

Lady Lions drop four games, struggle to hold No. 1 spot in AMCC

by Ray Immekus
staff writer

The Behrend softball team went 0-4 last week, dropping to 5 - 19 overall and 5-3 in the Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference. The current four-game skid by the Lady Lions follows a three-game winning streak that catapulted Behrend to first place in the AMCC. The Lady Lions still hold a game lead over Pitt-Bradford and Penn State Altoona in the conference.

On Wednesday, Behrend traveled to Westminster for a double-header against the Titans. The Lions lost a close one to Westminster in



PHOTO BY AMY FRIZZELL/BEHREND BEACON
The Lady Lions will have to hustle to stay in the No. 1 spot for the AMCC tournament.

game one, falling 5-4.

"We just need to stay focused and keep in mind what we need to accomplish," said sophomore Kim Raff. "Maybe we could of pulled that out if we did stay focused."

In game two, the Titans shut out Behrend 8-0.

"We just mentally weren't there. That has been a problem that has plagued us," said senior Brandy Polinick.

The following day, the Panthers of Pitt-Bradford hosted the Lady Lions for two games. Behrend was handed its second shut-out in as many games with a 3-0 loss to Bradford in game one, and lost their fourth straight in game two by a score of 6-5.

"They were hitting real well and because they were hitting that kind of broke us down and they came back to win the game," said Raff.

"The defense was good but we didn't play well in the rain," said sophomore Lindsey Stankus. "The rain brought us down because we were making a lot of errors. Those games it was hard to find anything positive."

The two nonconference losses dropped the women's record to 5-17 but did not affect the team's conference standings. It remains in first



PHOTO BY AMY FRIZZELL/BEHREND BEACON
The softball team now posts a 6-18 record including a 5-3 conference record, which has put them in the No. 1 spot. The team is looking to maintain its position as it fights for the AMCC championship crown.

place in the conference, but is losing ground with every loss.

The Lady Lions will play eight games in the next six days, four of which are against conference foes.

Today the Lions will travel to Frostburg for a Saturday conference matchup. Frostburg is 3-1 in the division and 16-9 overall.

The blue and white will have off on Sunday and Monday, and then they will travel to La Roche for two games on the 20th. La Roche is 2-0 in the conference with a 2-8 overall record.

The Lady Lions will finish off their season with the AMCC tournament, which will be held on May 1-2.

Men's tennis captures regular season crown Goes undefeated in conference, looks ahead to conference tournament

by Amy Frizzell
sports editor

After defeating conference foes Frostburg State and Pitt-Greensburg, the men's tennis team finished out its regular season conference play with a perfect 6-0 record. The Lions also defeated non-conference Fredonia State, 8-1.

The Lions hosted Fredonia on Wednesday in the Blue Devils' first match of their season.

"It was a good win," said coach Jeff Barger. "Since they aren't in our conference it gave the guys a chance to relax and just play a good match before the AMCCs."

The blue and white traveled to Pitt-Greensburg on Friday. This would be the last time the two teams would meet before the AMCC Championships. The Lions came away with a 9-0 win.

First doubles team junior Ryan Deimel and sophomore John Marini took the win with a 8-0 victory. Sophomore Jon Barber and freshman Brian Espin followed with a 8-3 win, while sophomore Kevin Fiorenzo and senior Jeremiah Guthrie took the win at third doubles, 8-0 to sweep doubles play.

Deimel had a 6-0, 6-0 win at first singles, Marini tallied up a 6-2, 6-2 win at second. At third Barber took a 6-1, 6-0 win, while Espin backed him up with a 6-3, 6-3 win at fourth. Fiorenzo and freshman Matt Meyer both had 6-0, 6-0 wins at fifth and sixth singles.

"Fortunately we all played well and we got the win," said Barber of the team's second meeting with the Bobcats.

On Saturday the Lions clinched the regular season crown and its perfect conference record when it defeated Frostburg for the second time.

"The Pitt-Greensburg match helped our confidence going into the Frostburg match," said Barber.

The blue and white once again swept doubles. Deimel and Marini won 8-6 in a tiebreaker when their score reached 8-8, coming away with a 9-8 win. Barber and Espin won 8-6 as Meyer and freshman Garrett Grenek took the last win at 9-7.

After playing one game, Frostburg's first singles player forfeited to Deimel. Barber took the win at

third 6-0, 6-4. Fiorenzo provided a win at fifth 6-3, 6-2. Meyer rounded out singles play, winning 6-3, 6-2. The Lions walked away with a 7-2 win.

"They played well. After the last time they played I wanted to see a better score this time and I did," said Barger, referring to the team's 5-4 win over Frostburg in the two team's first meeting.

"We're pretty pleased. This is the first time Behrend has ever gone undefeated in the conference," said Barber of the team's enthusiasm.

Next up for the team will be the AMCC Championships that will be held at Behrend this year. After last year's third place finish the team is looking to take the crown back since its last championship win in 1998, the first year the tournament was held.

