

# SPORTS - YEAR IN REVIEW

## Softball team ready for season after spring training

By Crystal Chisholm  
from the March 29 issue

During spring break, the softball team, consisting of 12 members, headed down to Kissimmee, Fla., for spring training. In preparation for the games, the team began practicing in February, and put in two more practices before heading to Florida.

While at spring training, the team played eight of the ten scheduled games, competing in two games daily. This year the team had what seems as though a streak of bad luck on the field, leaving spring training with a record of 0-8.

The team's misfortunes continued when they were rained out of two of their scheduled games in Florida, better known as the Sunshine State. Though the team suffered a terrible loss, they managed to hold their weight against top ranking teams.

"My ladies held off a top ranked team scoreless for four straight innings, said Head Coach Stacy Pondo. "They played a good game."

Though they were not very successful in dominating their competitors, the women's softball team stayed strong throughout the week. "They played tough teams during training, very good athletic teams, while holding down a very busy schedule," said Pondo.

While in Florida, the team was able to get a clear view of some of their weak points as well as their strong points, which will aid them in the upcoming season. "The team overall just needs to brush up on the basics. The Fundamentals, and their hitting," said Pondo

Even without the wins they had

hoped for, their losses shined light on the fact that through everything, they are still a very close-knit team, which Pondo considers to be one of the teams best assets. By playing competitive teams, they learned a lot about themselves and the team as a whole.

Even with the losses suffered during spring training, the team remains positive going into the conference games.

"Despite our record, Florida was a great starting block for our season," said Team Captain Shelle Roberts. "We played some really tough teams, and although we didn't win, we are much better prepared for our conference games. Now that we have Florida behind us, we need to stay positive and play softball the way we know how."

The team now knows what is needed in order to get the job done, and dominate out on the field.

"Even on Tuesday, their first practice since coming back up North, I can see they have stepped up their play another notch and they realized what they're capable of doing," said Pondo.

"With our first game coming up on March 29, I want to let it be known that our record doesn't portray what they did down in Florida," said Pondo. "They're a strong willed team with a desire to play hard and will compete well once they are back up North, during the season. It is essential that we keep positive. The team needs to keep their heads up, and continue to work hard and do the best they can."

## Baseball off to solid start

By Sara Kamber  
from the March 18 issue

The baseball team returned from spring training in Port St. Lucie, Fl. with a 5-3 record. The blue and white saw strong performances from several players who are earning their first real opportunity to play on a daily basis. After seven seniors graduated last season, there are some big shoes to be filled.

"We are pleased with our team effort in Florida," said Head Coach Paul Benim. "Our performance was solid during an extremely demanding week where we played eight varsity and three junior varsity games in six days. Spring training is honestly about survival and we did that and a little more."

Junior pitcher Ray DeVaul helped start things out the right way by earning this season's first AMCC Pitcher of the Week honors. DeVaul was 2-0 in his first two starts of the season, picking up a pair of shutout wins over Susquehanna and Eastern. Over 12 1/3 innings, he allowed no earned runs, struck out 8 and walked only 3.

Senior Jason Shaffer and junior Chris McCartney were each 1-1 on the mound. McCartney fanned 5 over 10 innings of work while Shaffer struck out 9 in 13 innings.

"The pitching staff really excelled," said Benim. "In several instances they were dominant and controlled the game from start to finish. We ask that they give us a chance to play defense and hit a little



Senior Vince Canzano makes the tag against Case Western. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

bit. They gave us a chance to succeed each and every game."

Last season's AMCC Newcomer of the Year, Brian Hart was back at work during the trip. Hart was 12 for 26 at the plate scoring 3 runs and 7 RBIs. He leads the team in batting average at .461 for the week.

Coming in behind Hart in batting average is senior captain Vince Canzano. Canzano averaged .423 with 11 hits in 26 at bats. He brought in 3 RBIs and had 5 runs. Canzano shares captain duties with fellow seniors Shaffer and Matt Szymanski. Canzano holds down short stop for the blue and white while Shaffer and Szymanski are both pitchers.

"Canzano, Shaffer and Szymanski all did

quite well, but I think they will be even better down the road at crunch time," said Benim. "We always look for upperclassmen to step up and perform. Players should improve every year and develop different aspects of their game and as seniors, be at their best and have their best year."

Although spring training was very successful, there were a few sets backs, including a nasty loss to Bethany College, 3-10. Over the eight game road trip, the Lions recorded 22 turnovers.

"Florida is an early preview of the season, almost a mini-season," said Benim. "But one good or bad game doesn't make a year or a career. Our guys did good things and we strive to get better daily."

