

Q & A: Who's Behind the Scenes?

Ryan Smith pursues a masters as baseball team pursues a championship



PHOTO BY MIKE BELLO / BEHREND BEACON

Ryan Smith, a standout on the diamond for Behrend a few years ago, was an all-AMCC pick two years in a row. Now he shares his baseball knowledge with the up-and-coming players.

by Kate Levdansky Petrikis
assistant sports editor

Ryan Smith, assistant baseball coach for the Penn State Behrend Lions, was a student assistant for the team in 1999-2000. Last year, Smith served Brockway High School as an assistant coach and also managed the DuBois Rockets in the Federation League. He also was an assistant baseball coach for Keystone Baseball Academy from 1998-2000.

Smith was a two-year standout for the team at Behrend. He led the Lions to a 49-24 record and the program's first-ever ECAC postseason appearance. Smith, a two-time All-AMCC selection, pitched and played first and third base for the Blue and White.

Smith earned his bachelor's of science degree in management in 1999. He is pursuing a masters of business administration degree at Behrend.

Beacon: How long have you been the assistant coach? How did you get

the job?

Smith: This is my second stint as assistant coach. I was a volunteer student assistant in 2000. This is my first year as the Graduate Assistant for the Lions. I applied for the position over the summer and I was privileged to have it offered to me.

Beacon: How do you juggle going for your graduate degree with baseball?

Smith: Since the bulk of our schedule is condensed into the end of the spring semester, juggling schoolwork and baseball only gets a little hectic at this point in our season. Just like anything else though, you have to prioritize your time and do the best you can in the classroom.

Beacon: What are the advantages of being the assistant coach, and not the coach? What are the disadvantages?

Smith: I don't feel that there are many advantages or disadvantages from being the assistant. We are a collective unit when it comes to

coaching. One advantage is I throw more batting practice, which is fine by me.

Beacon: Assuming you used to play baseball, do you ever wish you were a player and not the assistant coach?

Smith: The competitor in me will always [want] to be a player. As time goes on though, I really enjoy benefits of coaching. I love the opportunity to share the things that I have learned from the game and give back to our athletes and see them succeed.

Beacon: Who is your favorite major league team?

Smith: I would have to say the Pirates because they were close when I was growing up and I still follow them. Lately, though, my favorite team is anybody who is beating the Yankees. I am really pulling for Boston to win that division.

Beacon: What major league player you would like to have on your team the most, if you could?

Smith: I know he is retired but

having Mark McGwire on the team would be incredible. Nothing in major league baseball gave me more of a rush than the home run chase in 1998. I respected his character, his talent, and his professionalism throughout his career. He would definitely increase attendance at our home games. You know what they say - chicks dig the long ball.

Beacon: What major league player would you least like to have on your team, if you could?

Smith: Anyone who is not a team player and is in it for themselves. For example, someone like Carl Everett. He has all the talent in the world but can't fit into any team and what they are trying to accomplish. There is nothing more disturbing in baseball than an unhappy, overpriced player.

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

Track & field teams prevail at Westminster tournament

by Scott Soltis
staff writer

Momentum carried the track and field team into Westminster last weekend and the Behrend team prevailed at the meet.

The team qualified two more athletes for the ECAC championships and set three new school records.

The real highlight of the team's performance was when it captured four first places, six second places, four third places, five fourths, six fifths, and four sixth places. The team accounted for a total of 29 places on a cold day, not ideal for running.

There were nine teams at the competition, including Mount Union College, which Coach Dave Cooper described as a "perennial, national Division III power." Cooper was "pleased" with the team's performance, especially considering the low temperatures.

The team had several outstanding individual performances. On the women's side, Jessica Sarver followed up her win in the 1,500 at UP with another at Westminster.

Sarver broke her own school record in the event she won record by running a 4:56.38. Sarver also finished fourth in the 800.

