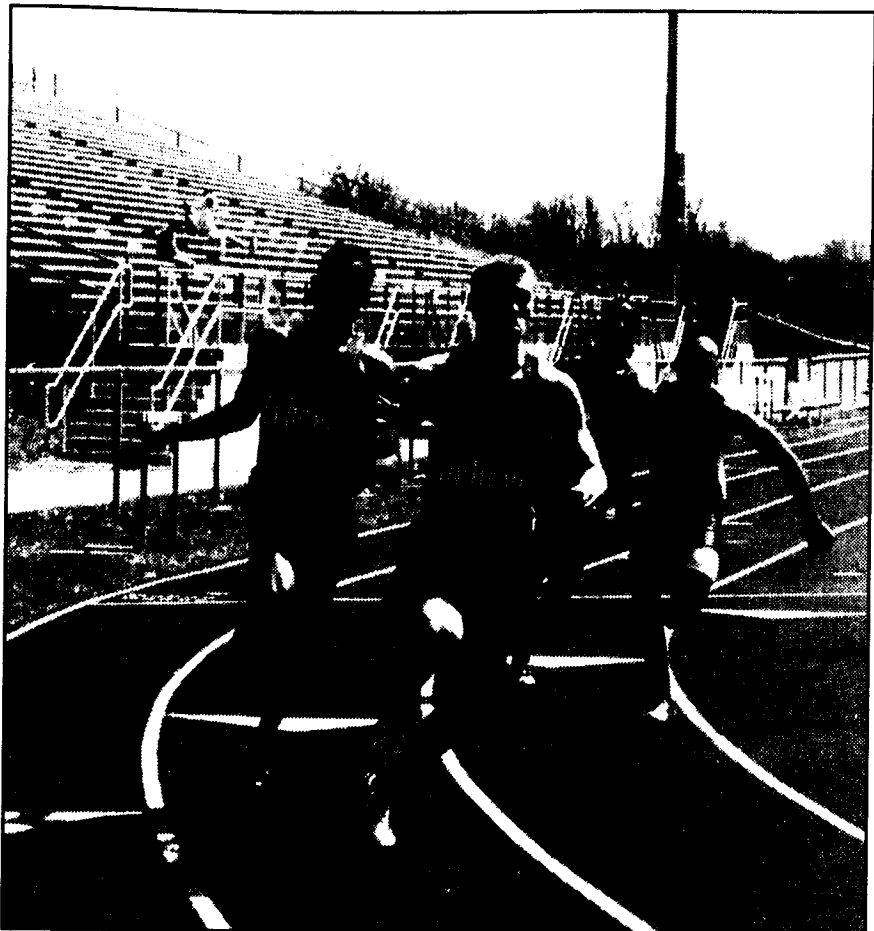


SPORTS

Slippery Rock Invitational invites good competition



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Senior Isiah Meek and junior Dennis Scheuer are part of the 4x100 ECAC qualifying team. Scheuer set the school record in the 400 meter hurdles this past weekend and qualified for ECAC's with a time of 57 seconds.

By Stephen Wingenter
staff writer

April 16, the Women's Track Team competed at the Slippery Rock Invitational and resulted in many records broken and many qualifiers for ECAC. Coached by Dave Cooper, the Lady Lions are coming out as strong competitors.

Freshman Leisl Soergel has been excellent in the 800 meter dash. Soergel recently broke the record for the second week in a row and placed second in the event. Her new time of 2:20.88 has also qualified her for ECAC.

Freshman Becky Gonzalez is also a newcomer who has been contributing greatly to the team. Gonzalez surpassed her previous two records for the 100 high hurdles, staking her claim to another Behrend record.

Placing 4th with the new time of 15.84 has also qualified Gonzalez for ECAC.

Competing along with Soergel and Gonzalez was junior Nicole Mineweaver and freshman Erica Smith in the 4 x 400 relay. As a result, they placed 3rd with another ECAC qualifying time of 4:10.16. Smith also placed 6th in the 400 hurdles with a time of 1:08.20.

Putting forth great effort on the team was junior Staci Banaszek placing 5th in the triple jump with a distance of 35' 7th in the high jump with a height of 5'0", and 8th in the long jump with a solid 16'1.25."

The team had a chance to face up against some of their future competitors at the ECAC. The Slippery Rock Invitational was loaded with lots of D II and D I schools. With this kind of competition, many of the athletes were hitting their personal bests.

Freshman Samantha Baldensperger threw her personal record of 87 feet in the javelin. Senior Claire Manelick had a personal record of 5:12.61 in the 1500 meters.

Freshmen Lymari Martinez and Jalise Velez both broke the tough 70 second barrier in the 400 meter event. Each of the ladies ran a 69.78.