## Swim teams rewrite record books

By Samantha Cibula  
From the Feb. 18 issue

Feb. 10-12 marked the final team competition for both the men's and women's swim teams. It also marked a three-day period of team excitement, best times, and new records. The Lion's traveled to Grove City for an invitational where they competed against 11 teams. The men finished fourth overall and first in AMCC competition. The women finished fifth overall and also placed first in AMCC competition.

"We had nine men swimmers and divers and placed fourth overall," said Head coach Jen Slack. "Everyone stepped up to competition, swam fast, and got back into finals and consolations."

At the meet, the men went on a record breaking rampage setting three new individual team records, two relay records and one AMCC record. Top finishers for the men were sophomore Brandon Thiel, freshmen Dustin Fairchild, Matt Seiferth, Anthony

Spoto and diver Dan Wiltroot.

Fairchild set one new AMCC record in the 500 freestyle with the time of 4:53.14; that time also set a new team record. Fairchild's 200 freestyle performance was good enough to set yet another team record with the time of 1:48.34. Spoto's 100 freestyle time 49.71 added to the record breaking performances.

In relay action the combination of Fairchild, Seiferth, junior Steve Schleicher and Thiel broke the 800 freestyle relay record (7:24.13). On Saturday, the four-man team of Spoto, Fairchild, Seiferth and Thiel ended the meet setting the 400 freestyle team record (3:18.58). Both relay records wiped out records that were originally set in the 2001 season, which was the men's second varsity swim season.

"They were tough records to break," said Slack. "It was exciting to see them work together to break those records."

The women had just as an exciting meet as the men. The blue and white teamed up, setting a record-breaking nine new indi-

vidual team records and four new relay records. To put the icing on the cake, the Lady Lion's set seven new AMCC individual records and four new AMCC relay records. The record breaking performances were surrounded with team best and Behrend's first-ever individual event Champion at the Grove City Invitational.

Morales placed first in both the 500 and 1650 freestyle. She mixed in a second place finish in the 1000 freestyle.

Morales, who made history earlier this year making ECAC cuts, once again gave Behrend swimming something to record in the history books. She was the first Lady Lion to take home a first place finish not in one event but two. Adding to her performance were record breaking swims in the 500 free (5:12.15), 1000 free (10:43.53) and the 1650 free (17:54.67). Each record was a team and AMCC record.

Marshall also had a standout meet. The sophomore captain broke records in the 200 free (1:59.11), 200 fly (2:18.80), and

100 free (55.59). Marshall's times in the 200 free and 200 fly set AMCC records. Her 100 freestyle time just missed the AMCC record set by Kim Love (55.15), Penn State Altoona in 2002. Marshall's largest time drop came in the 200 fly.

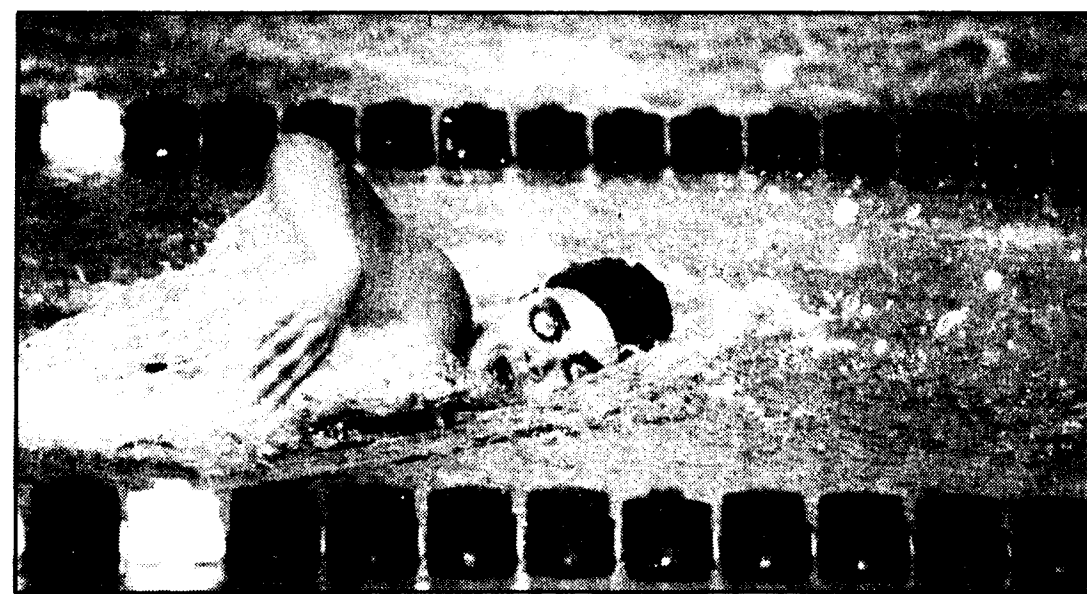
"Whitney dropped six seconds in the 200 fly," said Slack. "I knew she had it in her. It is so exciting to see someone do so well in a race that can be so tough."