For the men, Dave Ober had a successful day by winning the 400 with a time of 51.34. Ober also dashed his way to second place in the 200. Ober ran a time of 23.32 and came .79 seconds behind a Westminster runner.

Ober was also a member of the 4 x 400 relay A team that placed third. The B team captured fifth place.

There were also athletes who excelled in several events. Lindsey Schulte, Heather Efaw, Marlina McNutt, and Amanda Van Tassel each earned three places in three separate events. On an individual basis, Efaw took fourth in the 400 hurdles, McNutt finished fifth in the 200, and Schulte placed in the 200 and triple jump. In the 200, Schulte qualified for ECACs and set a new school record when she finished second with a time of 26.68.

All four runners also placed on relay teams. Efaw, McNutt, Schulte, and Van Tassel finished second in the

4 x 100 and set a new school record with a combined time of 52.31. In the 4 x 400 race, Efaw, McNutt, and Van Tassel were joined by Suzie Szafran to finish the race at 4:25.53 to capture third place. Szafran also placed in the 800.

Rounding out the women's effort were distance runner Jessica Knapp and thrower Lynn Herrmann. Knapp finished the 1500 in 5:17.16 for fifth place in the event. Herrmann threw the javelin 104-8 and took third.

The men had a strong platform among several athletes. Isiah Meek continued his success in the hurdles by capturing second and third in the 100 and 400, respectively. Accompanying Meek in the 110 was Dave Masilunas, who finished three spots behind Meek to take fifth.

Other track event placers for the men were Mike Barlett, second in the 800; Brian Wheeler, fourth in the 1500; and Steve Werner who took sixth in the grueling 10,000.

In the field aspect of the competition, the men shined. In the high jump, Jay Davids won the event by jumping 6-2. The Lions took first

and second in the pole vault with Don Hackworth clearing 13-0. Hackworth was followed closely by Steve Feder, who was able to clear 12-6 and take second.

The throwers displayed their power when Nick Peth qualified for the ECACs in the javelin. Peth threw 168-3 to capture fourth place. Nick Benkovich placed sixth in the event, but was unable to qualify for ECACs. Finally, Tom Ashcraft threw the discus 121-8 to also place sixth.

The team did well, especially considering the conditions and the amount of competition. Cooper is excited to see what the team will do this weekend.

"This week we compete in the Western Pa. Championships at Geneva College," said Cooper. "We look forward to a scored meet and also decent weather!"

The team looks for continued success in qualifying athletes for the ECACs and to come home victorious from their first scored meet this season.

Lions split with Frostburg, drop two to Thiel

by Zoë Rose
staff writer

Putting the pedal to the metal, the Penn State Behrend softball team has accepted overdue spring-like weather and accelerated to a 7-18 mark overall and a 5-1 conference record. Last Wednesday, the Lions faced a difficult Thiel team, losing 4-2 in the first game, followed by another close loss in the second, 3-2.

The Lions took on conference foe Frostburg on Monday and pulled out with a close loss in the first (8-6) before roaring back with a win in the second (8-0). The Blue and White then swept Lake Erie last Saturday with an impressive 12-0 win in the first game followed by an equally pleasing 13-2 score in the second.

Roberta Baker went 3-for-3 in the first game against Thiel with one RBI. Cheryl Peterson went 1-for-3 with a double and one RBI. Becky Corbin pitched six innings to record the loss, while Jennifer Miller pitched the last inning. In the second game, Erika Mack and Emily Woods contributed one RBI and Stephanie Covert threw for all seven innings.

"Thiel [was] a game for improvements like all games, in hitting and playing as a team," said Peterson. "It also [was] a confidence builder on our way to the AMCC Championship."

The Lions had their stamina tested as they headed into a competitive first game against the Frostburg Bobcats, dropping the first game in the Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference game. Miller pitched seven innings, al-

lowing seven earned runs and 15 hits in the loss. Peterson, Mack, Emily Allen, Kelly Woods, Jennifer Osborne, and Charity Marsh all contributed one RBI for the team.

