

Volleyball team trying to bounce back from tough loss

by Dan Rehmeier
staff writer

Having already crushed La Roche this season, 3-0, the women of the Penn State Erie volleyball team assumed the rematch would be a lock.

"We came out with a quick, well-played, three-game win earlier this year which set the tone lighter for our game Wednesday night," said Ashley Ordy, a sophomore.

However, the Lions did not have the easy game they had anticipated, losing 3-1.

The Lions, coming off a successful season, are a key target throughout the conference. Wednesday night's game was held in La Roche before a large student body eager to see a win for the home team.

The Redhawks came out with key passing, remarkable digs, and high percentage kills against the Lions. After losing two games in a row, the Lions knew they had an improved La Roche team on their hands.

"Danielle (Bemis, the Lions' captain) really began to motivate and push for us to work harder after the first two games," said Ordy after the game. "We just weren't clicking as a team and it could be seen in our passing and team play". Head coach Kelly Diehl spoke of the team's overconfidence.

"We came to La Roche with nothing but ease and victory on our minds. None of us were ready for the 100 percent better (way) La Roche played Wednesday night," said Diehl.

Despite a disappointing loss, Diehl can see a light at the end of the tunnel. "Our two freshmen have just been

outstanding, not only to the teams' performance, but also in the aspect of community throughout the team."

Even with morale down on Wednesday night, freshman Trisha Adams left the court with an astounding 17 kills and only one error.

The Lions hope to bounce back from their disappointment this weekend. The Lions will take on Penn State Altoona in a grudge match that goes far back.

Altoona was the only team to beat Behrend and claimed home court advantage for the AMCC championship. "This will be the first time playing Altoona this season," said Ordy. "This upcoming game against Altoona and our game against Frostburg are what the entire season comes down to."

Frostburg, which has dominated the division this year with a 12-2 record, will host the Lions Saturday. "We can't have any mistakes. We must come into the games against Altoona and Frostburg with poise and confidence to maintain the level of play we are capable of committing," said Diehl.

The game against Frostburg will be the ultimate test for the Lions and their hopes for this year's AMCC championship. Hard work and team unity is the basis for success of these Lions. If they play as a team they are capable of beating any school.

Although bad for the books and even worse on record, a loss like the one Wednesday to La Roche can sometimes be a good thing. The Lions look to improve their 9-10 overall record at this weekend's games.

Men's soccer team blanks Pitt-Bradford 3-0

The Penn State Behrend men's soccer team showed great improvement this past Wednesday with its win over Pitt-Bradford. The team came through with a 3-0 win over the Panthers in the Lion's first conference game of the season. Scoring goals for

the men were junior Andy Laver, freshmen Mark Cipriani, and Bryan Blaszyk. This win made the Lions overall record 2-6-2. The team goes on to face La Roche in another conference match on Saturday.

Senior Profile: Ben Atkins

by Zoe Rose
sports editor

Water polo, a sport that has few roots among Behrend's array of athletic activities, has branched out immensely. Once non-existent on the Behrend campus, water polo can now be watched at the Junker Center.

Ben Atkins, one of three seniors on the squad, has been rewarded with invaluable memories while being on the young team. Part of the fun, he said, has been "just hanging and everyone's smart ass comments, van rides, parties, and the tournaments."

During the past few years, coach Heynes has had the task of developing a competitive team for conference matchups. Commenting on the progress of the team under Heynes, Atkins said, "Coach taught us a lot and has brought a lot to the program. Most of the guys didn't have any knowledge of polo until he got here."

The same applies to students, said Atkins. He's "sure they understand the basics of trying to score goals but beyond that, not too much. It looks like

it's easy but there's a lot of hard work behind it."

Atkins has been swimming since he was eleven, but only began playing water polo a year ago. He was introduced to it during gym class his junior year.

Atkins is one of the key players to Behrend's success this season. He has scored in multiple games and had a four-goal performance against Grove City.

College life can be hectic, but Atkins said athletics has helped him focus his time. "It's helped me have a better

schedule about things, how you can't wait until the last minute to do things, and has overall improved my work ethic."

Atkins has set goals for the rest of the season. "I want to get better and I'd like to see the team improve so we can beat more teams other than Mercyhurst. We could be one of the better Division III schools around, if not one of the better water-polo teams in the area."



