

SPORTS

Swim team makes splash on opening weekend | Collegiate Crash Course: Women's Volleyball 101

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With the leaves in an array of bright colors and the blizzards of Erie County creeping near, winter sport athletes are preparing for their opening days of competition. In fact, the usual water polo matches that have been drawing crowds to the Junker Center throughout the first half of the semester will be replaced with a new form of battle. The indoor waters will now be occupied by your men's and women's swim teams.

In fact, this weekend marks the beginning of Behrend's season under third year head coach Jen Wallace. Not only did the men's and women's swim teams win four dual meets last winter, they also demolished 22 school records. Coach Wallace once again is expecting to accomplish impressive feats this season. "Once again, we expect to see numerous team records broken and a handful of ECAC qualifiers," said Wallace.

This Friday, Nov. 4, your blue and white will travel to Buffalo State to open their season. But that isn't the only swimming action in store for the weekend. On Saturday, at 11 a.m., Penn State Erie and the Junker Center will host the "Blue & White" swim meet.

On the women's side, a talented group of sophomore swimmers are expected to lead the team. Last year, as vigorous freshmen, Melissa Pilewski, Ashlee Marchand



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The swimming season starts this week with high expectations and strong performers. Look forward to record-breakers this season.

and Cyndi Morales became the first Behrend women to qualify for the ECAC Championships.

Sophomore standout Melissa Pilewski, recently commented on the small size of the women's squad, which fielded a roster of only 10 swimmers. However, she believes that they can pull through to make "big things happen." Big things may possibly transpire from the five new faces that have been added to the roster. "The incoming freshmen look good," said Pilewski.

The women's team also gained strength in the depth of swimmers specializing in certain events.

Freshman Annie Harris is a talented sprinter, junior Leah Haller is a disciplined distance swimmer and freshman Erin Emrich adds power as an IMR competitor, a series that combines all four strokes. Profound talent, discipline and

power may all be the Lady Lions need to send more swimmers to the ECACs this year, a goal that Pilewski said the team would like to achieve.

In regards to the men's team, they should have minor difficulties getting used to the water, since the team is primarily composed of talented water polo brutes. Senior Steve Schleicher, a distance swimmer, will lead the team as captain this season. Junior Brandon Thiel will also be looked upon for his leadership in directing the team of underclassmen. However, this particular group of underclassmen should not to be taken less seriously; in fact, they're the weapons that should ultimately be feared.

Sophomores Rodolphe Acelor, Vincent Brewer and Anthony Spoto, all water polo standouts, will reunite for the 05/06 season with Dustin Fairchild and Matthew Seiferth, forming the "five sensational sophomores."

Behrend will essentially be on the road for the majority of the season, hosting only four home meets.

Be sure not to miss the action when the Lions are in town. Your next chance to support the swim team will be on

November 18th, at 6:00 pm; as they prepare to surpass Nazareth University.

"Once again, we expect to see numerous team records broken."

- Coach Jen Wallace

Collegiate Crash Course: Women's Volleyball 101

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Bump, set, spike. These are some terms you associate with volleyball. It doesn't matter who you're playing with Uncle Leroy at the family reunion, Stacy from high school gym class, or the little kids at the park who always end up catching the ball. When the girls of the Penn State Behrend Lions use these terms they take them to an entirely different degree. If you ever thought that volleyball was a monotonous back and forth of an over sized ping-pong ball, then you're wrong and you should watch these girls play.

Bump or pass is a precision maneuver that takes years of practice to perfect. Take it from someone who tried. I played volleyball in high school for two years and frankly I couldn't cut it because I couldn't bump. I could spike and set, but what looks like the most basic of the volleyball formula happens to be the most important. Maybe it's just because I used to play, but believe me these girls

deserve a lot of credit. A ball that's spiked at a blurring speed would make any one of us run for cover, but those on the defense find a way to position their forearms directly underneath the ball in order to position at the same spot on the net time after time after time. I challenge anyone who takes the sport of volleyball for granted to try and do this and

do it with any sort of consistency.

Setting is where the offense begins. This job is delegated to the best of a very talented group of individuals. This person responds to the signal the hitter sends to any number of dozens of possible sets. These sets can arch forward, arch backward, short and in the middle, high in the middle, short and backwards, and who knows what else the team has up their sleeve. But these setters have to be able to set the ball on a dime at any time during the game.

