

SPORTS

The Behrend Beacon

Friday, February 14, 2003

One Win Away

Behrend closes in on AMCC regular-season title after posting wins over Frostburg, Lake Erie

by Zoe Rose
contributing writer

Going into last week, the Behrend Lions had two choices. They could let Frostburg get the season sweep on them, and then drop another game to Lake Erie. Or, they could just win.

Win and all but lock up the AMCC crown, or lose and have a fight to the finish for the title. On Saturday the team needed to start off the week right with a strong performance from their starters. They delivered.

One cannot call the Penn State Behrend men's basketball team inconsistent now. There was a time when the team could have been criticized for winning at home and struggling on the road. The Lions current winning streak has silenced all of those critics. The team has won its last five games both away and home. Their record has sky-rocketed to 9-1 in the AMCC and 15-6 overall.

It's not over yet, though.

Behrend is tightening its lock on the top spot in the conference, but still have four games left until the playoffs begin. Behrend can clinch the regular season conference title with a victory over La Roche this Saturday. Basically, Behrend has to lose out not to be the sole winner of the AMCC.

Last Saturday, the Lions invited Frostburg State to their home court and showed them what their winning streak meant, scoring a 77-58 win over the Bobcats. Lulich led the Lions on offense with 24 points on six three-pointers, and assisted in not letting Frostburg rally back after the second half started.

David Hairston led two other Lions into double digits with 20 points and grabbed a team-high eight rebounds. Behrend kept the Bobcats to 42.1 percent shooting only allowing them to make eight of 19 attempts. The Lions held the advantage making 15 of 27 attempts for 55.6 percent.

Next on the agenda for moving closer to the

AMCC regular season title was Lake Erie.

The two teams played toe-to-toe through much of the first 30 minutes of action, but with 10 minutes left to play, Behrend pulled ahead 50-43 and kept a steady lead until the end. The Storm were outscored 36-30 in the second half and never got closer than six with 1:30 left to go.

Behrend was led by Curren, who with 58 seconds left in the game, reached the game-high 30 points on 13-15 from the field. This was the second time this season that Curren reached the 30 point plateau, the first occurring at Grove City.

Lulich pitched in 12 while Hairston added 10 and grabbed seven rebounds.

The Lions wrap up their home schedule against Medaille on the Feb 20. The team will be going into action away against conference rival La Roche on Saturday and Carnegie Mellon on Tuesday. The last game of the season will take place at Pitt-Greensburg on the Feb. 22. The Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference play begins February 26th.



PHOTO BY JEFF HANKEY/BEHREND BEACON

Sophomore guard Tom Lulich led the Lions against Frostburg with 24 points. He pitched in 12 more against Lake Erie to complement teammate James Curren's 30 points.

Still in the hunt

Behrend women get convincing wins

by Kevin Fiorenza
staff writer

With convincing wins over Frostburg State and Lake Erie, the women's basketball team is back on track after two tough losses the week before.

On Saturday, the Lady Lions hosted a rematch against Frostburg State. Their earlier game had been a thriller that ended up going to overtime, with Behrend eventually pulling out the win. In the first half of the game Satur-

day, it looked like Frostburg was well on its way to getting revenge. Going into the half, Frostburg was leading 30-23.

After the intermission, though, the Lions came storming back with impressive play from all of their key players. When all was said and done, they outplayed Frostburg in the second half and eventually won the game 73-66.

Leading the way for the Behrend squad was point guard Erica Mozdy, who had 24 points, three rebounds, and four assists. Also contributing was forward Amber Krumpe, with 12 points and nine rebounds, and guard Carly Cochran, who added 11 points and six rebounds.

The women returned to court for another home contest on Wednesday, against

Lake Erie. This game was also a rematch and Behrend was looking for revenge. In the earlier match up, the Lions lost a heartbreaker 59-58 for their first-ever loss against Lake Erie.

Most of this game, it was an up and down affair. Behrend built a comfortable lead, but allowed Lake Erie to come close. Eventually, the Lions pulled away for good and got the victory by a score of 69-59.

Once again, the stars of the game were Mozdy, with 18 points, and Krumpe, who had a double-double with 14 points and 14 rebounds.

Behrend learned from earlier mistakes at Lake Erie, and did not make them twice.

"We didn't dig ourselves a hole like we did in the first game. It's easier to maintain a lead than it is to come back from a deficit. And we also only had 12 turnovers, which is really good for us," said Krumpe.

"We ran our offenses with a little

more patience. We also picked up our defensive effort. We played consistent on the defensive end."

The win against Lake Erie raised the Lions record to 12-10 overall, 8-2 in the AMCC, a game back of Pitt-Greensburg.

