

Lions ride streak to top of AMCC

by Kevin Fiorenzo
staff writer

The Behrend women's basketball team continued its winning ways this past week against conference opponents La Roche and Pitt-Greensburg, increasing their win streak to three games.

On Jan. 27, the Lions played a home game against conference rival La Roche. The game was a low scoring contest and both teams competed hard for the duration. Leading the way for Behrend was point guard Erica Mozdy, who had 11 points and 6 rebounds.

Forward Amber Krumpe also contributed solidly by scoring 12 points. In the end, the Lions played solid defense and proceeded to a convincing 48-36 victory.

Two days later, the Behrend squad was still at home and playing another conference match up, this time against Pitt-Greensburg. The Lions led most of the game and were able to contain their opponent by playing tenaciously on defense and out rebounding their opponents. At the half, Behrend led 24-18.

The momentum of the game changed late in the second half, though, and Pitt-Greensburg sent the game to overtime with the score deadlocked at 55.

Coach Roz Fornari said, "At the three minute mark they made a couple of key plays and we started to tighten up a little. We made a couple of unfortunate errors and let them gain momentum and confidence."

"They were able to come back because we failed to execute on the offensive end and rebound on the defensive end," said Krumpe.

In overtime, the game stayed very tight. There was very little scoring until the final minute and then both teams made important shots to keep the game competitive. Behrend sealed the victory, though, with two key layups from guard Carly Cochran. The final score was 64-63, once again in favor of the Lions.

Krumpe, who had 12 points and 12 rebounds, said, "Overtime was just crazy. No one scored many points until the last minute, and suddenly everyone was scoring. Carly was clutch for us by making two layups in the last 30 seconds, and then I blocked the potential game winner. It was possibly the best overtime game I've ever played in."

Aside from extending Behrend's winning streak, the victory had added importance because it launched the Lions to first place in the AMCC with a 5-1 record. It also boosted the team's confidence after a tough start to the new year.

"It's definitely a morale booster to win these last few conference games after we started so poorly in January," said Krumpe. "Now we know we can beat anyone in the AMCC if we play hard enough."

Fornari added, "Our players are seeing the benefit of improvement and teamwork. They are working hard in practice and the wins are a result of preparedness and a higher confidence level."

Although the squad is definitely playing at a superior level, the players and their coach know that they can improve. "We will continue working on our de-

cision making," Fornari said. "We struggle with making the right pass or taking the right shot in the offense. Defensively we will keep improving on our individual and team defense and boxing out."

"We need to execute better on offense," added Krumpe. "It's our defense that is pulling out these wins for us. If we can get the two of them to work together at the same time, it'll be great."

Coming up next for the Lions is another important conference game at home against Penn State-Altoona on Saturday, at 2:00 p.m. The Behrend team knows that to continue the win streak they will have to continue to play with intensity for the entire game.

"To beat Altoona again, we need to play hard defense for 40 minutes. We can't play well for just half the game and expect to win. Good execution on offense combined with hard defense should give us the win," said Krumpe.

Now that Behrend is playing its best ball of the season, Fornari recognizes that this is the team's best chance to capitalize on its success.

"They have a great opportunity ahead of them and they only have eight games left before conference playoff," said Fornari. "Knowing you have so few games and only four weeks left of your season makes you play with a little more urgency and focus."

