

SPORTS

Snow sports at full force

By Kara Struski
sports editor

Behrend students who enjoy winter sports are welcoming the recent snowfall that continues to blast the region. The mild start to the season that once kept skiers and snowboarders from hitting the slopes on a regular basis, has turned into a winter wonderland of fun.

Senior Behrend engineering major Jason Willis is one student taking advantage of the snow.

"Finally is the first word that comes to mind. I am glad the snow is finally here," said Willis.

Before the January snow storms, several area ski resorts were left producing artificial snow and had a limited number of slopes and lifts open.

However, resorts around the region are now in full force.

After a slow start to the season, Peek'n Peak snowboard instructor and Behrend junior, Jon Diurba, says business at the resort has increased dramatically.

"The lessons have been packed and the ramps and jumps are bringing in a huge number of snowboarders," Diurba said.

Snowboarding is a multi-million dollar industry that is surpassing skiing and Diurba said he is seeing more snowboarders than skiers on the slopes.

Peek'n Peak is clearly responding to the popularity of the sport. New features that cater to snowboarders include an eight foot half pipe designing machine as well as more fun boxes and rails on the slopes. The new pipe cutting tool is the same machine used to create pipes at major events, such as the U.S. Open Snowboarding in Stratton, Vermont and the ESPN Winter X-Games in Aspen, Colorado. The pipe groomer is unique because instead of a radial shape it creates an elliptical shape, which makes for a smoother landing in the half pipe. Riders can expect to gain speed easier, resulting in more hits in the pipe.

Resorts in the Pittsburgh area, such as Seven Springs and Hidden Valley, also report excellent slope conditions. Students who are looking for a closer place to ski or snowboard can try Peek'n Peak and Holiday Valley both of which are just across the New York border.

STUDENT SKI RATES

Peek'n Peak
College ID Nights
Every Sunday-Thursday night
(4 p.m.-close)
\$19 lift ticket
with college ID

Holiday Valley
College ID Nights
Every Sunday-Thursday night
(4 p.m.-10 p.m.)
\$24 lift ticket
with college ID

Hockey clinches playoff spot



Ryan Gallagher/THE BEHREND BEACON
Behrend hockey players huddle during a recent game.

By Danielle Brown
sports editor

The Penn State Behrend Hockey team won a hard-fought battle against Pitt-Johnstown on Saturday, Jan. 27 at the Mercyhurst Ice Arena. This 4-2 win clinched a playoff spot for the Lions in the College Hockey East North Division. This was also the first time in the team's history that they beat Pitt-Johnstown.

The game started off with a goal by junior forward Dan Thiessen, putting Behrend up 1-0 in the first period. Pitt-Johnstown answered this goal ending the period with a tied score of 1-1.

In the second period Pitt-Johnstown scored another goal putting them in the lead 2-1.

Then, in the third period, forward Brian Hammel scored a goal for the Lions, tying the game 2-2. But, it was senior forward DJ Craven who sealed the win for Penn State with two goals in the third period, ending the game at 4-2. This game brought Craven's total goals for the 2006-07 season up to 19, which is the second highest on the team behind Chris Simanic's 23.

This game was described as intense, due to several fights and many penalties. It was clear that both teams wanted to prove to be the dominant team, but it was Behrend who pulled off the win and the playoff spot.

Aiding the victory was the latest addition to the Lions, freshman goalie Eric Thiessen. Thiessen recently transferred to Behrend from Penn State New Kensington to play hockey. He has brought skill and teamwork to the team, helping to take them to victory. Thiessen has played two games this season and has won them both.

Assistant captain and vice president of the Behrend Hockey team, Brysten Jones, talked about how the spring semester has been a successful one thus far. "Starting off a new semester 3-0 is a pretty big deal. We came back to school knowing what we had to accomplish to earn a playoff spot. Now we have to work hard to bring back the league championship," Jones said. He is confident that the teams success will continue throughout the rest of the season.

Their next game is scheduled for Friday, Feb. 2 at the Igloo Ice Arena at 9:45 p.m. against Case Western.

INTRAMURAL UPDATE

DEADLINES:

100 mile club deadline Friday, Feb. 2
Ping Pong deadline Friday, Feb. 9
Arena Football deadline Friday, Feb. 9

AEROBICS CLASSES

Began Monday, Jan. 29

No registration needed; just show up for class!

