

SPORTS

Athletics honors alumni achievements

By Sara Kamber
co-sports editor

Emotions ran high on Saturday for the 2004 Athletic Hall of Fame ceremony where members of the class of '94 were welcomed back to acknowledge their place in Behrend sports history. The 15th annual Hall of Fame was held in the McGarvey Commons, where guests were greeted by Athletic Director, Brian Streeter, and enjoyed a dinner reception before the ceremony kicked off.

The five misty-eyed inductees included two women's basketball players, Anne Bonner and Wendy Ebinger Sudnerman, two men's basketball players, Don Plyler and Byron Thorne, and representing men's tennis, Eric Good.

Women's basketball coach Roz Fornari introduced the first former athlete, Anne Bonner. Fornari recalled her excitement about being able to coach both Bonner and Ebinger, then seniors, in her first season as the Behrend women's basketball head coach.

"I told some of the '93-'94 team that was there to support Anne and Wendy that I wish I had the opportunity to coach them now," said Fornari. "I am much more prepared to handle situations and coaching elements than when I was a rookie coach. I kind of wish I knew then what I know now."

Bonner and Ebinger led women's basketball to their most successful three-year run in the history of the sport at Behrend. Bonner finished her career shooting 53 percent from the field and 80 percent at the line. She tops the record books as number one in field-goal percentage, number two in points per season with 431, and number two in field-goals made in a single game with 11 as well as holding thirteen other records. As a result of scoring 431 points during her senior season, Bonner was named to the Eastern Collegiate Athletic Conference Southern All-Star Team.

Bonner warned the crowd filled with family members, athletic staff, and student athlete representatives that she would try her best to get through her speech without crying, but made no promises. She choked up when recalling her first meeting with Fornari. Coach had outlined her expectations for Bonner and told her, "this is your job, and I expect you to do it." Today, Bonner still holds her coach's confidence in her abilities as sacred.

"I am really proud of all that Anne and



The 2004 Hall of Fame Inductees included from left Anne Bonner, Don Plyler, Bryon Thorne, Wendy Ebinger, and Eric Good pictured with Athletic Director Brian Streeter. The Hall of Fame ceremony took place in the McGarvey Commons.

her teammates accomplished," said Fornari. "It is always a great feeling to have such an impact on a student athlete's life."

All-star guard, Wendy Ebinger, guided her team to 70 wins over four seasons, ECAC championships, and the NCAA tournament. She, too, is ranked in more than 15 categories including number one in field-goals made in a game notching 12, number one in all-time steals with 290, and number one in assists with 386.

Ebinger reminded the guests that no matter how aggressive she was on the court or how many points she scored, none of her accomplishments would have been possible without her team. She recalled her days playing on the Perry courts and was saddened that a place she held so close to heart had now been built over. Ebinger said she felt honored to be inducted with four of her closest friends of that time, whom she felt all built an important legacy to their respective programs.

Eric Good led the men's tennis team to 14 wins in 1993 and 13 in '94. During his career he posted a 47-30 mark in singles play, and his 40-16 doubles record is still the best in Behrend history.

Eric Good was the most emotional speaker of the inductees saying many times that the other four were athletes, he was just lucky to be there. When stopping to remember Herb Lauffer, the Athletic Director at the time of these athletes' college careers, he almost could not go on. Lauffer was remembered by all

five of the inductees and each noted that he holds a special place in their hearts.

Don Plyler and Byron Thorne are considered two of the best to ever run the court for the Lions. Plyler is especially noted for his long-distance shooting, holding number one records in three-pointers made in a season with 196, and three-pointers made in a game at nine. He holds a number of other records as well, and was named Male Athlete of the Year in 1991-92. During his speech, he thanked Thorne for being his go-to guy without whom he would not be here.

Thorne has been named one of the most athletic players in Lions history by the Athletic Department. In his senior season, he totaled 568 points, which is the third most all-time points scored in Behrend men's basketball history. Thorne made his mark on the record books finishing number one in steals at 171, number two in all-time scoring with 1,386, and number three in assists with 321. He was the first ever Division III All-American at Behrend.

While Thorne remembered Lauffer, he recalled a story of a visit back to Behrend when Lauffer sat Thorne down and said "thank you." Thorne said that it was not until that night he realized what Lauffer was thanking him for, and in a way, what Lauffer was thanking them all for.

"This was one of the most talented groups I have seen here," said Fornari. "It takes a lot qualify for the hall of fame, and certainly this class was a superb group."

HOUSING AND FOOD SERVICE ATHLETE OF THE WEEK



Brad Ruffo Sept. 27, 2004

Sport: Men's cross country
Class: Sophomore

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

finisher for the blue and white at all three Invitationals this season.

Next up the team will travel to the Dickinson Invitational on October 2 at 10:00 a.m.

Last weekend at the Allegheny Invitational, Ruffo finished 12 out of 206 runners notching a time of 27:04. Ruffo has been the top men's

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

Sports psychology major ends research, heads for home



DANIELLE FAULKNER/BEHREND BEACON

Cole during his interview with writer Annie Sevin earlier this week.

By Annie Sevin
staff writer

Mark Cole, a senior from the University College Northampton, England, has finished his sports psychology research at Penn State Behrend. Unfortunately for Behrend and Cole, he will be leaving the campus today to return to his home University. "I would love to stay here for a year, but I've got to get back and graduate," said Cole.

