

## WNBA struggles to find viewers, respect

By Chris LaFuria  
sports editor

On Tuesday, September 20, 2005, Yolanda Griffith scored 14 points as the Sacramento Monarchs won their first WNBA title by taking two straight games from the Connecticut Sun. It was the first professional title for any Sacramento professional team and an impressive victory for the program. In attendance for the big game were over 15,000 fans. This means that .005% of Americans attended the game. While most of you sports fans were glued to your television for this gala event, I believe I was watching a new episode of the Gilmore Girls.

If you can catch my tone from my opening paragraph, the WNBA does not rank high on my list of fondness. Ever since its inaugural season in 1997, the league has struggled for airtime on television and has basically struggled for an audience. Despite efforts from ESPN to broadcast the finals, attempting to raise some awareness about the league, not too many sports fans take a chance to sacrifice valuable sitcom time to view an event such as the WNBA.

Right away, people are already making judgments ranging from my hating of women's sports of sexist journalism. Therefore, I'd like to clarify that the WNBA is the only women's league that is unviewable. Maria Sharapova is a tennis whiz, who is most capable of beating me 6-0, 6-0 in nine out of 10 matches that I play against her. Mia Hamm could run circles around me while playing a pickup game of soccer. In the case of the WNBA, I feel that I can come off the bench and score six or eight points. The whole appeal of professional sports is that they are, indeed, professionals and are better than the average athlete.

Another aspect that renders the WNBA "lacking" is the marketing of the sport. During most professional sports season, if you walk up and down campus, you will see many people sporting their favorite athlete's

uniform or jersey. When I did a quick survey, I found that roughly zero percent of students here on campus wear WNBA jerseys. The best way to get fans interested in your sport is to sell merchandise and make the consumers your billboards for the sport itself.

In the early to mid 90s, what brought most Americans to be fans of the NBA is: the play of the superstars. Fans would watch games just so see Michael Jordan dunk or see Reggie Miller hit 3-pointers. The All-Star game was full of people that everyone knew. Every fan from the young to the old could list each roster of the All Star game. Herein lies another flaw of the WNBA. I couldn't tell you who started the WNBA all-star game. I couldn't even tell you who won the league's MVP. Furthermore, there aren't many stars making big plays and there certainly aren't any players who can impress fans with a non-trampoline-aided-slam-dunk. Sadly, the main reason the WNBA has not lived up to its expectations is the physical expectation of the main television audience. Women's events such as The Miss America Pageant or Women's sand volleyball are frequently televised to appeal to the main viewers of television- the males. Once again, primitive minds rely on primitive pleasure. I'm not condoning the displaying of only these sports, but I am simply stating what is true about the media world today.

Unfortunately, it is going to take a lot of effort to make the WNBA something viewable. The current state of the league is something that is only adored by avid basketball fans, friends and family of the basketball players. What this sport needs is a Michelle Jordan to take over and leave their mark on the sport. Every event needs something to make it worth viewing. Right now, the sub-par play of the league is not instilling much faith in the sport. Let's just say I will not be watching the upcoming WNBA Draft or genuinely anticipating the start of next season. The league needs help. Maybe a little more than possible.

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## Lions' tennis looks to make improvements

Heidi Weismiller  
staff writer

The Penn State Behrend women's tennis team managed two easy wins this past week against Frostburg State University on the September 24 and Penn State Altoona on Sunday, September 25.

On Saturday against Frostburg, the Lions left the court with an easy 9-0 win. "Our whole team did really well," said PSB junior Jenna Yankowski. "We were expecting a win." This marked the lions third AMCC win for the season. In singles competition, Allison Mudrey defeated her opponent 6-1, 6-2. Mindy Calvert beat her Frostburg opponent 6-3, 6-1. Yankowski secured herself a 6-1, 6-0 win and Shelly Goodpastor and Susan Cooper easily finished their opponents 6-1, 6-1. Amy Frizzell also managed a 6-1, 6-4 win. In doubles competition the lady Lions also swept the board. The Mudrey and Calvert team won 8-6. Yankowski and Goodpastor took home an 8-1

win and the Cooper and Frizzell team left Frostburg with an 8-2 win.

