

Winter sports wrap up

Lady Lions fall short in NCAA Tournament opening game

by Ray Immekus
staff writer

The Lady Lions' lost to Wittenberg in the first round of the NCAA tournament on March 3 by a score of 81-46, ending arguably the best season Behrend has had since they won the ECAC tournament in the 1995-1996 season.

The Lady Lions won the regular season Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference title, posting an 11-1 conference record. The women followed their regular season title up by winning the AMCC postseason tournament championship, their first since the 1998-1999 season.

Behrend defeated No. 4 seed Pitt-Bradford 63-41 in the first round, and No. 2 seed Pitt-Greensburg 67-56 to secure the tournament title.

Head Coach Roz Fornari was named AMCC Coach of the Year after leading the Lady Lions to a 22-6 record. Fornari is 151-88 in her nine years here at Behrend.

Freshmen forward Tenesha Aden was named the AMCC Newcomer of the Year. She averaged 11.9 points and 5.6 rebounds per game this season.

Aden, along with fellow freshmen Brittany Mays, was named to the 1st Team All-Conference squad. Mays, a guard, averaged 10.7 points, 5.4 rebounds, and 2.0 assists a game. She also led the conference in free throw shooting, making 84.7 percent of her shots from the charity stripe.

Senior guard Erica Mozdy was named to Second Team All-Conference. This is the second consecutive year she has earned this honor.

Mozdy averaged 7.8 points and 1.96 assists and finished in fifth in the conference in 3-point shooting, making 38 threes and shooting 34.5 percent from behind the arc.

Behrend finished first in the AMCC in defense, field goal percentage, and three point efficiency. The Lady Lions

allowed only 53.4 point per game, hit on 42.9 percent of their shots, and 33.4 percent from the three point line.

Sophomore guard Nikki Pacinelli finished fourth in the AMCC in assists and second in three point percentage, averaging 3.54 dimes per contest and hitting on 35.8 percent of her shots from deep.

After losing three of their first four games this season, the women bounced back by winning 12 out of their next 13 games, and 21 of their final 24. The Lady Lions placed second in their pre-season tournament, losing to Otterbien 61-56 in the championship game.

Next year's team will lose seniors Carly Cochran and Mozdy, both starters.

Cochran averaged 8.6 points and 3.3 rebounds per game. Mays, Aden, Pacinelli and junior Amber Krumpke will return as starters, in what will be a season with high expectations.



Guard Erika Mozdy, along with guard Carly Cochran, are departing seniors from this season's 22-6 team

PHOTO BY HEATHER MYERS/BEHREND BEACON

Men's basketball team loses in heartbreaker

by Kevin Fiorenzo
sports editor

The men's basketball team ended its season on a sour note, losing in the quarterfinals of the AMCC Tournament on their home floor and then in the first round of the NCAA Tournament, again at home.

The Lions came into their AMCC Tournament opener with a 22-2 overall record and 11-1 in the conference. They were the top seeds and hosted the tournament. In the semifinals, Behrend drew No. 4 LaRoche, whom the Lions had defeated in overtime in their first meeting, but fell 60-58 in their most recent game.

As expected, the two teams engaged in a close battle, with the Redhawks going into the half with a 30-26 lead. In the second half, the Lions continued to struggle to get production on the offensive end. In the end, they were unable to put a dent into LaRoche's lead and fell short, 66-57.

Behrend's leading scorer was senior center James Curren with 22 points and 11 rebounds. The next highest scorer was junior guard Joe Lucas with eight points. LaRoche was led by Kenny Gibbs with 25 points.

The Redhawks would go on to win the conference tournament the next day against Frostburg State. Though they only went 14-14, LaRoche caused matchup problems for the Lions and were blessed with some strong guard play.

Though they had fallen short in the AMCC's, the Lions were optimistic that a 22-3 record and AMCC regular season title would be enough to earn a NCAA Division III tournament bid. On February 29, the team got their wish and were slated to play the 18-10 SUNY-Potsdam at home on March 4.

Like the LaRoche game, the Lions were engaged in another close, hard-fought matchup. At the half, Potsdam held a 31-26 lead. In the second half, Potsdam extended its lead to 11 points, but the Lions came storming back to tie the game at 54 with 4:54 remaining. After Potsdam went up 58-56 with 31 seconds left, sophomore guard Doug Merski hit two free throws to tie the game.

Potsdam then went up 60-58 by hitting a layup with seven seconds remaining. Junior guard Tom Lulich then drove to the hoop but was tripped up and stripped of the ball as time ran out.

With that, the men's basketball team's season



PHOTO BY LAUREN PACKER/BEHREND BEACON

Senior center James Curren, who scored 11 points in the Lions' loss to Potsdam on March 4, leaves Behrend as the career scoring leader and two time AMCC player of the year.

ended and the team's seniors had finished their final college game.

Appropriately, it was the seniors who were the Lions' leading scorers in the game. Senior forwards David Hairston and Casey Ponsoll each had 12 points while Curren added 11. Potsdam was led by Edane Barton with 13 points and 12 rebounds.

Behrend finished out its season with a 22-4 overall record and 11-1 in the AMCC. Though the season ended disappointingly, it was not without some accolades. Curren was named the AMCC player of the year for the second straight year. He was also a member of the All-Conference First Team.

Curren averaged 16.9 points per game, 8.0 rebounds per game and had a 54.8 field goal percentage.

Lulich was made honorable mention All-Conference. Also, for the sixth time, head coach Dave Niland was named AMCC Coach of the Year.

Housing and Food Service Athlete of the Week



Shane Elzer

Sport: Baseball
Class: Sophomore
Date: April 26, 2004

In the bottom of the seventh inning between the La Roche Redhawks and Penn State Behrend, the score was tied 2-2 in a must-win game for the Lions. Elzer hit a single to bring in the man on base and collect the game-winning RBI for his team.

