

Women's soccer team looking for fuel to gain speed

by Kevin Fiorenzo
staff writer

The Behrend women's soccer team has hit a rough patch. The Lions were shut out in Brockport 4-0 on Saturday and then lost on Wednesday at home to Wooster by the same score, dropping their record to a disappointing 3-5.

The Behrend women play a very tough non-conference schedule and SUNY Brockport was no exception.

"The women competed very well and played hard but Brockport was just the better team," said coach Dan Perritano.

In the end, the Lions were just not quick and athletic enough to keep up with their opponents.

In terms of passing, we just need to be quicker," sophomore Carrie Smock said.

The women had high hopes that their game on Wednesday against undefeated Wooster would give them a chance to turn it around.

That was not meant to be. Once again the Lions competed and held the talented Wooster team to only one goal in the first half.

In the second half, though, the Wooster squad exploded for three unanswered goals. Afterwards the girls were having a tough time coming up with some reasons for the scoring drought.

"I really don't know what our problem is. Maybe we need to change the offense a bit," said sophomore Maria Gahagen.

Whatever the problem is, the Lions know they will have to fix it fast as they are faced with another tough non-conference game against Carnegie Mellon on Friday.

"They're a really good team. They beat us in overtime last year, so we're looking to bounce back with that one," said Gahagen.

The season is still young, though. It hasn't yet reached the halfway point and conference play has yet to begin for the squad. The Lions begin conference play on Wednesday against Pitt-



Natasha Edrington dribbles past a Wooster defender.

PHOTO BY JEFF HANKEY

Bradford. Freshman Stephanie Bowen said, "I feel like every game we are improving and I think we have a definite shot to make NCAAs."

Communication is going to be a key because with only six upperclassmen on the team, the returnees will need to help the new players along the way. The returning players don't see that as a problem, though.

"The team chemistry is very good. We all get along really well," says Smock.

The women know that there is room for improvement, though.

"We've got to be quicker, moving from the defense to the forwards," said Bowen.

Along with their speed of play, the team is going to have to have a lot of intensity to play well.

"To win our games, we are going to have to play at a very high level," said Perritano. Although, the last few games have had their bumps, the women and their coach remain optimistic. Everyone gets along very well and works well together.

"Everyone has their own individual skills, but we all really bond well together," said Bowen.

Senior Profile: Brian Wheeler

by Jen Henderson
associate editor

According to Wheeler the great benefits of the sport are "time management and physical fitness." He thinks that running actually is helping his school work too.

Brian Wheeler transferred to Penn State Behrend last year after first attending University Park. He is a Computer Engineer major and can't think of anything else he'd rather work this hard for.

He began running cross country this year and joining the team has been a very rewarding experience for him.

"There is a special camaraderie between the cross country runners because we all have the same event," Wheeler said.

After starting out at University Park, Wheeler realized he needed a change.

"After a few years of less than stellar academic performance, I transferred and got my act together. Behrend is challenging, but more personable. I liked the switch."

Wheeler did not join cross country or track while at University Park, but last semester he did run track here, where he performed above average. He was part of the team that ran the 4x800 event and set a new Behrend best with a time of 8:09.56. When asked why he didn't run for a college team before he stated, "I never ran there, but some of my high school teammates did run there. I mostly ran from Pollock Halls to the Electrical Engineering Building east to get my homework in by five o'clock."

He actually did run in high school when in ninth grade the coach approached him and told him he should run distance. He then began to run cross country during his junior year in high school.

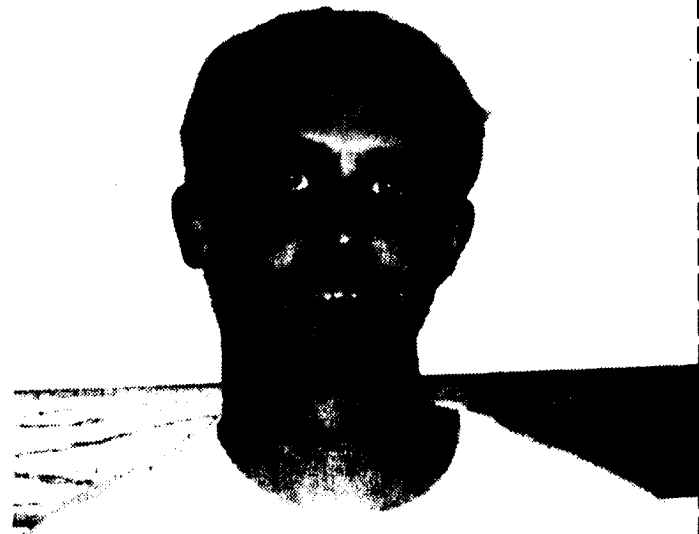
"I didn't think I would have the time to run cross country last year, so I didn't. When I ran track I realized that I actually did better in school and had time to run. The physical fitness aspect has made me the beefcake I am today."

The highlight in his time here at Behrend occurred last fall when he received a 3.42 GPA.

"That was the highest I ever received in college while taking my hardest classes and finding my way into the Behrend track and field record book".

Wheeler isn't always running. "I'm trying to maximize my time with friends and make as many new ones as I can. Unfortunately, it took me five years to get the hang of college and I'll have to leave when I graduate next spring."

When asked about the team's chance heading into the Allegheny Invitational he said, "Definitely! Most of the guys are healthy and we've all been working our hardest at practice."



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vs.

College of Wooster, 5 PM
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WOMEN'S SOCCER

vs.

Carnegie Mellon University, 3 PM
Friday, September 20th
Behrend Fields
Drawings for FREE Max & Erma's Gift Certificates

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vs. Grove City College, 10 AM
and Washington and Jefferson College, 1 PM

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