

Tennis team nets two wins

by Scott Soltis
sports editor

The men's tennis team enjoyed an eventful Saturday afternoon, building on the successful start of the season.

Kicking off the doubleheader was in-conference opponent Pitt-Greensburg. This was the Lions' first taste of AMCC action of the season. They annihilated Pitt-Greensburg, 9-0.

After their success against the Bobcats, the team turned its attention to the Jackets of Waynesburg. The Lions won this match as well, suffering few losses. The final score of 7-2 reflected only two singles losses by the Lions, and saw the team go 3-0 in doubles play.

Even the two players who lost in singles, Kevin Fiorenzo and Jacob Hillman, bounced back in doubles play to win in the No. 1 and No. 2 doubles matches respectively. Everyone was successful for the Lions on this day.

Winning in the early to mid segment of the season is a key to future success.

"This is the meat of the schedule and we need to win to have aspirations of playoff appearances," said Doug Smith, the lone senior on the team.

What makes the Lions victories a bit surprising was that they had to overcome the absence of impressive freshman John Marini, who missed the games due to illness.

"We had a illness to a key player for

the Pitt-Greensburg and Waynesburg matches and everyone just did their best," said head coach Jeff Barger. "I moved a couple of guys to places they usually don't play but they did well."

Stepping it up for Behrend was sophomore Ryan Deimel, who won all of his matches at both first singles and first doubles. Deimel's efforts helped him earn AMCC Tennis Player of the Week.

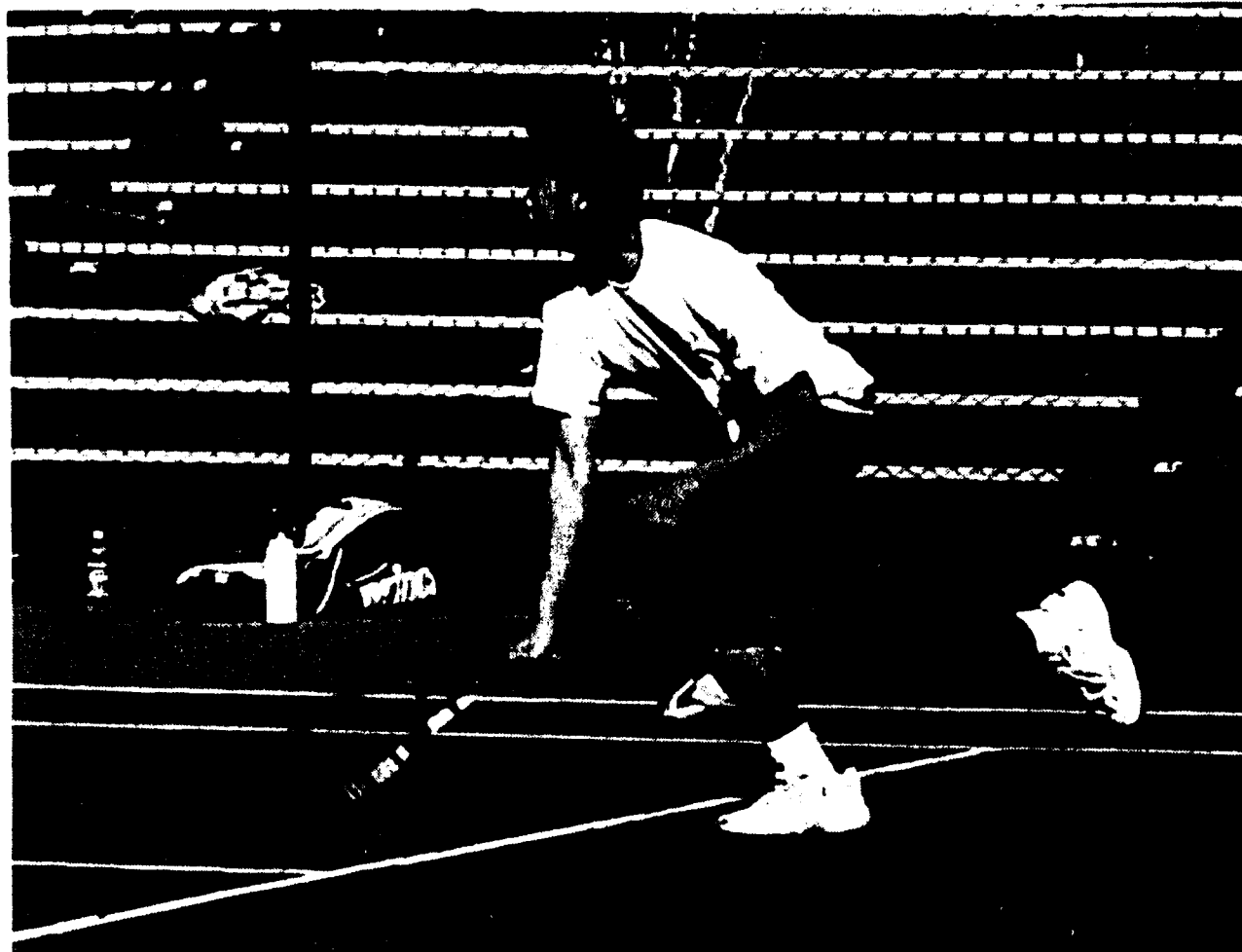
The team will square off against last year's AMCC champs Saturday when inter-University rival Penn State Altoona comes to Behrend. Although the season is still young, the team realizes the importance of this game.