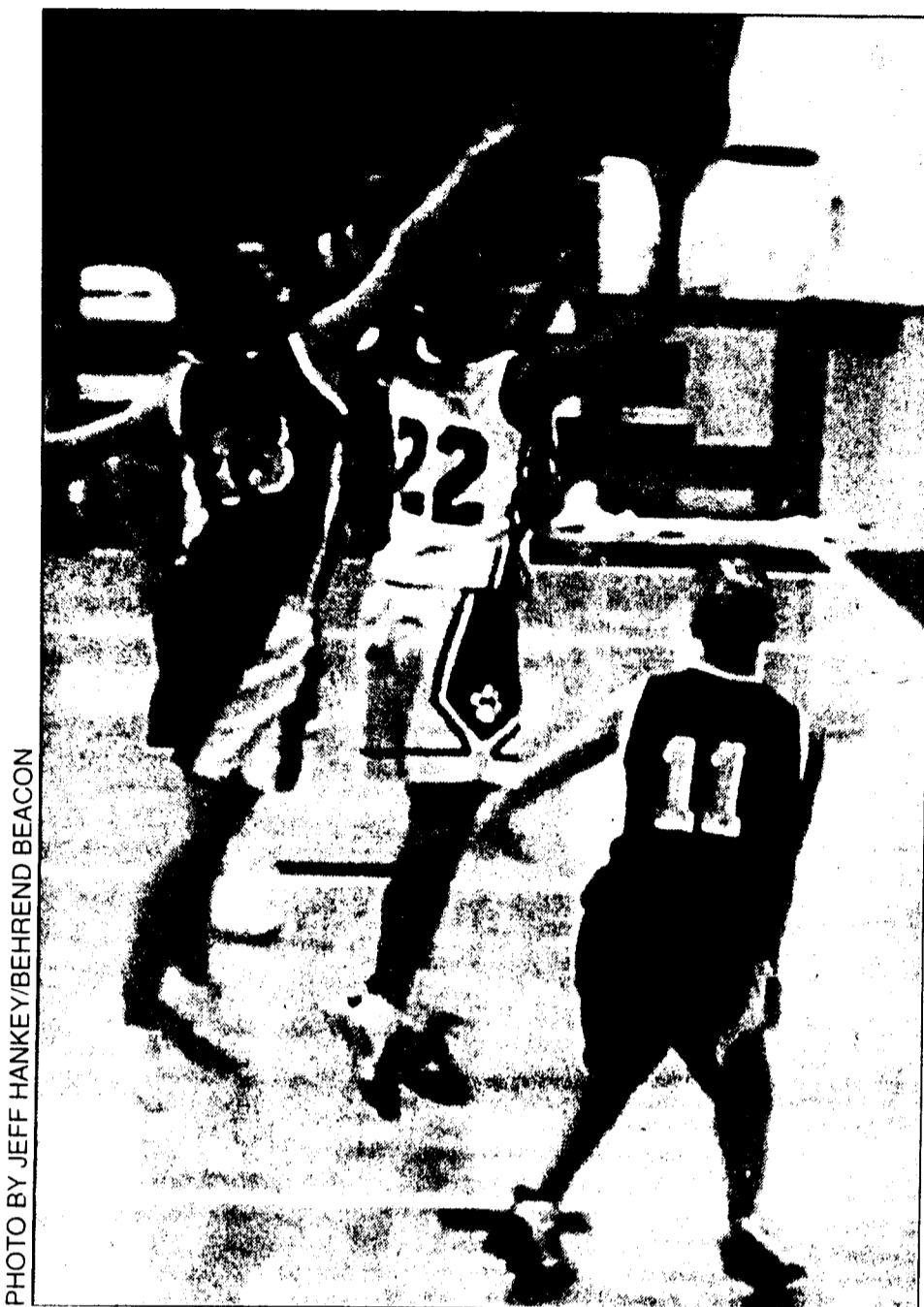


PHOTO BY JEFF HANKEY/BEHREND BEACON

Amber Krumpe and the rest of the starting five all scored at double digits in the team's overtime win Wednesday.

Dynamic duo

Curren, Hairston lead Lions basketball to top of AMCC

by Zoe Rose
contributing writer

ence record and on the season have a 5-1 overall record.

With eight games left to go before the Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference, the Penn State Behrend men's basketball team looks to keep up its steady pace at the head of the pack in the conference.

Currently tied for first place with Pitt-Bradford, the squad has a 5-1 confer-

Last Saturday, the Lions invited La Roche to their home turf followed by a game against Oberlin before they hosted the Pitt-Greensburg Bobcats on Wednesday night.

In front of 225 fans, Behrend pulled out a 63-50 win against La Roche. The three top players of the game were familiar faces: Curren with

19 points, eight rebounds, Hairston with 18 points, eight boards, and Ponsoll chipping in with 11 points.

The Lions next traveled to Oberlin and gave them their first win of the season, 52-46. The Behrend squad was on fire offensively crushing the Yeomen with 43 percent shooting from beyond the arc as well as inside. The Yeoman struggled with 33 percent field-goal shooting in the first half and a made none of the three attempted three-pointers in the first half.

However, the Lions' lead was temporary as Oberlin began to claw back, scoring eventually 33 points in the second half compared to Behrend's 16. Oberlin's first lead of the night came with 4:13 left to go, 45-44. Going on to steal the game away, Curren led the team with 14 points and six boards, and was the only Lion to reach double figures.

The Lions looked as though they were in complete control against the Pitt-Greensburg Bob-

cats as they took an early 20-11 lead with 10 minutes remaining in the first half. Behrend paced the first half with a steady flow of shooting before taking a cushioning 43-24 lead at the half.

At and this point it looked as though Behrend had it all in control. Half of the fans in the Junker Center left during the second half because of the sloppy performance of both teams.

The Lions squandered their lead to 5 with 31.6 seconds left to go with a score of 69-64.

A three-pointer by the Bobcats with 25.2 seconds tightened the score even more with the Lions up 71-67.

Casey Ponsoll finalized the score making two free throws ending the game 75-67.

James Curren led the team again with 22 points followed by Tom Lulich and Hairston with 11 each.

Penn State Altoona will visit Behrend this Saturday followed by what could be a tight game against No. 1 conference rival Pitt-Bradford on Wednesday.



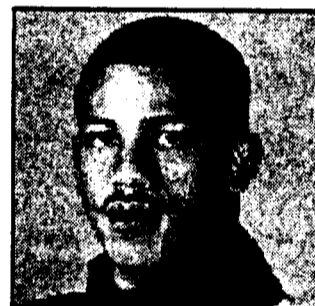
PHOTOS BY HEATHER MYERS/BEHREND BEACON

Juniors James Curren and David Hairston lead the team in scoring. Curren is the team's main weapon, but Hairston has turned it on as of late, acting as a great complement.



Housing
and
Food Service
Athlete
of the Week
PENNSTATE
Erie

David
Hairston



SPORT: Men's
Basketball
CLASS: Junior
DATE: Jan. 27

David Hairston (Erie/Cathedral Prep) was named this week's Beacon/Food and Housing Athlete of the Week.

Hairston led the Behrend Lions to a 2-0 week with a pair of outstanding performances. He hit for 10 points and 2 boards in an easy 69-53 non-conference win over Fredonia and followed by hitting 7 x 12 from the field for 18 points and 8 rebounds in big league win over La Roche.

The blue and white are now 11-5 and 5-1 in the AMCC.

Housing and Food Service Athlete of the Week is selected by the Sports Information Staff.