"Right now our only concern is Frostburg," said Barber. "We feel they will be our toughest opponent on Saturday."

Frostburg finished just above the Lions in last year's playoffs, while Altoona walked away with the crown for the second year in a row. This year the Lions are focusing their attention on Frostburg.

"The guys had a pretty easy time with Altoona this year," said Barger. "They're pretty confident in their abilities over Altoona, so they are really focusing on Frostburg who possess our only real threat."

Behrend will go into the tournament holding down five No. 1 seeds while Frostburg has the other four.

"Having a No. 1 seed will basically guarantee an easy first round for us," said Espin. "Which will be nice."

Barber, Fiorenzo and Meyer all have first seeds in their singles flights as doubles teams Espin and Barber, and Meyer and Grenek also have one.

The men haven't done much to change their game plan before AMCCs.



PHOTO BY AMY FRIZZELL/BEHREND BEACON
The tennis team finished conference play with a perfect record of 6-0. It will next play in the AMCC tournament on Saturday.

"Even though our consistency hasn't been lacking that much we're still working on it," said Barber. "Overall we're just going to go in with the same confidence we've had all year."

"They've been able play well using their confidence," said Barger. "If it's not broken then don't fix it."

Baseball team rises to .500 in AMCC play

by Kevin Fiorenzo
sports editor

The baseball team swept a doubleheader this past weekend against Lake Erie and split one with Fredonia on Monday.

This past Monday, the Lions traveled to Fredonia for a doubleheader with their non-conference foe.

In the opening game, the Lions routed Fredonia by an 11-3 final score.

Behrend got six runs in the first three innings, four of them coming in the third. The Lions tacked on five more runs in the game to come away with the easy win.

Sophomore Eddie George, freshman Brian Hart and senior Mitch Reckner all hit doubles in the game. Reckner also hit a home run, along with sophomore Shane Elzer.

Getting the win for Behrend was sophomore Chris McCartney. He went for five innings and gave up two hits, no runs and had six strikeouts. McCartney was also named this week's Housing and Food Service Athlete of the Week.

In the second game, the two teams engaged in a much tighter contest, this time with Fredonia prevailing 2-1.

With the score tied 1-1 in the bottom of the seventh, Fredonia scored one more run to pull out the win.

The Lions had no extra base hits but had a stolen base from junior Vinnie Canzano.

Behrend's loss went to senior Jason Shaffer. He pitched 6.1 innings and gave up four hits and two hits and had seven strikeouts. Pitcher Brandon Miller got the win for Fredonia.

On the previous Saturday, the Lions hosted a doubleheader against AMCC opponent Lake Erie. Behrend was able to sweep both games, 5-2 and 9-7.

In the first game, the two teams played a tight first three innings. In the final innings, though, both teams managed to get runs. Behrend ended up pulling out the win by a 5-2 final score.

The highlight of the game was a home run by a senior Tony Azzato. The win went to Hart, who pitched a complete game, giving up four hits, two runs and had 10 strikeouts.

In the second game, the two teams engaged in a shootout. After three innings, Behrend was ahead 5-4. The two teams were tied, 7-7, though, after five innings. The Lions scored two runs in the bottom of the sixth to pull out the win.

Azzato, Elzer and Hart all had triples in the game while Canzano hit a triple.

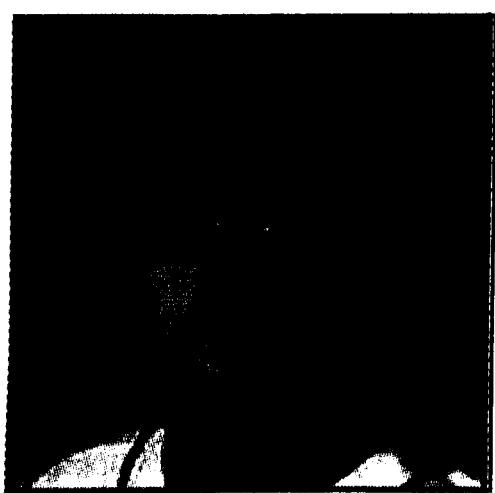
The winning pitcher for Behrend was sophomore Ray DeVaul. He pitched for 2 1/3 innings and gave up one hit, no runs and had two strikeouts.

With their three wins in the past week the Lions improved to 13-9-1 overall, 4-4 in the AMCC. Their conference record currently places them in fourth place.

The Behrend squad will resume play today at home against Thiel. On Saturday, it will host a doubleheader against conference opponent Pitt-Greensburg, who currently occupies the AMCC cellar.

PENNS STATE
Housing & Food Service
Erie

Athlete of the Week



Chris McCartney

Sport: Baseball
Class: Sophomore
Date: April 12, 2004

For Chris McCartney leads the Lions in ERA at 1.78. He also has a 3-1 record and 20 strikeouts, which have aided the Lions in being 4-4 in the conference. The blue and white is a doubleheader against Thiel at home on Monday.

McCartney pitched for five innings and gave up two hits, no runs and had six strikeouts in the Lions' 11-3 rout of Fredonia.