"With only 12 women competing, our women are doing a great job. They have broken Behrend records 10 times already in the short season. Some of the Behrend women are doing three and four events per meet which is very strenuous. They do it without any complaining and are eager to work hard in practices to continue improving. They are a great bunch of competitors," said Cooper.

The team prepares this week for the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Invitational on Saturday.

Behrend breaks three records at Invitational

By Justin Bootes
staff writer

Behrend already has 10 ECAC qualifiers. The Slippery Rock Invitational proved to be the area of breaking Behrend school records.

The Salt Rock Invitational not only marks the fourth meet of the season, but also the shortest trip.

"At this stage we are still experimenting and overloading athletes in events," said Cooper.

Three school records were broken Saturday at the Salt Rock Invitational. Junior Harry Balwick took the record in the 1500 meter run with a time of 4:09.14. This metric mile time earned him a position of 5th place.

Sophomore Brad Ruffo broke his own Behrend record of 33:22.80 in the 10,000 meters. The record was set the very first meet of the outdoor season.

Junior Dennis Scheuer placed 6th in the 400-meter intermediate hurdles with a time of 57.00. The Behrend record is good enough for the ECAC meet.

Senior Mike Barlett took 5th place in the 800 meter run. Senior Donnie Hackworth took 8th in the pole vault with a vault of 14 feet. Junior Shane Rock triple jumped 43'9.25" qualifying for the second straight week.

Senior Isiah Meek finished third in the 110 high hurdles, qualifying for ECACs again. Sophomore Dan Mitchell launched the javelin 175'5" to qualify for the ECAC meet.

Freshman Brett Pollack filled in for the 4x400 team (Barlett, Meek and Shugars) at the last minute as the lead off runner. The team took third overall.

With the season coming to an end soon hopefully more athletes will make it to the ECAC meet.

The ECAC Championships is on May 19-20 and the NCAA Championships are May 26-28.

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Behrend prepares for Western Division Championships

By Rachel Lyon
staff writer

The Lady Lions finished the regular season with a disappointing 12-3 loss against Slippery Rock University Tuesday night. The blue and white now get set to take on University of Michigan in the Western Division Championships beginning Friday.

Behrend's leading scorer, sophomore Cara Ludwig fired in two goals, while freshmen Alexis Puhala also knocked in a goal and added a steal and a drawn kickout. The Lady Lions finish up the regular season with a 5-15 record overall.

Sophomore Ericka Brunner and freshman Sarah Cicero combined for nine goals for The Rock, with four and five goals, respectively. Brunner, Slippery Rock's leading scorer, also added two assists and a steal. Goalenders Amanda Miller and Kelly Leibolt combined for seven saves.

"We played the best we could play," said Coach Joe Tristan. "We were playing girls with experience. Experience is a huge factor for us."

Many of the Lady Lions opponents boast rosters of 20-25 players, while Behrend works with just 10 members. Tristan points out that a deeper bench and more experienced players in the team's opponents pose a challenge that can be overcome the longer his team plays together.

The Lady Lions' first round game of the Western Division Championships will come against the number 12 nationally ranked Wolverines of Michigan. The two teams squared off back on March 6, with the Wolverines routing Behrend 13-2. Michigan is 6-0 all-time against the blue and white and this year, Behrend is 1-5 against CWPA Western Division foes. The Wolverines are hot, winning eight of their last 11 matches and boast a 22-12 record overall.

"It's important we don't give up on ourselves before we play the game," said Tristan. "If we can play our game, we are getting better as

a team."

Despite a crushing loss to Michigan earlier in the season, Behrend has played tight against Division I opponents St. Francis and Siena College. With those close matches, Tristan believes his team has a chance as long as the Lady Lions can settle into their normal game play.

The high level of competition against Division I schools has brought growth in maturity and confidence. Tristan says the difference is "day and night," in terms of where the team stands now from the beginning of the season and also where the Lady Lions stood just three years ago.

Behrend's record against fellow Division III schools this season was 4-1, with the only loss coming to Washington & Jefferson last week. Three years ago, the Lady Lions didn't manage that accomplishment.

"You have to start somewhere," said Tristan. "To see this kind of improvement, I know two things. One, I know I'm doing something right as a coach and two, it makes me happy to see this kind of growth."

NBA Postseason provides excitement, anticipation

By Chris LaFuria
sports commentary

With an exciting final day of the regular season, the 2005 playoff schedule is now final. This year's matchups will solidify this season as one of the most exciting and nail-biting postseasons in history. With some teams fighting back from losing records in the first half of the season to teams who share a history of the literal term for fighting, many series have no clear advantages.

