

The Behrend Beacon

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Women's soccer continues winning ways

by Kevin Fiorenzo
sports editor

The women's soccer team suffered its first loss of the season on Saturday against Westminster, but was able to bounce back with a commanding victory on Wednesday against Hilbert.

On Saturday, Sept. 13, the Lions played host to Westminster. Within mere minutes, Behrend had scored its first goal, in the 10th minute. Unfortunately it would also be its last. Westminster went on to score three unanswered goals and run off with a 3-1 victory. Westminster's goalie ended up playing a complete game with six saves.

The loss was particularly frustrating because it was the Behrend squad's first of the season. Although the team made some mistakes, the team was aware of them and ready to improve.

"We created some great scoring opportunities but we were unable to finish," said senior Erin Maurer.

While the loss was a difficult one, the women couldn't dwell on it as they had another game to look forward to on Sept. 17 against Hilbert.

Once again the Lions were playing at home and this time they did a much better job of protecting their turf. Behrend controlled the entire game and rolled to a dominant 5-0 victory. The squad got five goals from five different players: sophomore Holly Greiner, freshman Kara Struski, junior Jen Baker, sophomore Kacie Burns, and Maurer. Goalies Dara Neilsen and Liz Hall combined for the shutout.

All involved were necessary for Behrend's victory and the players believe that this team effort is one of the keys to its recent success.

"We are really getting comfortable playing together," said Maurer. "All of our players are great and we expect that everyone will continue



PHOTO BY HEATHER MYERS
Junior, Jen Baker beats Hilbert defender

to work hard."

This is definitely evident when looking at Behrend's statistics. It leads the AMCC in scoring defense and are second in scoring offense, trailing La Roche.

With the win over Hilbert, Behrend improved its record to 5-1, the best record among AMCC teams so far. The schedule only gets tougher for the Lions, though. Its next game will be an away match against Pitt Bradford. It will also be the team's first game of the conference season. The team knows that it will be a hard fought game and that it can't take any conference games for granted.

Maurer said, "I think we are ready to take them and we will come out with the win."

So while the team is off to a very successful start, the season is still very young and there are a lot of games to be played. The Lions can only hope that it is able to keep up this level of play all season long.

Men's water polo looks for inspiration

by Adam Massaro
staff writer

If the men's water polo team is searching for a sports mentor—they need look no farther than the infamous Detroit Tigers.

The Lions 1-6 start eclipsed the Detroit Tigers 0-6 start, but if the pieces fall into place and the Lions drop its next two, it could find themselves a mirror image of the Tigers, who did not stumble onto their first win until its eighth game.

"We are inexperienced, and coach is trying to get us back to the basic fundamentals of the sports," said sophomore Chris Gleditsch.

"Once we work on those areas and become more experienced during the season, we will get better."

Both teams began their respective seasons with the odds stacked against them: young, inexperienced, and not accustomed to the rigors of the game.

"We've been focusing more on our swimming in an attempt to improve our endurance and strength for the matches. It has been a slow process but it can be accomplished," said freshman Justin Ryder.

Clearly, it is slim pickings on the home front, but for these young cubs, but it may just be part of the maturation process.

"Our teams chemistry has come together well, everyone gets along and works well with each other," said freshman Brian Kustra.

"The biggest thing separating us from major programs is the experience level. Players on other teams have been playing for awhile. As for our team some kids are learning how to play for the first time."

The squad will try to prevent joining the dubious 1-8 company of the Detroit Tigers, by mak-

ing some waves at the Grove City Invitational over the weekend.

The Lions have matches against Salem International, Grove City University and Slippery Rock

"Water polo is a demanding sport both mentally and physically, especially if you are playing more than one match," said freshman Mark Quinones.

"The mental aspect is the toughest, you just got to have faith you can do it, and bond together as a team."

The team has not faced Slippery Rock this season but went a combined 0-3 against the Rock last year. The Lions have already faced Grove City University twice this season, with the last meeting at the Bucknell Invitational resulting in a 19-2 lambasting.

"Each game is part of the learning process, coach goes over a game plane and we try to execute it. There is hope for the program, as we build on our foundation; we are going to be a pretty dominating team in Erie," said Quinones.

The team will more than likely have to gain that vital experience it is lacking on the road, as the Lions only have only two more home games slated for this season.

"It is pretty rough not having our home fans involved, but some of the parents and fans travel to the closer matches, especially ones at Grove City," said freshman Mark Walczak.

"It certainly is nice having a fan base, but that presence definitely isn't there for match's far-away like at Bucknell or later this season when we travel to Princeton."

Men's soccer dominates against Westminster

by Ray Immekus
Staff Writer

The Lions played 180 minutes of solid soccer last week, winning two games and allowing zero goals. The victories came against Hilbert and Westminster, improving the men's team record to 3-1-1 and securing senior goaltender Jake Hordych his second and third shutouts of the season.

"Jake is certainly one of the best goaltenders in the league, he gets the job done," said head coach Dan Perritano.

Sophomore midfielder Mark Cipriani was named AMCC men's soccer player of the week, after netting three goals and raising his season point total to seven. Cipriani had a goal against Hilbert, and two against Westminster; including the game winner.

"It was a surprise to me about becoming player of the week. I really feel that the team is coming together well as the season progresses," said Cipriani.

Behrend began its week with a game against Hilbert last Thursday at home. Hilbert came in with a 0-1 record, losing their only game to Lake Erie by a score of 3-0. The game was dominated from beginning to end by the Lions. Hilbert managed only two shots in 90 minutes, opposed to Behrend's 24 shots. The game ended as an 8-0 rout by the Lions, giving Hilbert its second loss in as many tries.