Next up for the Behrend squad is a game on the road against La Roche. In their first game, the Lions won comfortably 48-36 and know what they need to do to win again.

"We need to shut down their main scorers and make sure that we use our defense to create our offense by getting some touches and running the floor," said Krumpe.

"We need to get up and down the floor quickly and utilize our speed," added Fornari. "We will focus on a couple of key players they have and be aggressive defensively. Our players will need to shoot their open shots and attack the basket."

Now that there are only a few games left in the season, the women are aware of the challenges that lie ahead of them.

"We need to play our game and work hard," said Fornari. "We have the talent and seem to play well on the road. I am confident in this group and we are in control of our own destiny."

"Our biggest challenge down the stretch is to play consistently for 40 minutes with no let-downs," said Krumpe. "If we do that then we will be able to beat La Roche and Pitt-Greensburg next week and hopefully host the conference tournament."



PHOTO BY JEFF HANKEY/BEHREND BEACON

Amber Krumpe has been nearly unstoppable on the boards pulling down 23 rebounds in the Lions last two wins.

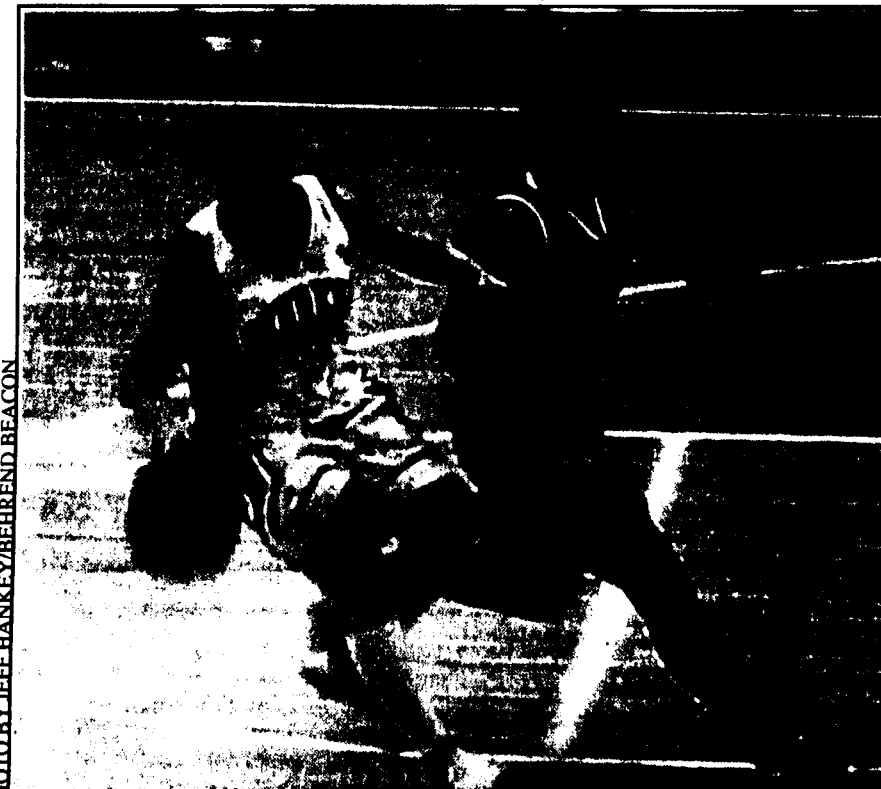


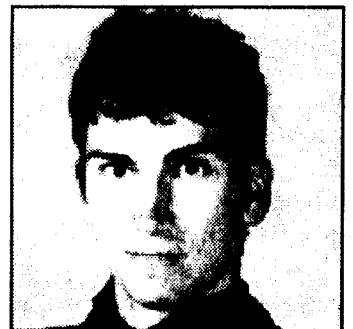
PHOTO BY JEFF HANKEY/BEHREND BEACON

Erica Mozdy has had a stellar offensive week scoring 42 points in the team's last two games.

Housing
and
Food Service
Athlete
of the Week

PENNSTATE
Erie

Tom
Lulich



SPORT: Men's
Basketball
CLASS: Sophomore
DATE: Feb. 10

Tom Lulich (Canonsburg/Peters Township) was named this week's Beacon/Food and Housing Athlete of the Week.

Lulich helped the Lions past Frostburg and Lake Erie this week. He hit 8 of 11 from the field including 6 of 9 from three point land. His game high 24 pushed Behrend to a 77-58 win. Lulich also contributed 5 rebounds, 2 assists, and a block.

Lulich continued his big week on Wednesday against Lake Erie. Lulich only shot three pointers in the game and connected on 4 out of 5 of them. His 12 points helped the Lions to a 67-58 win clinching the AMCC regular season title.

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