

SPORTS

Men's water polo goes to the wire

By Kyle Woodside
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How ironic it was that Behrend spirit towels were given out at Wednesday's men's home water polo contest against rival Gannon. This was appropriate to the game because there seemed to be plenty of spirit in the crowd, as well as in the pool.

After one quarter, the Knights jostled with the Lions to a 1-1 tie. Behrend's Andre Pranckevicius scored their only tally of the stanza and Gannon countered shortly thereafter.

Gannon started things off with a quick goal to tie it at two goals apiece, but Pranckevicius netted two more goals for the hat trick by halftime.

Behrend looked good on defense with a 3-2 lead at the break. Pranckevicius' second goal was "controversial." Many people pleaded with the refs because they felt the goal wasn't considered to be fully in the net, but the real reason the goal was debated over was because of the "seven-meter foul" rule.

"When you get fouled at that distance, you are supposed to 'grab and shoot' the ball in one motion," said Coach Joe Tristan. "You are not supposed to hold the ball for a long period of time on a seven-meter foul."

After halftime, the Knights countered with two very quick goals to take a 4-3 lead. "These goals changed the momentum," Tristan said. Gannon found the back of the net with 2:10 remaining in the third period for a two-goal advantage before Anthony Spoto scored on a penalty shot for the Lions to cut the lead to 5-4.

The rest of the game was a back-and-forth scoring affair. Gannon scored again with 53 seconds left in the third period, but Spoto answered with 10 seconds left to make it 6-5 in favor of Gannon with one period to go.

A few clutch saves by goalie Leandro Azevedo, one on a breakaway and another on a seemingly wide open shot, seemed to give Behrend the momentum back. However, Behrend committed a costly turnover and Gannon took advantage to make it 7-5 with 5:20 remaining in the contest. Pranckevicius scored yet again out of a timeout called by Coach Tristan. The goal came only three seconds after play was resumed.

"The timeout play was worked on in practice," Tristan said. "Basically, we had our top two perimeter players swim across the net really hard to clear out the defense so that our goalie could pass it in to our best shooter [Spoto] so he had a chance to drill it home and he did just that."

Gannon scored with 2:44 left on the most controversial play of the game. This caused Coach Tristan to erupt from the bench and receive a yellow card from the referee, which was a warning to stop complaining about the calls or he would be ejected from the game.

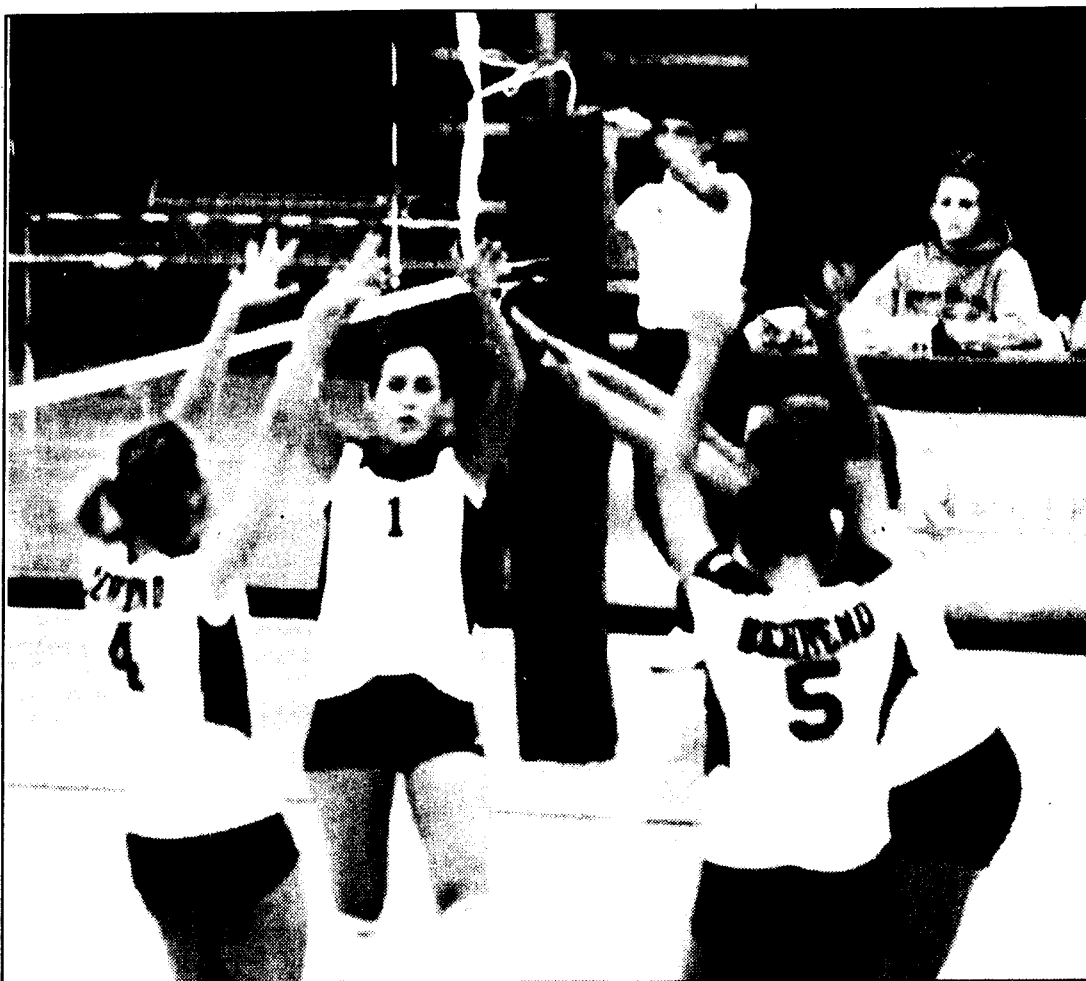
"The ref felt that our player was holding the Gannon player, but he didn't have the ball," Tristan explained. "Our guy [Pranckevicius] did his best to put his hands up to show that he wasn't holding their guy, but the ref called it anyways. This was the only ejection I disagreed with the whole game. It cost us because this was his third ejection, meaning that he was not allowed to come back into the game."