Spiking, then, is left, the glory stat. Nothing is more gratifying to a front row player than slamming that ball as hard as you can at the face of an opponent. Yes, sometimes they hit their mark and yes, it's almost always funny when it happens. The timing and synchronization between the setter and hitter has to be perfectly timed in order for the play to be successful. Sure it helps to be able to jump high, but if you aren't disciplined enough to get the timing done then you will be watching someone who can from the bench.

Bottom line is the sport of volleyball is one to be reckoned with. Sure, it gets a bad rap from family reunions all over the country, but just go see our girls play one of these days and they will personally show you what you have been missing. Bump, set, spike will never mean the same thing to you again.

Penn State football continues to win

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Penn State football, what can I say? Just when all was lost we get a super senior along with some super freshman to boost our roster and take us to the number one spot in the Big Ten.

Northwestern check, Minnesota check, Ohio State check, Michigan...well let's get this out of the way. If we couldn't keep them from getting into the end zone from 50 yards away in less than 40 seconds, then we didn't deserve to win the football game. It doesn't matter whether the two seconds was fair or not, the fact is if our defense was so good, and if they wanted to win, then we should've stopped them.

The last time Penn State was this awesome, or even ranked for the matter, was 1999 when we had the talents of Lavar Arrington and Courtney Brown on the team. Keep in mind these two were gone the next year. This team's offense is centered on four - that's right four - freshman wide-outs that have all consistently played at a level higher than any Penn State receiver I've seen. The only Penn State receiver that was drafted I can remember Bryant Johnson, and he's somewhere around third or fourth on the depth chart of the Arizona Cardinals and he in no way produced like any of these players.

An even more important factor is our rushing game. The amazing thing is that 10 of 21 of our rushing touchdowns have come from our quarterback, Tony Hunt. He leads in yards on the team with 807, compared to other running backs around the league may be modest, but considering he averages 6.2 yards per carry puts him among the elite of any runningback in college football or football in general. Some credit has to be given to the offensive line - actually a lot of credit has

to be given to the offensive line. There are only three players on the team that haven't gotten at least four yards per carry. Seeing as though you only need three yards on every carry to guarantee a touchdown on a drive that's pretty good.

Now the defense, excluding the Michigan game, is the best in college football as far as I'm concerned. Now, I also said that Penn State was the best defense in college football last year, but this year the offense occasionally gives them a break by keeping them off the field. This seems to have made all the difference for players such as Paul Posluszny, Calvin Lowry, Dan Connor, Tamba Hali, Alan Zamaitis, and Scott Paxson. Posluszny has been particularly effective being nominated to the semifinals for Munger, Bednarik, and Butkus awards. I expect to see another NFL draft record for Penn State players in the future on what looks like defense alone.

Some people may say "What about Penn State's future?" Michael Robinson is already a super senior and he is obviously a critical part of this offense. Well, Anthony Morelli was the number two recruit in the nation going into the 2004 season and he might not be too bad. We can't expect him to be able to get 10 rushing touchdowns, but once these freshmen receivers are more disciplined I expect to see the kind of West Coast offense that Penn State has never had. There is a reason why Morelli was put in to throw some Hail Marys during his freshman season.

I have a question for those of you who had the nerve to doubt Joe Paterno...how does it feel to be wrong? Some of you skeptics even say that he's no longer running the team. Well, any way you look at it, he's either calling the shots himself or he's delegating to the people who are calling the shots. This season is evidence of why Paterno is "the winningest coach" in college football history.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Head Coach Joe Paterno eagerly looks on as his Penn State football team embarks on a weekly battle against a Big Ten foe. Paterno and his squad look to capture this year's Big Ten championship.

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Men's soccer season comes to end

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The Behrend men's soccer team ended their season in a loss to Frostburg State. The Lions, ranked number four in the conference, played at home on Saturday, Oct. 29, against the number five seed, Frostburg State.

The game was very evenly matched and the win could have gone either way. The Lion's Justin Reese had the first goal of the game, Behrend's only goal. He scored with about 10 minutes left in the first half. The game seemed to be going in favor of the lions until the last 15 minutes of the game. Frostburg put in a goal to

tie the score. Despite the persistent efforts of Behrend to pull ahead, Frostburg scored again with less than a minute to go in the game. Immediately following the goal, Behrend player Rob Milani received a red card and was ejected.

Both teams took a fair amount of shots and both goalies played well. Behrend took a total of 13 shots and Behrend's goalie, Matt Zirnsak had seven saves.

This disappointing 2-1 loss for Behrend ended their season. Frostburg will continue in the conference playoffs but for the Lions, the season is over.



Chris LaFuria/THE BEHREND BEACON

Senior defender Dan Bash boots the ball downfield.