From the start of the season, the favorites this year happen to be the top two seeds in the Eastern and Western Conference. With the addition of Shaquille O'Neal, the Miami Heat have a dominating lineup and, with the consistency of Dwyane Wade, could advance far into the playoffs and even bring Miami their first title. In the West, Phoenix, who took the league by storm in the beginning of the season, has the clear advantage over the first few series.

Miami and Phoenix may have the advantage early on, but the teams who rank as the two seed in their respected conferences may give these teams a run for their money. If San Antonio can keep Tim Duncan healthy and maintain their suffocating defense, a Finals run may be in their future. In the East, Detroit, the defending champions, who had a very slow start early on this season, has one of the best defenses since the dawning of the Shot Clock. With Ben Wallace managing the boards and Rick Hamilton playing stellar defense, repeating as champs may be possible.

The lower seeds, which generally have the toughest time succeeding in the postseason, may surprise everyone. In the East, Indiana matches up against a Boston Celtics team that has a history of not showing up early in the playoffs. Reggie Miller and Jermaine O'Neal need to keep up their consistent play to advance. In the West, every team has to watch out for Denver. The Nuggets are 31-7 since George Karl took over the team. Even though they are playing the favorite in the West, Denver has a chance to take the San Antonio series to seven games and weaken the Spurs.

Matchups of all types fill this year's playoffs and will make it very interesting. The first round games of Dallas vs. Houston and Chicago vs. Washington will be the most intense games because of the arduous journey each team has endured to make it to the playoffs. If you look further into the playoffs, even tighter matchups arise. If Indiana can overcome the Celtics in the first round, a potential matchup of Pacers and Pistons would add to the excitement. The two teams, consumed by bad blood, will fight to the utter death for advancement and pride.

The only factor that would keep this postseason from being the most memorable is the absence of the leagues biggest stars. This year, the playoffs will be without Kevin Garnett, last year's MVP, perennial superstar Kobe Bryant and Jordan's heir apparent, LeBron James. The Timberwolves and Lakers have suffered dismal seasons while the Cavaliers fell from glory and were snubbed when the New Jersey Nets won their final game, eliminating Cleveland.

Now, it's selection time. I am going to predict upsets, because

there is too much talent in the lower seeds that are overlooked. Indiana will beat the Celtics in the first round but will fall to the Pistons. Sacramento does have the talent to beat out the Supersonics and challenge San Antonio. However, even with the upsets early on, you cannot ignore the number one seeds.

Miami and Phoenix have played to well this season and should not be impaired on their journey. Duncan and San Antonio will take Phoenix to seven games, but fall short due to the dominance of Amare Stoudemire and the passing precision of Steve Nash. As well as Detroit has been playing, the Heat may have too many weapons for their defense to handle. That is why I predict that Miami will prevail until the Finals. Phoenix is the most exciting team to watch. They can outrun teams in transition and score in the paint. If Shawn Marion and Stoudemire can keep Shaq from getting the ball, the Suns shall reign supreme. If this can happen, the Phoenix Suns shall be the 2005 NBA Champs.



Shaquille O'Neal's Heat are the number one seed coming out of the East.

Intramural season comes to an end

By Eric Nyberg
contributing writer

This past week the intramural Spring season came to an end on a high note. With temperatures nearing 70 degrees, students came out in masses to enjoy the nice weather and the last event of the season. intramural events have gained popularity among students in the past few years and the numbers keep rising.

The spring season kicked off on March 25 with soccer. Luckily the Behrend fields were playable and participants got to enjoy their first taste of spring.

The next event in the spring line-up was the team triathlon. Students who participated in this event were tested in their physical abilities but had a lot of fun competing with each other to see who kept in shape during the off season.

The third event, which began on April 8 was the track meet. There was a lot of hype going in to this event but things didn't get out of hand. Most of the people running the track meet did it for their personal interest in keeping in shape and the chance to run around campus, without slipping on any ice.

The final event in this years Intramural season was the Badminton singles tournament. Even though the tournament was played indoors during seasonably nice weather there was still a considerable turnout. Badminton is a sport with minimal physical activity and that drew numbers of students who just wanted to get out and have some fun.

Like years past, intramural sports attract a wide variety of students who like the friendly context of playing for fun. Unlike varsity sports at Behrend, intramural events require a low-level of physical ability without a coach hassling you to do better.

Luke Goldner, BIO 07, is a varsity soccer player at Behrend who regularly participates in intramural soccer. He shares the same feeling about intramural events as most of the student body.

When asked about his experience in intramural soccer Goldner said, "After playing [varsity] at such an intense level of competition, it is nice to just go out and play the sport I love for fun with some of my closest friends."

Patrick Farrell/Miami Herald