The following day, for their fourth AMCC game of the season, the Lions' tennis team traveled southeast to face Penn State Altoona. "They are pretty good," said Yankowski. "They improved since last year and their top players are strong." They left the court victorious taking home a 6-3 win and securing their place in the AMCC as number one with a 4-0 record. Mudrey, Yankowski and Goodpastor all took home wins for Behrend in the singles competition. Behrend also swept the doubles competition, securing wins in all three matches. "Our number two girl had a tough match, but she will play her again next week," said Yankowski.

More good news came for the Lions when Yankowski was named AMCC player of the week. The conference felt that she deserved this award because she went undefeated, 3-0, in her singles competition, as well as her doubles competition for

the past week with her partner Goodpastor.

"The week before, I won all of my matches," she said. "The number one girl on the team usually wins every season, and she has already been awarded it this year." Yankowski believes that although she is not number one on the team, she does deserve this award. "I worked hard in practice and I did good in all of my matches," she said. "We are a strong team and anyone could get it," said Yankowski.

Next week the lions face John Carroll at home on October first at 11 a.m. "They are really good; it will be a hard match," said Yankowski. Although John Carroll is not in the AMCC, they still hope to secure another win for their 9-2 winning season. The Lions will also see Altoona again for the second week in a row on October 2 at 1 p.m. "We hope to have a repeat of Sunday with a few minor improvements," said Yankowski.

## Volleyball captures Lycoming Tournament

By Mathew Turner  
staff writer

The Behrend Lions took the Lycoming College Tournament by storm over the weekend. They roared through the entire field of teams, and captured the championship. The Lions dominated from the opening game, and didn't look back from there.

In the first match of the tournament Behrend manhandled Dickinson in three straight games 30-12, 30-23, 30-18. Senior setter Amanda Evans led the attack, accounting for 38 assists, ten kills, and nine digs.

In the second match of the evening, Behrend made quick work of Penn College. The Lions won in straight games 30-11, 30-22, 30-12. Junior middle hitter Elaine Voltz hammered 16 kills that went along with her two blocks.

On Saturday, Behrend beat host Lycoming in four games 30-16, 26-30, 30-15, 30-13. Amanda Evans recorded her first triple-double of the year, totaling 44 assists, 16 digs, and 11 kills. Junior outside hitter Lisa Wagner accomplished a feat that only two other Division III volleyball players have all season. She blasted a career-high 30 kills, as she hit .617 on 47 attempts.

In the championship game, Behrend rolled over Marywood 30-21, 30-17, 30-17. Lisa Wagner posted 17 kills and 10 digs, while Freshman middle hitter Jenna Bensenhoefer added six kills and four blocks. Coach Pisano talked about what it meant to win the tournament afterwards, "Winning the

**"We played hard all weekend, and performed more consistently throughout the tournament."**

**-Coach Pisano**

tournament was a nice accomplishment for the team. We played hard all weekend, and performed more consistently throughout the tournament."

