continued his record-breaking ways into the outdoor season. Barlett finished fifth in the 800 with an impressive time of 2:00.31. This was a full second below the previous school record.

Dave Ober also carried a successful indoor season into the outdoor campaign. Ober wasted no time qualifying for the ECACs, as the senior from Pittsburgh finished the 400 with a time of 50.95.

Not only did the team finish strong

in the track events, but it excelled in the field events as well. In the high jump, Jay Davids took fourth, clearing 6-4 and qualifying for ECACs. To put this height into perspective, Davids could have cleared NBA star Jason Kidd or Penguins legend Mario Lemieux (both stand 6-4).

Pole vaulter Donnie Hackworth qualified for the outdoor championships by clearing 13-7. This leap was good for fourth place and also broke the old school record of 13-6 set in 1999.

After qualifying for the ECACs, Ober was awed by the team's overall performance.

"I thought that the meet was a great experience for all of us by seeing how we compare to some of the Division I schools that we were up against," said Ober. "It was great to qualify so many people for ECACs in the first meet of the season. It was a great way to start off the outdoor season."

Coach Dave Cooper echoed the sentiment of his players.

"The Behrend athletes took a

number of places that we hadn't really even hoped for, but more importantly we had great performances," he said. In addition to the six ECAC qualifiers and five new records set, 12 other athletes finished in the top six in their events.

The Jim Thorpe Invitational was an event that will not soon be forgotten. Behrend, the underdog going in, faced nearly insurmountable odds but instead of faltering, the team excelled. The fact that Sarver won her race and many other Behrend athletes finished mere seconds or inches behind Division I competitors illustrates to the players how far the team has come this year.

The Lions look to carry this momentum into the Case Western Reserve Invitational this weekend. The team had not competed in two weeks prior to UP last Saturday, and it was its first outdoor competition. The Lions are interested to see how well the team does now that it has warmed up.

Q & A: Who's Behind the Scenes?

Rob Wittman: Exercise your right to intramurals

by Kate Levinsky Petrikis
assistant sports editor

This is Rob Wittman's 11th year at Behrend as coordinator of intramural and recreational programs. For the past six years, he has also handled the athletic facility scheduling. He also was the assistant women's basketball coach from 1991 through spring 2001, which ended when the Junker Center opened March 12, 2001 and the facility duties became more involved. Wittman also teaches an ESACT class in the summer, as well as summer golf classes.

"Teaching is not part of the job description, but I do enjoy that aspect," said Wittman.

Prior to Behrend, Wittman was an assistant intramural director at University Park while in grad school, where he also coached high school basketball and worked in the Commonwealth Campus athletic office.

Beacon: How many programs do you have? What are the programs?

Wittman: We have about 17 intramural programs (flag football, arena football, soccer, softball, tennis, golf, bowling, billiards, ping pong, swimming, sand volleyball, 6v6 volleyball, 4v4 coed volleyball, cross country running, 5v5 basketball, 3v3 basketball), about 10 recreational activities (canoe trip, white water rafting, fantasy sports on the web, 3-point shootout, 2-ball shooting competition, team triathlon, 3v3 water basketball), the aerobics classes, and the 100-mile club. We also use Erie Hall as a recreation space where students can go down at certain times and play volleyball, kickball, or whiffleball.

Beacon: How many students participate in the program?

Wittman: I deal with percentages here, but first I would like to say that we try to offer fitness/recreational opportunities as well as the more com-



PHOTO BY MIKE BELLO / BEHREND BEACON

Rob Wittman has been the intramural coordinator for 11 years.

petitive intramural sports because that gives everyone a chance to get involved in something that interests them. Even with the intramural sports, we do your typical football, softball, and soccer, as well as ping pong, badminton, and bowling. Last year, 60 percent of all resident students participated in at least one activity and 65 percent of all freshman residents did the same.

Beacon: Are the games competitive? What are the criteria for determining competitiveness?