Cole was here at Behrend for six weeks researching sports psychology for his senior thesis (a 15,000 word paper). He was comparing and contrasting how American and English sports teams approach issues such as handling stress, mental attitudes, and coping with a big game.

Cole chose Penn State Behrend because the campus matched perfectly to Northampton in terms of size, teams, and sports facilities. He said it's the exact same level of sporting ability here. He chose sports that are available here as well as in England such as soccer, tennis, golf, volleyball, cross-country, and track and field. He used Behrend athletes and coaches from those sports teams to conduct the research for his thesis. Mainly, he surveyed them about their athletic experiences.

Not only did Cole work with the sports teams, he also worked with the psychology department. Specifically, he worked with Dr. Dawn Blasko. She took an interest in Cole's work and encouraged him to talk to Behrend students about the field of sports psychology and how it can help athletes.

Cole explained that psychology is very important aspect of athletic competition. "The difference between winning and losing in any sport is not points...instead it's [the athletes] attitude toward their mental game." He stated that it was a challenge to "convince people that within the world of sports, psychology is a massive field now."

Unfortunately, that wasn't Cole's only challenge; he also had to get over the negative attitude obstacle. "The biggest challenge is trying to break down the barriers of people's negative attitudes in [sports] psychology," he said. Cole's research wasn't about finding the negative or positive aspects of sports as some might think. Instead, he maintained it was about comparing and contrasting the differences and similarities of the English and American sports teams.

During his stay at Behrend, Cole was pleased about how helpful and friendly everyone was. Jokingly, he attributed everyone's kindness to his nationality saying, "Maybe it's my accent." He enjoyed his living experience on campus as well. When asked what he thought about Behrend, Cole declared, "Beautiful, beautiful campus." He said when people come here; they soon realize what they've got. "You've got everything you need here. You've got shops, food, a gym, everything."

Cole says he enjoyed his stay in Pennsylvania; he thinks Erie is very lucky to be near water. "I'd die to be living anywhere near water," he said. Cole entertained the idea of bringing more water sports to the campus; he thought that perhaps Behrend should make better use of having a lake so nearby.

Cole's stay at Behrend was all too short, but before he says goodbye to North America, he will spend a few weeks in the Algonquin National Park enjoying kayaking, repelling, and hiking. Then he will return to Northampton to graduate this coming May.

Cole considers himself lucky for coming to Behrend to conduct his research. That puts him ahead of the game when he returns to school because the rest of his peers are still on summer vacation. He mused, "I've already started my dissertation...[but] I still have to do a year's worth of classes when I go back as well as write a 15,000 word paper."

Women's tennis rolls win streak at six, lead AMCC

By Mike Tomko
staff writer

The women's tennis team continued its great play this week winning four games, three of them against AMCC teams and all in consecutive days. Following these four impressive victories, two of them by the score of 9-0, the lady Lions sit atop the AMCC conference alone.

"The team lost only one match out of three days of games. The girls played very well for having three straight days of matches," said Coach Jeff Barger. "It was a big confidence boost."

On Sept. 24, the team defeated Chatham 8-1 in Pittsburgh. Next the team traveled to Maryland for two matches, one on Saturday and Sunday. On Saturday the lady Lions shut out Frostburg 9-0 and continued their winning ways on Sunday by shutting out Penn State Altoona 9-0.

"It was worth while because they are in our AMCC division. So it was good practice to play them now before the championships," said freshman, Allison Mudrey.

"It was rough playing three matches in a row but then we had Monday off and another match on Tuesday so we were all pretty well rested."

On Tuesday, the team had a home game against a talented Waynesburg team. Frustration set in early for Waynesburg as they were down early and often. Mudrey and partner Mindy Calvert set the tone winning their doubles match 8-3 with Mudrey dominating the net throughout. Mudrey also won singles match 6-1, 6-4, helping the lady Lions win against Waynesburg by a score of 6-3. This win gives the lady Lions a six game winning streak.

"It was good competition," said Mudrey. "Last year Waynesburg beat us pretty bad so it was good to come back and win."

Despite the team's recent win streak, which now stands at six games, few fans have come out to the games to support the team.

"It's nice when people come and cheer us, but you can't force people to go," said Mudrey.

To this point, the team leads the AMCC

conference with a 5-0 record within the conference and is the only team with a winning record. Overall the Lions have a record of 9-3.

"It's always good to see my ladies dominate the opposition," said Brett Pollack, a follower of the lady Lions.

For the third straight week the lady Lions have had the AMCC tennis player of the week. This week the award went to sophomore, Mindy Calvert. The award was previously held by Freshman, Allison Mudrey and Sophomore, Jenna Yankowski.

"This is the third straight week someone from our team has won this award," said Coach Barger. "That is pretty good."

The Lions next game is a rematch against Chatham at home on Oct. 3. This is the last conference game of the season for the lady Lions, who have already clinched first place in the AMCC conference.

"This year it seems like we are the team to beat. This year is the first year we've beat teams 9-0," said Mudrey. "In the past they haven't done that, so we are doing pretty good so far."

Intramural Sand Volleyball Champs...

Coed - Project Mayhem



men's - Fockers



women's - ASA