Behrend's Roy Cho caught fire at the end of the game when the Lions seemed like they were dead in the water. Cho scored with 1:37 left in regulation, but Gannon quickly scored to cancel out that goal. Cho scored again with 36 seconds left to prove once again that these Lions are hungry for a win. Cho had a chance to tie the game with 10 seconds left in the game, but his shot was blocked by Gannon's goalie. The Knights then ran out the clock for a 9-8 victory.

"It was a tough loss, but I was so proud of my guys. Some apologized to me after the game, but I told them not to because they played their hearts out. The only thing that really hurt us tonight was our ejections. From when there was 1:10 left in the second quarter until the end of the game, none of Gannon's goals came when we were playing six on six. They all came when we were a man down. I thought both our goalies played great. Conor (Powers) had 10 saves and Leandro [Azevedo] had nine saves. I was proud of our defense too. We played great while we were down a man, and we had 11 steals overall. I think we're getting stronger, better and more confident because of our hard work in the weight room and in the water. Our bench is my MVP so far this year because they have improved themselves by pushing our first string to improve their skills as well. Without my bench, we wouldn't be as competitive."

Behrend will play two rematch games to end their regular season. They will travel to Mercyhurst next Thursday and then play their last home game of the season against Slippery Rock on October 20 before the Division III Eastern Championships on October 22-23.

"When we get to the championships, our hard work should show up as wins," Tristan exclaimed.



Kathryn Carstater/THE BEHREND BEACON

The women's volleyball team gathers for a huddle in the middle of their match on Tuesday night.

Volleyball focuses on their sights

By Mathew Turner
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Last week, after losing to Grove City, Coach Phil Pisano had only one thing to say, "Our sights are set on Saturday's match against Altoona." The Lions knew how much of an impact this game could have on the rest of their season and rose to the occasion. In a match that had AMCC championship potential written all over it, Behrend easily rolled over Penn State Altoona in three straight games 30-24, 30-17, 30-18, improving their record to 14-7 (2-0 AMCC).

Junior middle hitter Elaine Voltz led Behrend, slamming 19 kills to go along with three crucial blocks. Junior outside hitter Lisa Wagner, fresh off of being named AMCC volleyball player of the week, nailed 10 kills and also had 10 digs. Fellow Junior outside hitter Karla Murray recorded eight kills as well as eight digs. Freshman Brittany Hennessy lived up to her reputation as the defensive specialist recording 14 digs.