Wittman: Most of the intramural sports are competitive. Most students are there to win when they sign up for an IM sport. There are those that are there to have fun - and that, to me, is what it is all about, have fun, meet new people, and get some exercise. In some sports we have competitive and recreational leagues so those that are really into it compete against each other and those that are there for fun play against

those with the choice of recreational competitiveness. In any sport it is difficult to keep out the competitive nature. We do offer the pick-up volleyball, kickball, and whiffleball in Erie Hall where students can come down and just have some fun. No referees - just for fun.

Beacon: Does competitiveness lead to aggression, i.e. fights?

Wittman: Not necessarily, we keep that under control. Most teams are very good with sportsmanship. There are a few exceptions at times though.

Beacon: Are the games serious, or fun?

Wittman: They can be either depending on the teams involved. I would like to label most as serious fun. They want to win but have fun at the same time. It really does depend on the teams involved.

Beacon: Have any of your intramural players been recruited by other

Behrend coaches?

Wittman: We have had a few but 99.9 percent of our varsity coaches know who their athletes are through their recruiting process.

Beacon: What sport consumes most of your time as the administrator?

Wittman: All [are] about the same. Each tournament involves registration, making a schedule, a captains' and officials' meeting. Some of the one-day tournaments could be a little easier than those that go on for a few weeks.

Beacon: What sport costs the most to run? Why?

Wittman: The sports with officials, probably football with about three officials per game and four games running simultaneously. Also, football gets over 40 teams.

Beacon: Are intramurals a year-round program?

Wittman: We start two weeks into the fall semester and end the last week of class in the spring semester. We typically have something going on every Sunday through Thursday. We do have things scheduled on a few Saturdays, but never on Fridays because it is unsuccessful.

Beacon: Do you think the program is developing more?

Wittman: Yes, and we are really concentrating on the recreational and fitness aspects. We try to tweak things every year to make what we have better and also attempt to add new activities the students want. Student input is always welcome.

Beacon: Why should students participate?

Wittman: It is fun, you get to meet new people, and get some exercise.

Every week, the Beacon will engage in a little "ask and respond" with someone who doesn't make the headlines.

Water polo ready for Southern Tournament

by Kate Levinsky Petrikis
assistant sports editor

The Behrend water polo team is actively preparing for the Southern Tournament at Indiana University on Saturday and Sunday. Behrend opens play Saturday against Mercyhurst, and follows that up with a match against Gannon. The Lions will return on Sunday to face Washington & Jefferson and Indiana.

Practice has been scheduled as usual, with nothing added or subtracted in terms of time spent in the pool. The team has been concentrating on offense and conditioning.

"We have to be able to last the entire game in this huge pool," said coach Josh Heynes. "Offensively, we are trying two new plays, and defense has and will always be our strong point."

In order to have a successful tournament, Heynes said the team can't lose its focus. It has been two weeks since the Lions have played. The team has had some voluntary subtractions, but Heynes said the Lions will stay vigilant in their game-playing abilities.

"We can't assume anything for this tournament," said Heynes. "Even though we crushed Mercyhurst the first time, [it] does not mean it can or will happen again. The men's team did the same thing this past year, and we ended up losing to them when we should not [have]."

"The most important thing to learn from this tournament is that 30 meters by 25 yards all deep pool is the great equalizer," said Heynes. "Teams that are good in smaller pools tend to lose something in these large pools. Conditioning and good passing will be keys to any type of success."

Players to watch include offensive star Christine Williams and goalie Lauren Packer. In addition, Behrend needs strong performances from Tara Braden, Amanda Brown, and Hollie Stash. Heynes said the bench will see more minutes than usual, and will have to play with great intensity for any amount of time that it is in the pool.



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Christine Williams, top, and Hollie Stash, below, are two of the top players coach Josh Heynes will rely upon this weekend in the Indiana Tournament. The Lions take on Mercyhurst and Gannon on Saturday, plus Indiana and Washington & Jefferson on Sunday. The Lions defeated Indiana and Mercyhurst at the Behrend Invitational March 15 and 16.

