

ENTERPRISE RENT-A-CAR ATHLETE OF THE WEEK



NAME: Kevin Buczynski
SPORT: Men's Basketball
CLASS: Senior
DATE: Dec. 10, 2007

Kevin Buczynski (Erie/Villa Maria) has been named the ENTERPRISE RENT-A-CAR athlete of the week for the week of Dec. 10, 2007.

Buczynski had an outstanding week for the Behrend Lions, contributing a total of 37 points and 17 rebounds in two AMCC games. On Wednesday, the men's squad defeated Hilbert college 83-46. Buczynski tallied 21 points and 10 rebounds, shooting 9 for 13 from the floor. On Saturday, he added 16 points, shooting 100 percent from behind the line and seven for 12 from the floor. Buczynski leads the blue and white in overall points for the season with 105. He is currently ranked third in the AMCC in free-throw percentages with 84 percent, shooting 21-25 for the season.

The men's basketball team will not hit the court again until Friday, Dec. 28 when they travel to Belton, Texas to play in the Mary-Hardin Baylor Tournament. The Behrend Lions will match up against Hedrix College from Arkansas in the first round of play. The winner will advance to the championship game on Saturday, Dec. 29 at 4 p.m.

Women's basketball wins two straight

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The Penn State Behrend women's basketball team suffered their first conference loss of the season as they traveled to Pitt-Greensburg this past Saturday. After a streak of three consecutive conference victories, the 78-46 loss to the Bobcats dropped the Lady Lions conference record to 3-1. The loss lowers Behrend to fourth overall in AMCC conference standings; however, following the uneven defeat, the Lady Lions were able to tally two straight non-conference wins. Victories against Grove City and Hiram College improved Behrend's overall record to 5-5.

Despite their three impressive early-season conference victories, the Lady Lions were unable to contain their momentum as they traveled to Pitt-Greensburg, losing a vital conference match-up, 78-46 against the Bobcats. The hosting Bobcats boasted a suffocating defense and a balanced scoring attack, one that was able to storm past Behrend this past Saturday afternoon. While the Lady Lions were able to take hold of an early 10-2 lead, the team quickly found themselves playing from behind after a handful of turnovers and missed opportunities. The Bobcats immediately capitalized on Behrend's mistakes and soon Pitt-Greensburg was able to ignite a scoring run of their own. The Bobcats outscored Behrend 30-12 to close out the half, taking a nearly 20-point lead. The Lady Lions entered the half trailing 44-25.

"They were able to press us all game," says head coach Roz Fornari. "We didn't handle the ball well and didn't play with a lot of confidence."

While the second half didn't exactly indicate a tale of two halves like Fornari would have liked to see, the Lady Lions were able to slightly close the gap, as they were only outscored 32-23 in the last 20 minutes of play.

"At the half the team focused on better communication and began to play more to their potential," says Fornari. "They understood what they needed to do as a group. They shot well but couldn't get a lot of shots off."

Against Pitt-Greensburg, the Lady Lions appeared to be out-matched at both ends of the court. Defensively, they allowed six Bobcat players to score in double digits, two of which had 15 points apiece. Offensively, Behrend's game told much of the same story. The Lady Lions committed 28 turnovers to Pitt-Greensburg's 15. Behrend was also unable to hold their own under the glass, losing the battle of the boards 34-27. Behrend was led by junior guard Natalie Engel who contributed 10 points and five rebounds in the losing effort.

In Behrend's following match-up, a non-conference contest against Grove City College, the Lady Lions were able to tally a 57-44 win over the visiting Wolverines on Monday night at the Junker Center. With the win, Behrend lifted their record at home to 3-2. The Lady Lions sole pair of losses at the Junker Center came early on in the season at their annual Tip-Off Tournament. In the first half of play, Behrend and the visiting Wolverines battled back-and-forth before the Lady Lions entered half-time with a one-point advantage, 23-22. Senior guard Julia Andrus led all scorers with 10 first half points. Andrus was three-for-seven from the floor and connected on a pair of shots from beyond the arc.

Coming out of the break, Grove City grabbed their second and final lead of the evening off a pair of free-throws to start the second half. However, the Lady Lions answered immediately with a scoring run of their own and it was all Behrend the rest of the way. The team shot 47 percent from the field in the second half and forced Grove City into 20 turnovers. A stingy and relentless Behrend defense also worked to restrict their opposition to 31 percent shooting for the game. Andrus led the scoring with 24 points, while Engel added 11 points and four assists. Senior forward Meagan Bielanin contributed 10 points to the winning effort.