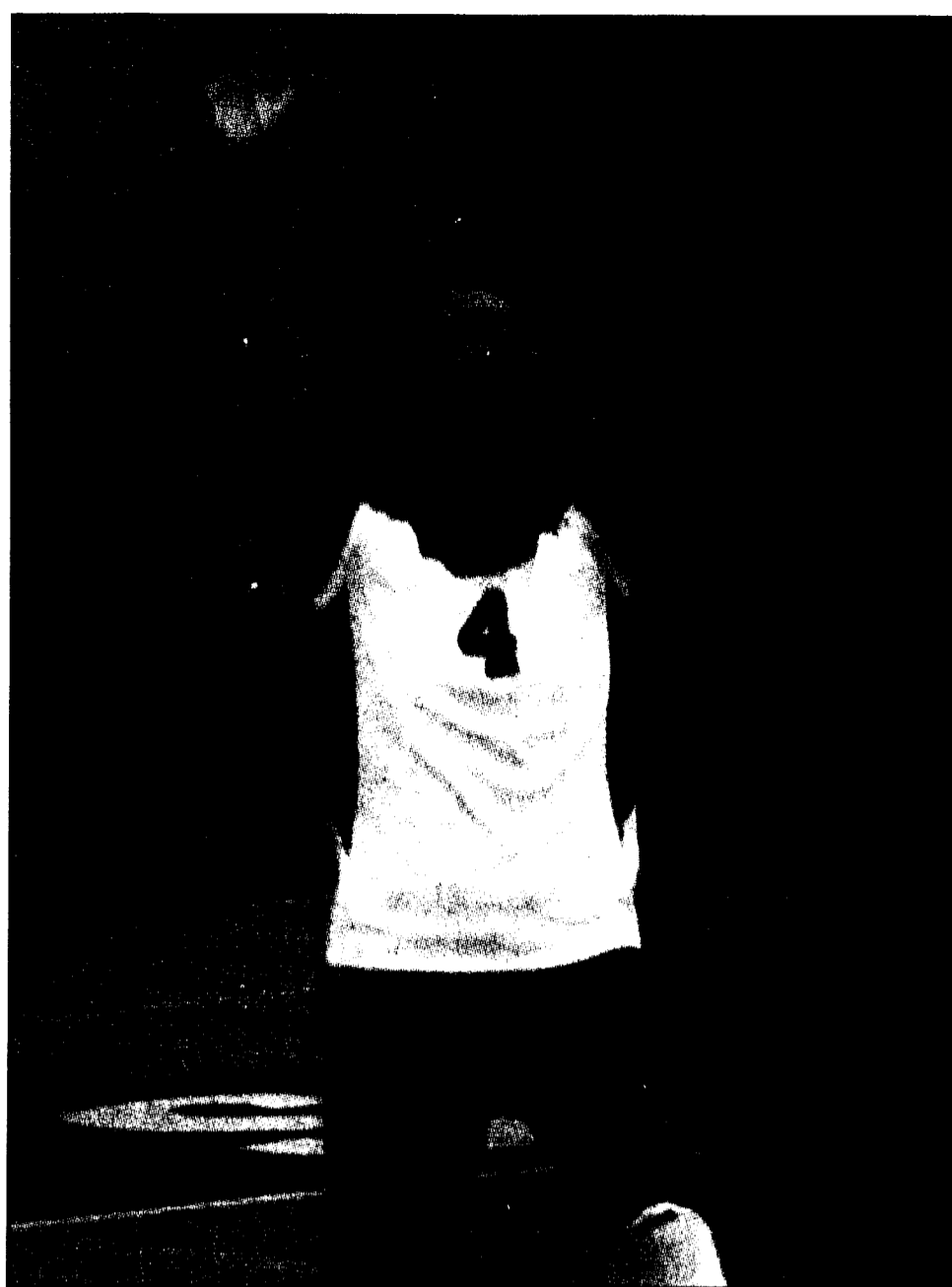
On Monday Behrend was greeted with some news that is now becoming customary. Lisa Wagner was named AMCC volleyball player of the week. Wagner is currently third in the AMCC in kills per game (3.81) and sixth in digs per game (3.85). This is now the third time

in a row that a Lion has been honored.

Behrend traveled to Pitt-Bradford for their first conference match of the year on the 28th. They came out on top for the sixth consecutive time, winning in straight games.

Last night Behrend returned home for a non-conference match with Grove City. They saw their six game winning streak come to an end as they fell in four games 22-30, 27-30, 30-26, 17-30. Elaine Voltz recorded 22 kills while Jenna Bensenhoefer tallied eight blocks. With the loss Behrend dropped to 13-7 on the season.

On October 1, Behrend will host Penn State Altoona, in what Coach Pisano calls the "biggest game of the year." Even after the setback against Grove City Coach Pisano had positive things to say about the team. "Our goal has been and continues to be to get better each day. I think we are right on track with where we need to be at this point in the season. Our sights are set on Saturday's match vs. Altoona and we feel good about our positive momentum heading into the weekend." The winner of this match will most likely host the conference championship, which could be a huge advantage to either team.



### HOUSING AND FOOD SERVICE ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

NAME: Lisa Wagner  
SPORT: Volleyball  
CLASS: Junior  
DATE: September 26, 2005

Behrend's Lisa Wagner (New Castle/Laurel) has been named Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference (AMCC) player of the week. The junior led the Blue and White to last weekend's Lycoming College Invitational Tournament Championship.