LIONS DOMINATE

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Mauer. Credit must also be given to goalie Colleen Applebaugh for helping to keep Pitt-Bradford scoreless.

Even though it had been tough the past few games, the women were able to psych themselves up for the game.

"It was our first conference game and I think we were just much more mentally prepared," said sophomore Carrie Smock.

This game also gave the team a chance to work on some weaknesses they had shown.

"We communicated much better and we passed very well," said Smock.

That's a good sign because the women will be challenged on Saturday, by La Roche, a tough conference opponent.

"La Roche is a big rival of ours," said freshman Kacie Burns. "We are going to have to play and pressure hard if we are going to win."

The team knows that with this win over Pitt-Bradford, it is starting to move in the right direction.

"We are just trying to improve every game and to get better as time goes on," said Burns.

While things are looking up, the team

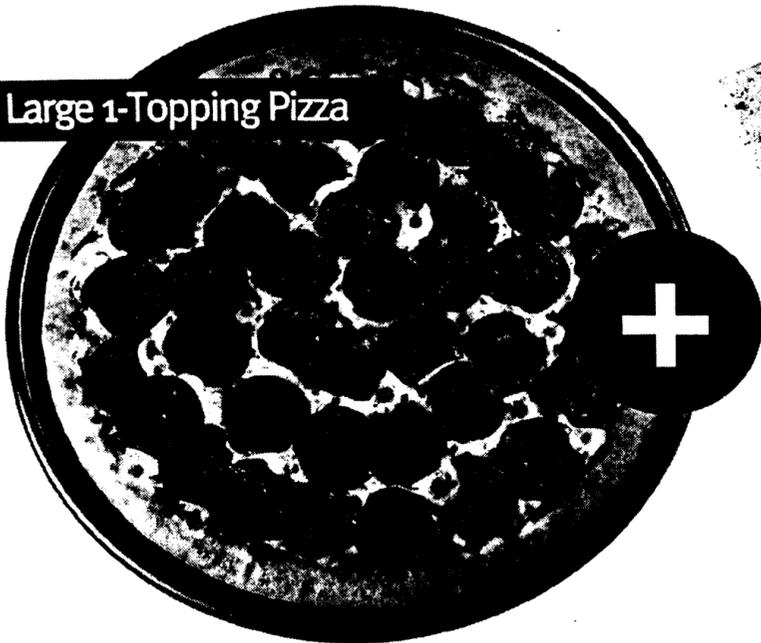
knows that they still have some kinks to work out.

"We need to do better finishing. Even though we scored 5 goals, its still something we need to work on," said Burns.

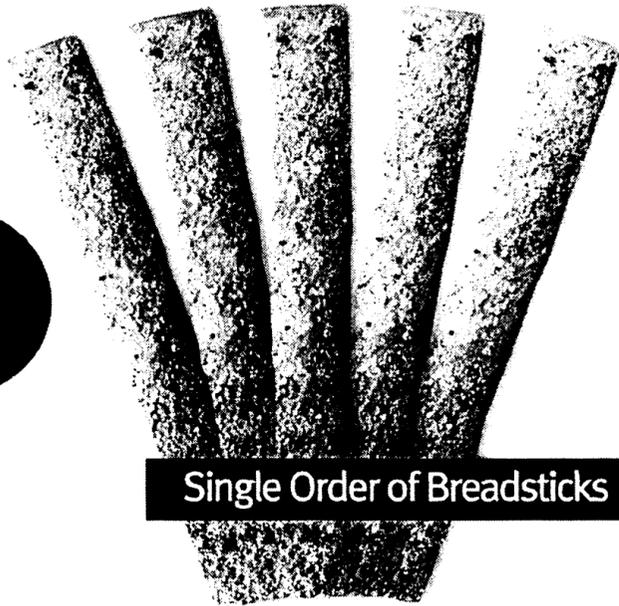
Bowen said, "We need to pressure more and get the ball to our forwards."

In spite of these problems, the women are confident that the team is improving and that they have put together a good group of competitors.

Burns said, "We are definitely starting to play like a team. We get more and are getting pumped up for games."



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