

HOUSING AND FOOD SERVICE ATHLETE OF THE WEEK



Women's soccer kicks off

By Lenny Smith
staff writer

Some good things are happening at the Behrend Fields this year. This coming weekend, September 15 and 16, the women of the Behrend soccer team will take part in the Herb Lauffer Tournament here at home.

Last weekend, the women were a part of the Fredonia State Tournament, where they finished (1-1). In their first match against Mount Union, freshman Cassie Berlin had two goals, while sophomore Beth Manganaro added one of her own. Head Coach Patrick O'Driscoll added that the game was not the team's best performance.

In the championship game against Fredonia State, Coach O'Driscoll said, "The players fought hard even though they lost." Coach O'Driscoll also added that the team had several chances to get on the scoreboard, but they had bad shots. The team fell 2-0 to Fredonia State.

The team had three of its members named to the Fredonia State All Tournament Team, Katie Ritchey, Kayla Frost, and Berlin. Frost had another honor come her way this week when she was named the Goal Keeper of the Week.

Kara Struski, a senior captain, plays the midfield and last year was named to the Second All-AMCC (Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference) Team. She said, "Our main goal is the same every year...win the AMCC title and get an automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament. We've been so close we could almost taste it over the last couple years, but just couldn't get it." Coach O'Driscoll would also love to see his team win the AMCC, but admits that it will be very hard. Also

named captains of this year's team are juniors Emily Rogan and Jess Carlson.

Struski said, "This year's team is definitely younger than it was last year, with the addition of nine freshmen, but we seem to have the same dynamics as every year." Coach O'Driscoll said, "[The team] is more flexible in terms of tactics with some dangerous forwards, five freshmen starting, and at least six or seven (freshmen) seeing significant playing time."

"Basically our goal in everything we do is to be number one, not number two and that is the attitude we take to every game and every practice," said Struski. This attitude may help the team win this weekend's Herb Lauffer Tournament at the Behrend Fields.

The tournament is named after the former Penn State Behrend Athletic Director because of his influential work as the Athletic Director, and in his work bringing collegiate soccer to the college. The tournament will see some very strong teams,

many of whom participated in last year's NCAA Tournament. The teams include Westminster College, Calvin College, and Thomas Moore, as well as the Behrend Lions.

Behrend will take on Westminster on Friday the 15th at 3:00 p.m. and then on Saturday, the 16th, then the team will face Thomas More at 4:00 p.m.

"We are all determined, passionate, and confident that we can come out on top and win the AMCC this year," Struski added.

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-Kara Struski

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Volleyball team enjoys success

By Matt Waronker
staff writer

With each new season there come the expected changes that every team must face: the addition of new players, adjustments in team chemistry, and even on occasion the necessity for brand new uniforms. For the Penn State Behrend women's volleyball team, the latter proved to be essential for the 2006 season. After rolling through 2005 with a record of 26-8, the Lady Lions captured sole possession of the AMCC Conference title, as well as the watchful eye of every other team in the conference. The team's new uniforms are now adorned with an enormous bull's-eye over each of the player's numbers.

"We can't worry about the target on our backs," said 2005 AMCC Coach of the Year, Phil Pisano. "We need to keep taking big steps this year towards trying to improve. We can't allow last year's success to be the peak of our progress as a team."

The Lions, who shot out of the gate to an undefeated 5-0 record, are showing no signs of this being the problem and will not allow the fast start to go to their heads. In fact, with 5 returning seniors and 10 total returning players, the team has much of the same core as it did last season.

"We have very strong team chemistry," noted senior captain Lisa Wagner. "The entire team has bonded from the beginning. With us it's a team thing all the way."

After opening up the season with a 3-1 win at Thiel college, the Lions focused their attention on hosting the annual Behrend Invitational Tournament.

"Anytime we're at home it's an advantage," commented senior captain Karla Murray. "Our fans are very loud and loyal, and they always make us feel comfortable."

Relaxed, and playing in their comfort zone, the Lions had no trouble picking apart the field of five visiting teams.

Behrend opened up the tournament on Friday by winning a pair of matches in merely three straight games. The Lions tore through D'Youville 30-14, 30-16 and 30-15 in their first match of the weekend, and then proceeded in similar fashion to overpower Kenyon 30-17, 30-20 and 30-21.

The team continued its dominance well into Saturday, posting yet another victory in only three games as they disposed of Bethany (WV) 30-16, 30-20 and 32-30. The highlight of the tournament, however, came late Saturday afternoon, when the Lions won a decisive series

against Fredonia State, capturing the title of tournament champion.

"Fredonia is typically a very strong team," said coach Pisano. "So for us to handle them in 3 games, speaks volumes to the potential of this team."

The Lions were led by tournament MVP Elaine Voltz who supplied 14 kills in the championship match. Voltz, who averaged nearly 5 kills per game, totaled 77 kills and 23 blocks throughout the tournament. Her 14 kills against Fredonia State placed her with 1,138 for her career, the most in school history. Joining Voltz on the All-Tournament team was sophomore teammate Brittany Hennessy, who supplied 65 digs over the course of the weekend.

The Lions will look to add some more hardware to their trophy case this upcoming weekend when they play in the Westminster Tournament.

"We really wanted some momentum entering the Westminster Tournament," commented coach Pisano. "Since we have a week to prepare for the tournament, we'll have a chance to really work on things we thought we could have done better."

The only task left to do now is to find larger uniforms for that growing bull's-eye.

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