

ENTERPRISE RENT-A-CAR ATHLETE OF THE WEEK



NAME: Emily Berry
SPORT: Women's Cross Country
CLASS: Freshman
DATE: Oct. 29, 2007

Emily Berry (Reno/Rocky Grove) has been named the ENTERPRISE RENT-A-CAR athlete of the week for the week of Oct. 29, 2007.

Over the weekend, Berry placed fourth overall in the AMCC Championships held at Hilbert College. The women's cross country team finished first and won their third AMCC Championship. Berry finished second among her fellow Behrend runners with a time of 24:45.

The women's cross country team beat ten teams for the title, finishing with 29 points. The team will next travel to LeHigh to compete in the NCAA Mid-east Regional invitational on Saturday, Nov. 10. The race will kick off around noon.

Volleyball finishes second in AMCC

By Matt Waronker
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The last time Penn State Altoona traveled to Erie, the visiting Lions upset Behrend three games to one, snatching away the AMCC title and the automatic NCAA tournament bid that came with it. The No. 2 seeded Altoona team was able to take game one and despite a slight comeback run by Behrend in game two, Altoona was able to bounce back with strong performances in games three and four. The loss shattered the No. 1 seeded Lady Lions' shot of winning the AMCC conference title and earning an NCAA tournament bid and instead sent the then 27-3 Behrend squad to the prestigious yet much less heralded ECAC tournament.

This season, nearly a year to the day later, Altoona made their way up Interstate-79 to Erie, and the match-up ended once again by a score of three games to one. The difference, however, was instead of falling in a heartbreaker on their home court, the Lady Lions prevailed in a series of nailbiters with each game decided by an average of less than three points.

Although the stakes may not have been exactly the same in this match-up, the consequences of the outcome were nonetheless crucial to each squad's respective season. Both teams entered into the match-up with identical 7-1 conference records and were in a race for a first round bye in post season play. With the win, the Lady Lions improved to 18-11 overall and more importantly to 8-1 in the conference which secured Behrend a first-round bye in the upcoming AMCC Tournament.

Since both Altoona and Behrend have proven themselves over the past few seasons as perennial powers in the AMCC, the match-up between the two has become a substantial conference rivalry. The match-up, which over the last few seasons has seemed to arrive at crucial points in each squad's respective schedules, has caused Behrend head coach Phil Pisano to notice this game specifically on his calendar.

"I can't speak for Altoona but for us this has definitely become a nice rivalry that our players look forward to," said Pisano. "The game always seems to mean something and it helps that both of

us seem to be at the top of the conference. The competitiveness really adds to the rivalry."

Each game lived up to their billing as competitive and compelling with each finish amounting to a difference of less than three points between each squad. Behrend victories came by scores of 30-28, 30-28 and 30-29. In the first game, the Lady Lions fought off a tenacious Altoona scoring run late in the match-up and in the second game played in much similar fashion, trading point for point with the visiting Lions.

"We were able to stay aggressive in each match even when it got really close," noted Pisano. "We've been in a lot of close games and I think that experience is really starting to pay off."

In the third game, Altoona temporarily stole Behrend's momentum, pulling ahead and holding on for a 30-24 victory. Behrend would make a late run at comeback but Altoona was set on their way to their sole victory of the evening.

In the fourth game, Behrend was finally able to regain momentum. In a hard fought match with neither team scoring more than one consecutive point. Both teams were searching for a big play to pull away for the win. With the game tied at 29, Behrend sophomore Sheila Ogden provided that big play. After the initial serve, Ogden stepped up and blocked a menacing Altoona spike, capturing both the game and the match for Behrend. Ogden provided 18 kills in the win, while sophomore Carissa Johnston had 13 kills. Senior Deanna Ciccarella tallied 17 digs in the winning effort, and junior Brittany Hennessy recorded an impressive 32 digs against Altoona.

The tournament will begin on Friday, Nov. 2 at Frostburg State, where the Lady Lions will face none other than Penn State Altoona in semifinal action. No. 3 seeded Altoona swept sixth-seeded Pitt-Greensburg three games to none on their way to earning a rematch with Behrend. No. 4 seeded Lake Erie defeated fifth seeded Pitt-Bradford in the other first round match-up and with the victory will face No. 1 seeded host Frostburg State.

"Our goal is still to win the conference and at this point reaching that goal is only two games away," said Pisano. "Right now we're confident and focused, but it'll still take a strong team effort to reach our goal. The competition is pretty balanced, but I like where we're at if we keep playing well."

Do You Have a Love for Sports? Are You Interested in Writing?

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