Barger also understands that this match will not be as easy as the two last weekend. "This week's match with Altoona will be a good one, if both teams play their best."

The Lions are currently on a six game win streak, and lost only their first match of the season. "I hope we can ride this a little longer," said Barger. "I would like to see us peak around the conference tournament."

The Lions must also take advantage of home court while they have it. Their final three conference games occur on the road, and the AMCC tournament will be held at Penn State Altoona this year.

Despite the long road ahead, if the Lions continue to play as they have been over the past few weeks, it won't matter where they play the games.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Sophomore Michael Oey has helped the team to an impressive 6-1 record. Oey was undefeated last weekend in singles and doubles matches against Pitt-Greensburg and Waynesburg.

Baseball team rebounds against Allegheny

by Kevin Fiorenzo
staff writer

The Behrend baseball team endured a tough conference loss on Saturday against Penn State Altoona but rebounded a few days later with a win against a strong Allegheny team.

The baseball team hosted Penn State Altoona Saturday in their first conference game of the season. While the Behrend squad put up an excellent fight, it was not able to overcome the superb pitching of Altoona's starter Luke Deihl, who registered 13 strikeouts.

"We couldn't get a rhythm together. He kept us off balance and guessing on pitches," said outfielder Adam Best.

"We put him in a couple of jams and he was able to work his way out of them well," said outfielder Mitch Reckner.

Though Altoona's pitching dominated the game, the Behrend Lions were able to keep the score close, eventually losing by a 4-2 margin. The win went to Altoona's Deihl and the loss to Ryan Seyler. Seyler threw five innings with seven hits, two runs, and two

strikeouts. Freshman pitcher Brent Gabel finished out the contest two innings of work. He gave up three hits, two runs, and also had three strikeouts.

"We didn't put enough hits together in any given inning and we swung at too many terrible pitches, helping out the pitcher more than we usually do," said Best, who is the AMCC's stolen bases leader with 12 and is hitting .439 with 18 hits.

Reckner, who is leading the AMCC in batting average (.490), RBIs (17), and hits (24), said, "This loss will make us just want to play harder and win more. We are a very talented team and it just happens that Altoona was better than us on that given day."

The loss against Altoona snapped Behrend's nine-game winning streak and dropped their record to 10-5 overall, 0-1 in the AMCC.

Next up for the Lions was a game on Tuesday the 25th at Allegheny. Like the Altoona game, Behrend was engaged in another close, hard-fought game. The game was scoreless for the first four innings, but

Behrend exploded in the top of the fifth for four runs. Allegheny answered in the bottom of the sixth with four runs of its own. The score would stay deadlocked until the end of regulation and went into extra innings.

Behrend stepped up to the plate in top of the 10th and scored two key runs. In the bottom half of the inning, the Lions were able to silence Allegheny's bats and hold on to win 6-4. The win went to Gabel, who threw for 3 1/3 innings and had three hits, with no runs, and three strikeouts.

"Our team is fielding the ball really well," said Reckner. "That has been a big factor that we have focused on this year."

Up next for the Lions are games on the Saturday and Sunday against conference rival Frostburg and Bethany. Both promise to be particularly strong tests for Behrend.

"We will have to have less errors than them and put the ball in play and make them make the plays," said Best.

"All we have to do is play the way we are capable of playing and everything will fall into place," said Reckner.



PHOTO BY SCOTT SOLTIS / BEHREND BEACON

Lions' catcher Brad Shamitko.

Women's water polo keeps head above water

by Amy Frizzell
staff writer

Two weeks ago, the women's water polo team hosted the St. Patrick's Day invitational here at Behrend. At the end of the weekend, the Lions came away with two wins and three losses.

"The St. Patrick's Day invite was a great experience for us and also the community by getting more home games here at Behrend," said coach Josh Heynes.

The team lost to Grand Valley, team rival Mercyhurst, and Gannon.

"We could have done better," said sophomore captain Christine Williams.

"There were two games we should have won."

Even though the team had three losses, it came away with two good wins.

"The wins over Ohio and IUP were hard fought and helped us build confidence," said Heynes.

Leading the team to a 7-5 win against Ohio was sophomore Christine Williams with four goals, junior Hollie Stash with two goals and junior Sarah McGarvey with one goal.

Junior Lauren Packer contributed to the win with 15 saves in goal.