The victory was an overall team effort. Eleven Lions contributed points with eight goals scored by different players. Sophomore midfielder Justin Reese led all scorers with a goal and an assist.

"We did what we needed to do to win the game and I was very pleased with the team's effort," remarked Coach Perritano.

The Lion's second game was played last Saturday at home against the Westminster Titans. Westminster entered the game with a 1-4 record,

losing its last three games.

This game was over almost as soon as it began. Behrend scored two goals in the first six minutes, taking both the lead and Westminster's morale. Cipriani scored the first goal, off an assist from senior midfielder Andy Laver. Laver made the score 2-0 only a minute later, with a goal assisted by sophomore defenseman Brian Blaszczyk.

Cipriani added an unassisted insurance goal in the 78th minute to make the final score 3-0. Behrend played solid, flawless defense for the entire game, allowing only six shots on goal.

"With only a few games under our belt, we played the best game of our season last week against Westminster. All parts of the team are finally coming together and we are looking forward to start conference play," said sophomore midfielder Andy Lesser.

Cipriani added, "The first loss was an eye opener and it has given our team character. The win against Westminster was our most important. It was great to see the team come out focused and poised and we finished them early."

The Lions have one non-conference game remaining, against Washington and Jefferson, before the start of league play next Wednesday. The Washington and Jefferson game will be the first away game of the season for the Lions.

"I think the team is definitely ready for the challenging conference play beginning next week and we will need to be on top of our game in order to be successful," said junior forward Eric Nyberg.

Perritano agreed with his players, saying, "We have one non-conference game left, against W & J, and we will be ready to compete and be successful in the conference this year."

Men's golf looks for AMCC crown

by Greg Smith
staff writer

After a mediocre 2002 season, the Behrend men's golf team looks to regroup and take a shot at the AMCC championship this year.

The predominantly young team, who finished fifth last year at the AMCC championships, returns two key players in Jeff Black and Anthony Pagliari, both juniors playing their third seasons at Behrend.

"They're leaders on the golf course; they lead by example," said head coach Mark Murphy.

"They are guys who are really committed to the team. They're good students and good all-around people, so they're a great example for the younger guys." Pagliari earned AMCC All-Conference honors in 2002.

Sophomores Daniel Russo and Kevin Thieman will also be returning from last year's squad. Along with Russo and Thieman, Ryan Deimel, a junior transfer from University Park, will round out the team's top five.

The rest of the team is comprised of four freshmen. Coach Murphy expects big things from Josh Loaney, a newcomer who had one of the top scores in team tryouts. Josh Hull is another freshman who may be able to do some damage for the team. Aaron Becker and Andrew Powell will be joining the team this year as well. With the strong top five of the team, it may be hard for the young players to prove themselves, but Murphy feels that they will get their chance.

"I think we have a few freshmen who could step in and play," said Murphy. "The young guys will get their chance when the older guys can't miss certain classes... but it's tough because we

only have about 8 times to play."

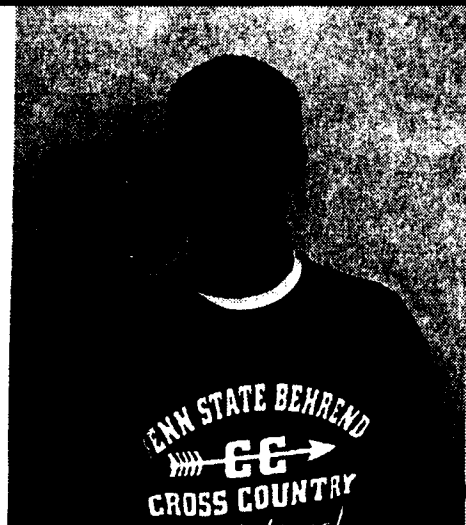
Both the coaches and the players have an optimistic outlook for the upcoming season. "I think we have one of the best teams we have had here in a long time," said assistant coach James Bowen. After the disappointing AMCC championship play of the prior year, the team's obvious goal is to work hard and win the conference title in 2003. The keys to success for the team this year are overall team commitment and effort. Murphy explains that five golfers play at the tournaments the team participates in, and the lowest four scores count towards the team's final tally.

"What happened last year," said Murphy, "is that we had a couple people play well and the other people would play bad. The guys know that at the invitationals, they need to all play well in order to win. We need a team effort."

There is no regular season championship in AMCC men's golf, so the championship all comes down to one day at the conference tournament. Murphy stresses the importance of the tournament, saying, "We all have each other's invitationals, but it matter what you do in those invitationals, it matters what you do on that day of the AMCC finals." Pitt-Bradford, last year's conference champ, appears to be the block in Behrend's road to the title this year.

The men were not able to play their first scheduled match with Pitt-Greensburg on Sept. 11, but they have scheduled a make-up match with Mercyhurst on Oct. 2, at Lakeview. The team was again denied on Sept. 15, when they were rained out after seven holes at Penn State Altoona.

Housing
and
Food Service
**Athlete
of the
Week**
PENNSTATE
Erie



Brad Ruffo

Sport: Men's Cross Country
Class: Freshman
Date: September 15

Brad Ruffo (West Middlesex/
West Middlesex) was named
this week's Beacon/Housing and
Food Athlete of the Week

Ruffo set an 8K course record
with a time of 27.20.10, finish-
ing first at the Thiel Invita-

tional. Ruffo was a top finisher for Behrend at both meets that have taken place so far this season, finishing first at Thiel and ninth at the Behrend Invitational.

Next up for the blue and white will be the Allegheny Invitational on Sept. 20 at 10 a.m.