Afterwards Pisano said, "Beating Altoona in three games is a major accomplishment and every player on the team contributed to this win. We were coming off a bad loss two days ago, but put that behind us and played a fantastic match. The players really did a great job staying focused and playing with intensity."

Behrend continued on their quest for a conference championship Tuesday night at the Junker Center against Hilbert. Playing nearly flawless, the Lions cruised to victory in three straight games 30-16, 30-17, 30-13 to stay unbeaten in AMCC play (3-0).

Freshman defensive specialist Brittany Hennessy had a solid night recording 10 digs, five aces and three assists. Senior setter Amanda Evans continued to lead by example dishing out 30 assists, while tallying five aces. Junior middle hitter Elaine Voltz totaled eight kills to go along with two blocks.

This marks the first time since 2000 that Behrend has started 3-0 in conference play and Pisano knows where that puts his team. He said, "Being undefeated in the conference puts us in the driver seat. We don't have to worry about what other teams do as long as we keep taking care of our own matches. One of our goals for the season is to host the AMCC Championships and we'll continue to try to make that a reality."

Behrend begins a road trip on Saturday when they travel to La Roche for another conference match. The Lions then play on October 11 at Fredonia and on the 12 at Lake Erie. Behrend returns home Saturday, October 15 when they will host Pitt-Greensburg and Buffalo State.

Golf team nowhere near bunker

By Kelly Houghton
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You don't have to know what a birdie or bogey is to realize that Patrick O'Connor is obviously doing something right as first year head coach of the men's and women's golf teams. In fact, according to sophomore Alex Kiproff, Coach O'Connor is doing an "awesome job."

Kiproff emphasized how Coach O'Connor genuinely looks out for the team. "When we need something while on the course, he gets it for us." Junior Josh Hull also added that Coach O'Connor urges the team to practice as much as possible.

"With him as coach, we already tied the school record for wins," said Hull. It's evident that success will follow if you have a good coach. However, when a coach is given exceptional talent to work with, a powerhouse of golfers will unquestionably be born, and they have.

In relation to the 2005 season, Hull believes, "The season is going very well. So far in our conference matches we have had solid performances." Kiproff emphasized Hull's thoughts by adding, "I feel that we can win every time." Evidence strongly supports their statements, as the men have finished first in two tournaments and second, third and fourth in their other matches.

For those who are unfamiliar with the game of golf, even a third place finish is commendable, seeing that they finished third out of 11 teams. Kiproff also commended freshmen Rick Davis and Bill Weeks on their play. "The rookies are showing skill and have been a perfect addition to the lineup," said Kiproff.

In action on Monday, your Lions traveled to La Roche University, winning the competition by beating out the other 10 present teams.

Sophomores Alex Kiproff and Dave Kostanich each shot a 75, leading Behrend. This victory awarded the men their second first place finish of the season.

Your blue and white found themselves right back on the road Tuesday afternoon as they traveled to Meadville, Pennsylvania in a tournament at the Allegheny Gator's home. Although junior Josh Looney shot a notable 78, the team finished much lower than anticipated, closing the day with a 10th place finish out of 13 teams.

However, dwelling on the past does nothing to improve ones swing. This coming Sunday, October 9, are the AMCC Championships at Penn State Altoona.

Emphasis now needs to be placed on this competition. Last year, your Behrend Lions narrowly stole the AMCC

crown from Penn State Altoona. Behrend has already won a match this year on Altoona's course, finishing 1st out of 11 teams. The men are expecting to keep that past momentum rolling this coming weekend in hopes of grasping another first place finish. "For this season, we plan on defending our AMCC Championship title and placing well in the ECAC's," said Kiproff.

Although it is exceedingly difficult for the women's team to compete as intensely as the men, given that many AMCC schools do not have a women's team, they are still creating a mark this season. With only four members on the team, senior Kellie Engstrom and sophomore Hilary Neal have become great upperclassman leaders, according to O'Connor.

Two new freshmen, Ashley Lanton and Courtney Minewcaser, form the other half of the 2005 squad.

"Ashley Lanton has been a great surprise in her golf game and her work ethic," said O'Connor. Coach O'Connor also noted that Hillary, Kellie and Courtney all played very well at The Behrend Invitational, which took place at Peek 'n Peak Resort this September. Coach O'Connor commended their play, believing that "they are improving everyday."

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