In the second game, the Lions exploded for eight runs in the first inning and cruised to the 8-0 victory shortened to five innings due to the eight-run rule. Covert pitched all five innings and didn't allow any earned runs and only four hits to cruise to the win. Brandy Polinick and Marsh both got two RBIs

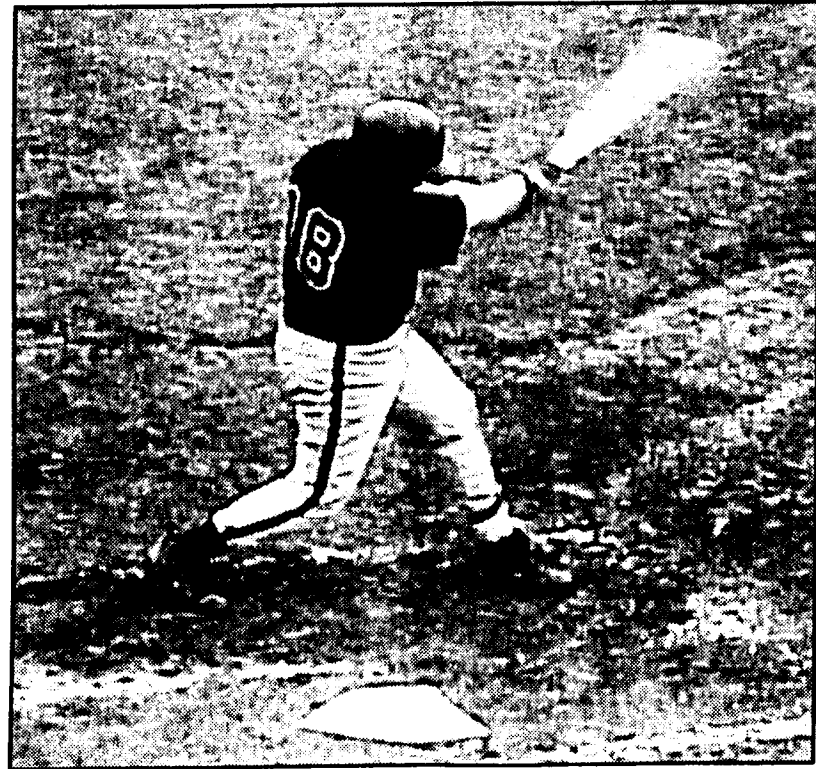


PHOTO BY MIKE BELLO / BEHREND BEACON

Junior catcher Cheryl Peterson takes a whack at a pitch Monday against Frostburg at the Behrend Softball Field.

lowing seven earned runs and 15 hits in the loss. Peterson, Mack, Emily Allen, Kelly Woods, Jennifer Osborne, and Charity Marsh all contributed one RBI for the team.

Against Lake Erie, the Lions pulled off some outstanding play as they roared past the Storm at the Behrend Softball Field. Several players brought in runs for the Blue and White, including Woods with four and Marsh with two in the first game. Peterson drove in three runs in the second, while Corbin and Roberta Baker each knocked in two.

After a loss to Fredonia the previous

week, the Blue and White needed a booster to pick up the season.

"Our attitudes as we go into a game always determine whether or not we will play well," said Corbin. "We were optimistic when we played Lake Erie, and we won both games."

Energized after the win, Cheryl Peterson knows the road to the AMCC championships is a dangerous one.

"We still play a lot of good teams before the tournament, but we can take all of them," said Peterson. "We are fighting for the AMCC championships, but so are six other teams."

The AMCCs aren't that far away and with that in mind, the players are concentrating on the tough conference games ahead.

"We just have to keep focused on the task at hand and take one game at a time and keep up on the positive attitude of the team and work on hitting as a team," said Osborne.

"We definitely have what it takes to make the AMCC Championships, as long as we keep our good attitudes and continue to play together," said Corbin.