Fee is \$2 per class or \$20 for semester pass (charged to student account)

MONDAYS:

6-7 p.m. Cardiotoning

7-8 p.m. Pilates

TUESDAYS:

6-7 p.m. Stretch and Tone

7-8 p.m. TaeBlast

WEDNESDAYS:

6-7 p.m. Step

7-8 p.m. Pilates

THURSDAYS:

6-7 p.m. Stretch and Tone

7-9 p.m. Taeblast

RECENT EVENTS:

3-point shoot-out was held Jan. 24 and 25

Women's winner: Elaine Voltz

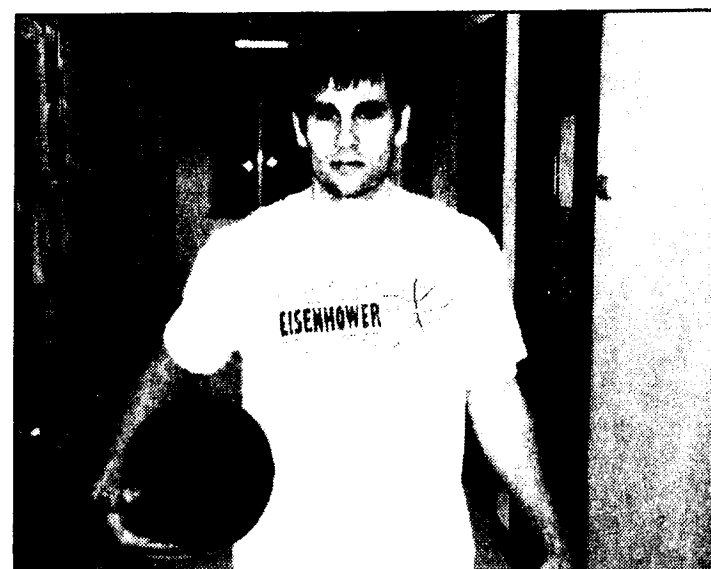
Runner-up: Britt Hennessy

Men's winner: Jacoby Curtis

5v5 Basketball started Jan 17

For recent results visit:

<http://www.behrend.psu.edu/athletics/intramurals/M5v5basketball.htm>



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Jacoby Curtis after winning the Intramural 3-point shoot-out.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Voltz (left) and Hennessy (right) pose after the 3-point shoot-out.

Lions join 1,000 point club



Congratulations to Behrend basketball players Kevin Buczynski and Brittany Mays for passing the 1,000 point mark.

Buczynski, a junior center, reached this milestone on Jan. 20 after scoring a game high 17 points in a victory against Frostburg State. Buczynski currently sits 13th all-time in Behrend record books with 1,046 points.

Senior guard Brittany Mays surpassed the 1,000 point mark on Jan. 23 against conference rival Mt. Aloysius. Mays scored a team -high 16 points in a 79-53 win. Mays currently sits 8th all-time in Behrend history with 1,035 points.



CONGRATULATIONS

NBA update: The best is in the west

By Tommy Phillips
staff writer

The NBA heads into the second half of the season with the balance of power clearly shifted towards the Western Conference. The top three teams in the Western Conference, Phoenix, Dallas and San Antonio, all have records that are far superior to any team in the Eastern Conference. The Western Conference also has many of the top players in the game, as well as the leading MVP candidates, such as Steve Nash, Dirk Nowitzki and Kobe Bryant.

The Phoenix Suns have had an amazing season so far, going on two winning streaks of at least 15 games. Two-time reigning MVP Nash, has been the leader of the Suns over this amazing stretch. The Suns started the season 1-5, but since have gone on an amazing run including their long winning streaks. Forward Amare Stoudemire has been another key player for the Suns, leading the team in scoring on many nights.

The Denver Nuggets have become a real force in the Western Conference after trading for guard Allen Iverson during a 15-game suspension of forward Carmelo Anthony. Anthony was suspended for fighting in a game against the New York Knicks. Iverson came over from the Philadelphia 76ers and helped the Nuggets during Anthony's suspension. The two of them have played well together since Anthony's return.

The Dallas Mavericks have been one of the top teams in the league for much of the season. After starting out the season 0-4, the Mavericks won their next 12 games in a row. The Mavericks later went on a 13-game winning streak, propelling them to one of the best records in the league. Forward Dirk Nowitzki has been a huge reason for the Mavericks' success, as he has led the team in scoring in most of their games this season.

In the Eastern Conference, the Washington Wizards have been one of the biggest surprises. They have been one of the top teams in their conference this season, led by guard Gilbert Arenas. Arenas has been the leading scorer for the Wizards, as well as making some last-second winning shots. He has topped 50 points three



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Amare Stoudemire of the league leading Suns.

times this season, even reaching 60 points in one of the teams games. He received a late surge in votes to be named a starter for the Eastern Conference in the NBA All-Star Game in Las Vegas.

The defending champions, Miami Heat, have struggled tremendously this season, mainly due to the fact that center Shaquille O'Neal has been out for much of the season with injuries. Miami has dropped all the way to third place in its own division and out of playoff position in the weak Eastern Conference. Guard Dwyane Wade has led the team in scoring in nearly every game, but even his efforts have not been enough to stop the struggles for the Heat this season.

With the defending champions in danger of missing the playoffs, there are a lot of teams with a chance to go all the way and win the title. The best teams in the league reside in the Western Conference, which would indicate one of those teams winning it all, but in the NBA, anything can happen.