Behrend took the game 10-5. For the week, Elzer had nine RBIs, seven runs and 12 hits.

Swimming team sets new Behrend records

by Samantha Cibula
staff writer

The men and women swimmers ended their season at the Grove City Invitational Feb 12-14. Both the men and women took home sixth place.

The men tallied 278 points during the three-day meet, while the women scored 243 points. Both teams also beat conference rival Penn State Altoona.

The three-day meet consisted of preliminaries, consolations and finals. After the preliminary swim if swimmers placed 9th-16th you came back at night to swim in consolations, and if the swimmers placed 1st-8th they came back for finals.

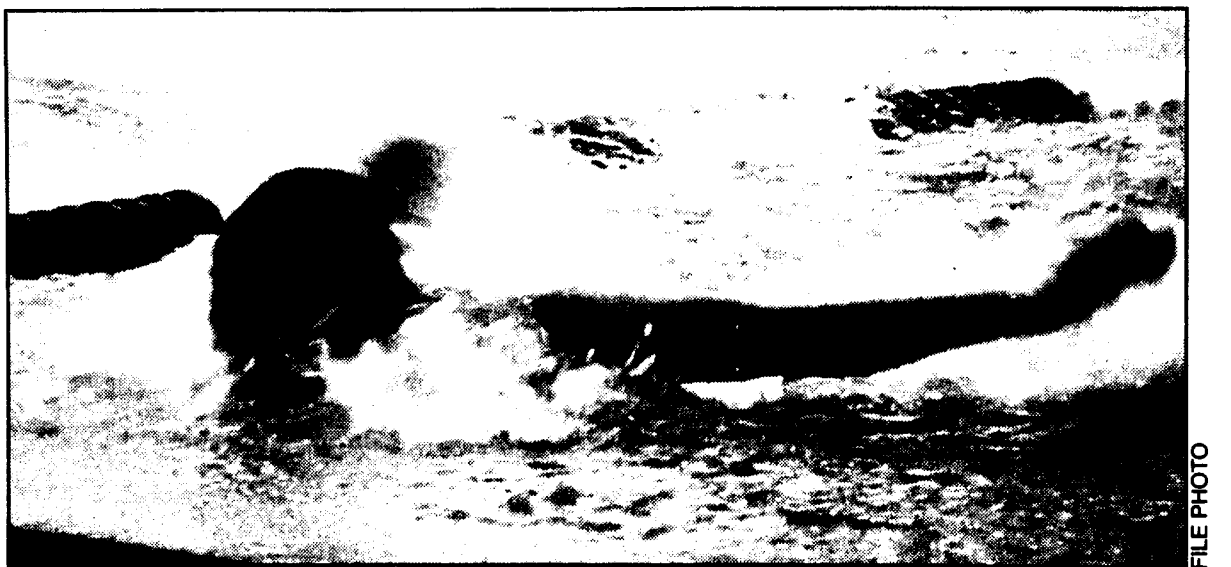
"Everyone seemed a little nervous for their first race, but the second day...you just can't describe," said head coach Jen Slack. "The third day is hard to come back on but the team pushed through and continued to place in consolations and finals."

The entire women's swim team made it back for consolation or finals in either an event or a relay.

Senior captain Tara Braden and freshman Whitney Marshall competed in finals in individual events. Braden placed 8th in the 200 yd breaststroke and 7th in the 100 yd breaststroke. Marshall, who individually placed the highest for the ladies, placed 6th in the 100 yd butterfly and 8th in the 200 yd butterfly.

"It was satisfying to see our hard work pay off," said senior captain Sarah McGarvey. "Everyone swam their fastest times. It was an incredible three days."

The women's 200, 400, and 800 yd freestyle relays, and the 400 yd medley relay placed in the top six and all broke the team records. Adding to the record-breaking relays was Marshall's 200 yd



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freestyle, 500 yd freestyle, 100 yd freestyle, and 200 yd butterfly. Freshman distance swimmer Alexis Puhala also broke her 1650 yd freestyle team record.

"Everyone swam awesome and with a lot of heart," said Marshall. "We worked really hard all season and it showed during our races for three straight days."

"It was just a great experience, and a great way to end the season. The girls had close races, and everyone raced to the wall," said Jen Slack.

"Alison Jaskolski swam stroke for stroke, next to a girl in the 200 yd freestyle and at the end just out touched her. It was so close that you couldn't tell by looking at the pool who won," said Slack.

"I just saw her hand at the end of the race and decided I'd beat her," said Jaskolski.

The men also saw their fastest times of the season, sending close to everyone back for consolations or finals. Along with personal best times, freshman Brandon Thiel broke the first team record for the men this season.

Thiel broke the mens 500 yd freestyle team record (5th place) and the 200 yd freestyle record (4th place).

"I was at the top of my game, and as each race came I felt stronger and faster," said Thiel. "I trusted my abilities and I didn't let the days of competition wear me down."

Joining Thiel in top finishes were senior captain Eric Phillips (5th 400 yd individual medley relay, 5th 200 yd breaststroke), sophomore Steve Schleicher (7th 1000 yd freestyle) and freshman Kent McKee (6th 400 individual medley, 8th 200 yd backstroke).

The men also placed in the top seven for the 200, 400 and 800 yd freestyle relays, and the 200, and 400 medley relays.

"The taper was nothing like my high schools taper, and it had me thinking that I wasn't ready for the meet," said McKee. "There was no need for doubt, because our coaches know how to train us and the team and I swam our best times."

"It was an awesome meet, you can't really explain it," he said.