The Lions played against Pitt-Bradford on Thursday but could not be reached before deadline. The Blue and White will stay on the road against La Roche on Saturday before returning home for games against Penn State Altoona on Sunday and Tuesday against Buffalo State. The Lions will play in the opening round of the AMCC Championships on Wednesday, at a site and time to be determined after all conference games are played.

SGA - Academic and Advising Committee

Committee Chair: Michelle Armstrong

Do you have "issues" with advising on this campus?

Would you like a better insight into classes that you are thinking of taking?

Well, guess what, SGA is here to help. The Academic and Advising Committee is currently working with Penn State's advising website to give you a look at former, and in some cases current, syllabi and course descriptions. This will also give you a look at different advising topics that may help you in your college career such as study abroad, transferring schools, choosing a major, dropping courses, and scheduling courses.

The site can be found at:

<http://www.psu.edu/advising>

All schools here at Behrend are currently receiving requests to add their own syllabi to this site for the use of students who could benefit from this being available. The committee feels that this site is currently an untapped resource with unlimited potential for giving aid to not only Behrend students, but to students throughout Penn State. A pioneer at this campus, the School of Business has recently developed a site for Behrend students to look at business courses that are offered right on their homepage:

<http://www.pserie.psu.edu/schbus/busindx.htm>

We hope that with the growing use of these two sites, you, the students, can make more informed decisions on what classes to take and when to take them. If you have any questions, input, or would like to attend one of the committee meetings, please contact Michelle (mea143@psu.edu) Doug (djb110@psu.edu), Rob (rnc193@psu.edu), or Edalia (exg179@psu.edu).

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Baseball rolls to AMCC first place

runs. Jason Shaffer picked up the win in relief for Brian Pifer, pitching 2 1/3 innings and giving up no runs on two hits. Chuck Sevin pitched the last inning for the save. In the second game, Kechisen struck out seven, while Luke Bundy went 2-for-3 with three RBIs. Lepionka added three more hits in game two.

A day earlier, the Lions hosted Lake Erie and exploded for 36 runs in winning 12-1 and 24-0. In game one, Kevin Dubyak, Matt Szymanski, and Shaffer combined

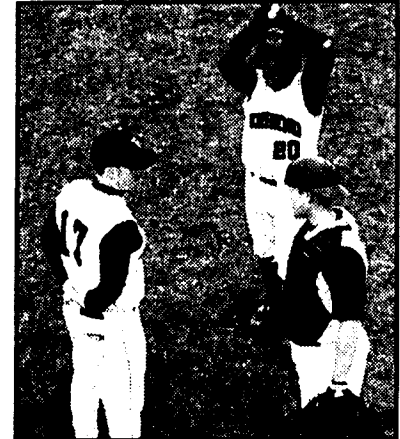


PHOTO BY MIKE BELLO / BEHREND BEACON

Coach Paul Benim, left, Chris Shearer, bottom right, and Luke Bundy, top, discuss some baseball strategy during the second game against Pitt-Greensburg on Monday.

to give up two hits and strike out seven. Boyle went 3-for-3 with two runs and two RBIs to lead the attack for Behrend. Mike Coutts scored three runs and knocked in two, while Canzano added three RBIs.

In game two, the Lions scored seven runs in both the first and second innings on the way to their biggest offensive output of the season. Canzano socked a pair of doubles and drove in four while scoring three. Tim Stafford, Jason Karas, and Kurt Himrod each scored three runs, while Karas, Coutts, Sevin, and Tyler Wiand each plated two runners.

Bill Zore and Bob Palivoda combined to give up one hit while striking out 13. Behrend as a team batted .419 in the game.

"I think the team has been doing a good job at realizing that we are beatable every game we step on the field," said Boyle. "I don't know about the rest of the team, but for me personally, the thought of how we played last year is like a poison I cannot rid myself of. It shows that no matter how good you think you are, in reality you are only as good as you perform on the field."

After the recent offensive explosion, the Lions have proven to the rest of the league just how good they can be.