Behrend also blew Indiana University of

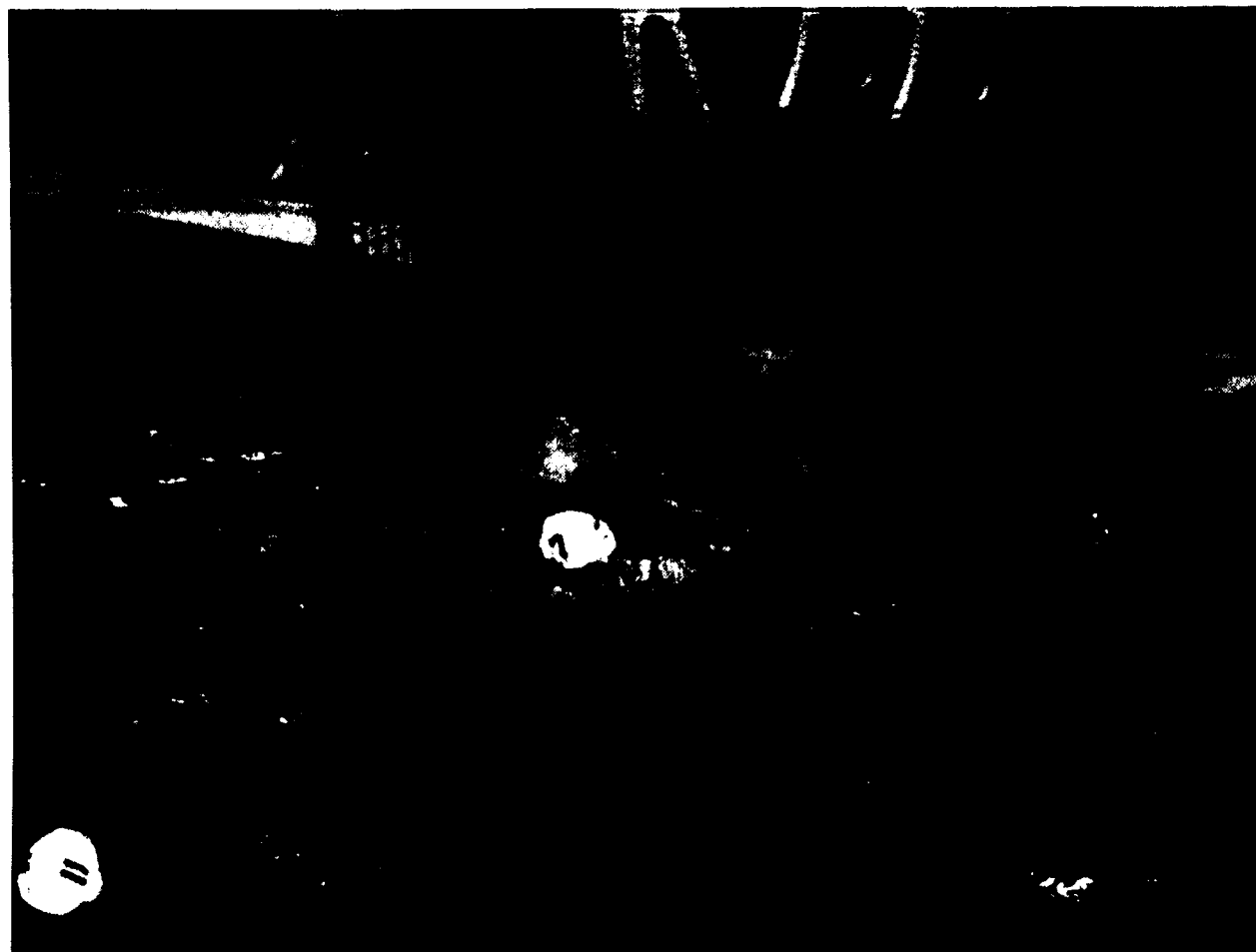


PHOTO BY JOE DEELY

Goalie Lauren Packer has anchored the Lions defense on the season and only needs a little more offensive help for success.

Pennsylvania out of the water with a 13-5 win. Leading the team this time was McGarvey with two goals, Stash with three, senior Ann Marie Havey with two, sophomore Erin Troester with one and Williams with one.

"I think this tournament was a turning point for us," said Stash. "We're playing better as

a team."

Also participating in the invitational was Grove City College.

Next the women played a doubleheader on Tuesday against Division II team Slippery Rock and Washington and Jefferson another big team rival.

The Lions started off strong in the first game, leading 4-2, but Slippery Rock proved too powerful, coming back for a 11-6 win. This gave Behrend its second loss to Slippery Rock this season.

"Though the score may not show it, we played well as team," said Stash.

"We had them, we just died," said Williams. "Next time around will be a closer game."

In their second game, the Lions took on rival Washington and Jefferson. Despite being tied at the half the women sank, losing 8-6 in the end, making their current record

'We had them, we just died. Next time around will be a closer game.'

-Captain Christine Williams, on the team's match against Slippery Rock

2-10.

"We held our ground against these two teams," said Heynes. "I think the Washington and Jefferson game would have been different if we had not played an hour earlier."

"We played well as a team," said Stash. "I think it will help us this weekend."

Next the team will play in the Southern Divisional playoffs on March 28-30 at Washington and Jefferson.

"We just have to stick to the game plans and keep on playing the ball that we are," said Heynes. "I see us doing some great things in the three weeks we have left in the season."

"We're looking forward to playing Washington and Jefferson, Gannon, and IUP," said Williams. "By our game on Sunday against Mercyhurst, we'll be prepared."