Behrend won 12 of 13 games en route to the title. They blanked Dickinson, Penn, Lycoming and Marywood. Wagner led the team with 5.19 kpg (kills per game) percentage and a 0.408 attack percentage. Against Lycoming, Wagner recorded a single match career-high of 30 kills. She also contributed 3.94 dpg (digs per game).

The Behrend Lions have a home stand hosting Grove City on Thursday, September 29, at 7 p.m., Penn State Altoona in the home league opener on Saturday, October 1, at 1 p.m., and the Hilbert Hawks on Tuesday, October 4, at 7 p.m. in the Junker Center.

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

## Player Injury Update September 29: Mike Donaworth, Capital University

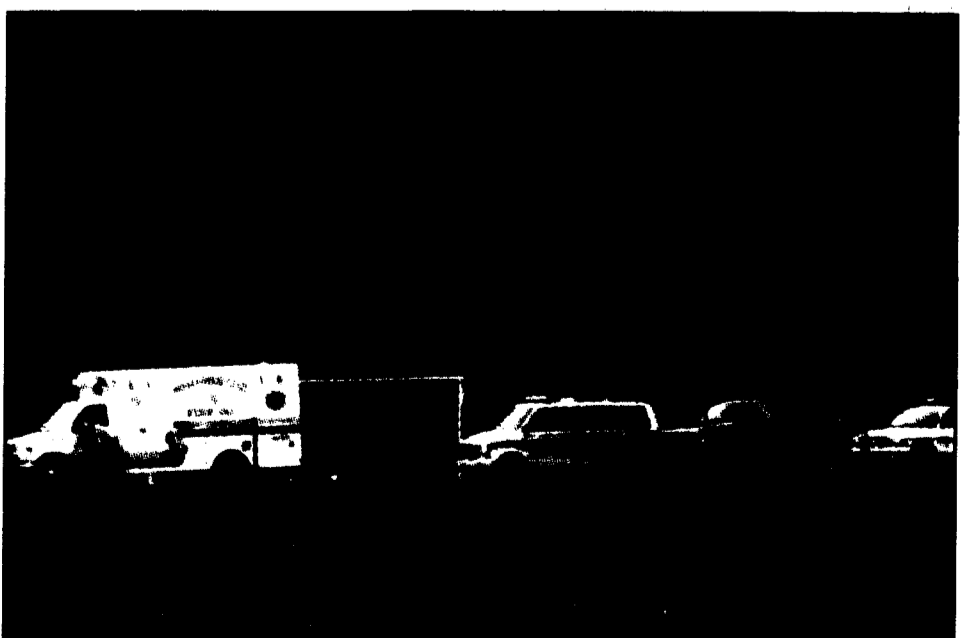
By Rob Frank  
managing editor

Injury is always the furthest thing from the mind of a sports player. Unfortunately for Mike Donaworth this was the first thing on his mind when he awoke laying face up on the Behrend Fields.

Late in the second half of regulation, Mike Donaworth was tending the goal for Capital University. With the game at 2-2 tie and eighteen minutes left on the clock it was still either teams' game. Donaworth received an accidental knee to the face from his own teammate. The field had been saturated by heavy rains the night before and because of this Donaworth's teammate could not come to a stop quickly. Donaworth fell unconscious, as a result of the collision, for almost a minute.

"They were concerned about spinal injuries, however they found he had full feeling in his extremities and they were taking him to Hamot to check for any additional injuries," stated assistant coach Matt Kohl. He was taken by ambulance to Hamot Medical Center where he was awaiting a MRI and CAT scan.

The game which was called with eighteen minutes left of regulation should be considered a full game because regulation went through the second half. However, official referee's were not on site for the game due to a miscommunication of unknown origin. The next men's soccer game is scheduled for Saturday at 3 p.m. against La Roche.



Rob Frank/THE BEHREND BEACON

Emergency vehicles lines the soccer field to come to the aid of the injured Capital University soccer player. The game was called due to the injury and darkness.