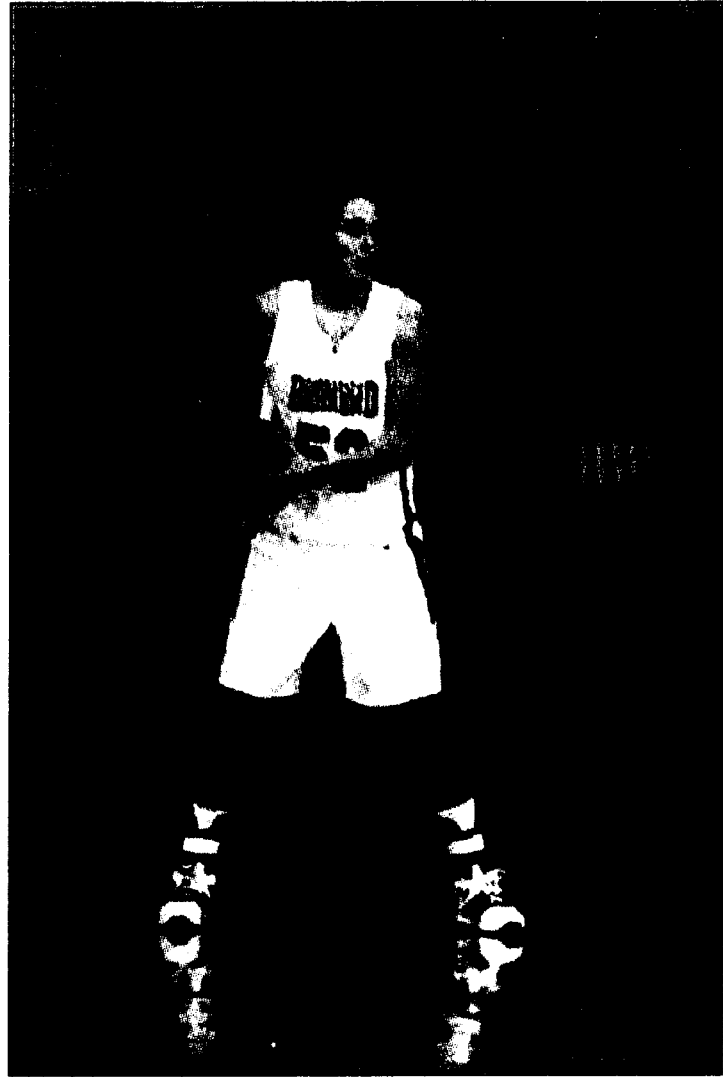
"In the first half against Grove City we played strong defense but we just weren't hitting our shots," says Fornari. "In the second half we kept up with our defense but we started hitting our shots. It's simple: good defense keeps you in games and good offense will win you those games. Against [Grove City] we were able to utilize that formula."

Against Hiram College, Behrend continued to ride their momentum from their Grove City victory, defeating the non-conference Hiram Terriers 67-56. After a close first half, the Lady Lions pulled away with a strong second half effort.

"Through these past couple games we've spent a lot of time focusing on ourselves and how to fix the problems we're facing," notes Fornari. "Against [Hiram] it paid off. We played a strong second half and looked a lot more like ourselves."

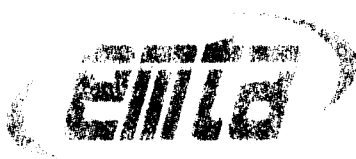
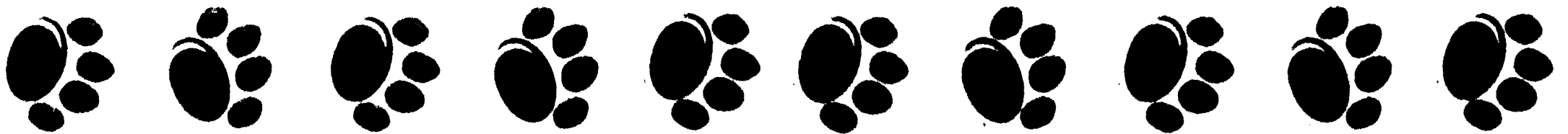
Against the Terriers, Behrend had three scores reach double digits. Andrus, Bielanin, and Engel contributed 19, 15, and 10 points respectively in the winning effort.

The Lady Lions will host their final match-up before the holiday break this Saturday in a non-conference game against Fredonia. Following their contest with the Blue Devils, Behrend will not return to the court until Jan. 12, 2008 when they are scheduled to host rival Penn State Altoona in a crucial AMCC conference match-up. The Lady Lions were undefeated against Penn State Altoona last season, defeating the Altoona Lions by an average of 28 points in each contest.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Sophomore forward Jenn Emberg looks for an open teammate against Grove City. The Lady Lions defeated the Wolverines 57-44.



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