Pilewski's bread and butter events guided her to two record breaking performances as well. Her 200 breaststroke time of 2:38.63 and 100 breaststroke (1:11.34) set both team and AMCC records. Sophomore sprinter Brittany Yost also knocked down a record in the 50 backstroke (30.21).

The Lady Lion's also rewrote four of five AMCC and team relay records. The quartet of Marshall, Pilewski, Morales and Yost broke the 400 free relay, 200 medley relay and 400 medley relay AMCC and team records. Marshall, Yost and Morales teamed up again, this time with sophomore distance swimmer Alexis Puhala to set the 800 free relay team and AMCC record with the time of 8:17.72.

"For some of the relays we weren't expecting to swim as fast as we did," said Yost. "But when you put four girls together behind a starting block, combined with intensity and determination, you realize anything can happen."

After a physically and emotionally wearing three-day meet, both teams find their seasons over. Morales, however, made ECAC cuts and will be traveling to the University of Pittsburgh where she will compete in the 1650 and 500 freestyle.



Freshman Cyndi Morales.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

## Women's water polo gains three wins

By Rachel Lyon  
From March 25 issue

The Lady Lions water polo team picked up three wins this weekend at the Behrend Invitational, but may have lost their top scorer for the rest of the season.

After a rough 0-7 start to the season, the blue and white took three out of their five matches, including two from Utica and one from Colorado College. The team also kept it close against Division I school, Sienna, losing 8-7.

Behrend's first win of the season came March 18 night against Utica, with a monster 11-2 victory. Freshman Amanda Wiest and sophomore Cara Ludwig led the lions with three goals apiece. The team then made it two in a row, with a win over Colorado, 7-5, Saturday morning. Ludwig led the way with three goals. Later that day, Behrend fell 8-7 against Sienna, with three goals from Britney Yost to lead the squad.

The Lady Lions started their Sunday stint of matches with a 12-4 loss against Iona, but finished the tournament Sunday night with another big win against Utica, 7-3. Ludwig and Yost each had a pair of goals for Behrend.

After a productive weekend, the women dropped their home match against Gannon 14-1. Erin Troester scored the lone goal for Behrend as the Lady Lions fell to 3-10 on the season.

Despite the slow start, Head Coach Joe Tristan saw a lot of positive things this weekend, including the important first win.

"It builds confidence for the athletes to get that first win under their belts," said Tristan.

He also points out that the first seven games came against Division I schools, such as University of Michigan and Colorado State University. Tristan says these matches are meant to help his team develop.

"You need to compete at a high level in order to play at a high level," said Tristan.

Tristan said he stresses defense and saw an improvement from where it was lacking before. The team still needs to work on filling holes and minimizing weaknesses

"Any great offense needs an even greater defense," said Tristan. And while he is happy with the offensive performance, defense still remains the team's main focus.

"We just need to come out and play the best game we can play," said Tristan.

Tristan said the team will take it one game at a time. The absence of Ludwig will cause some to shift positions and adjust to new roles.

Next week, Behrend will travel to take on Grove City College on March 29. The Lady Lions will then spend the weekend at the Sienna Invitational, to get rematches against Iona and Maryland.

## Streeter receives Outstanding Athletic Director award

By Sara Kamber  
from the Febr. 25 issue

Behrend Director of Athletics, Brian Streeter, is the 2004-05 recipient of the General Robert R. Neyland Outstanding Athletic Director Award, which is given out by the All-American Football Foundation. Streeter was presented with the award at the 66th Banquet of Champions.

Streeter was chosen because of his dedication to not only Penn State Behrend Athletics, but to the advancement of many other athletic programs as well. He serves as President of the Eastern Collegiate Athletic Conference and has been involved with ECAC for 24 years, serving on many different committees.

Streeter feels it is important to be professionally active outside of Behrend because it gives him the opportunity to see what does and does not work at other schools and bring that back to our own athletic program.

"It's important to serve both on and off campus to get ideas from other professionals," said Streeter. "This benefits not only the athletes, but all students and the school. In order for our program to get ahead, there has

to be professional development and involvement."

The award was given out by the All-American Football Foundation, which is even more of an honor for Streeter since Behrend has no football program. This proves the committee looks at all-around service and dedication to the entire athletics profession and not just what goes on at one director's school. When asked about the possibility of having football at Behrend, Streeter smiled happily at the chance to answer this question.

"I would love to see football be a part of our program here at Behrend," said Streeter. "Economically, this may not be the right time to add a football team, but it's on the to do list along with many other things that are important in the growth of Behrend. A college grows together, and when the time comes, the university will make the right decision."

Until Behrend does get that football team, they can take satisfaction in knowing the school has an "outstanding" athletic director who is dedicated to not only what is best for the athletics department, but the entire college.