

SPORTS

Baseball team looks to have another successful season

By Connor Sattely

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On a bulletin board in Penn State Behrend Baseball coach Paul Benim's office hangs a snippet from the Baseball Coaching Bible. "Being successful is a grind," it reads, "it does not just happen."

It is with that mentality that the seventeenth-year head coach dove into preparing his varsity baseball team, fresh off a 2008 season in which the record-setting team posted a 34-12 record and won both the AMCC regular season and conference tournament title.

Benim, though, had little to say about the team riding the wave of success from last year. "It was a great year, of course," he said, "and there are still good feelings and a good vibe from last year. But, it is last year. We're 0-0 now; we have to go out and get after it."

This year's team, while still having to face many challenges as the season begins, will have the benefit of a large amount of returning players from last year's championship team. The entire pitching staff of last year's team

will return, as well as many other players on the roster.

Benim, three times recognized as the AMCC coach of the year, realizes the value that those players will bring to the roster. "They've been through a lot," he says. "These guys have been influencing the program since their first years. It's really a luxury having them."

Though the team will not be lacking in leadership from the mound, the team will feel the loss of several of last year's leaders, primarily at the catcher position. Three seniors graduated and left their spot open behind the plate; it may prove to be Behrend's first significant challenge to fill that hole.

Sophomore Henry Latta and freshmen Jimmy Battaglia and Ryan Geibel could provide the team with the presence they need. "They're primed and ready to go," says Benim, "everyone's ready to meet these challenges."

In doing so, the Lions will certainly utilize four players who were recognized by Collegiate Baseball Magazine as "Players to

Watch" in Division III.

Seniors David Koebel and Ben Cain, in addition to juniors Josh Fyffe and Dustin Dubensky, were also selected to the list.

Koebel, last year's AMCC MVP, and Cain, who boasted a 5-0 record and 0.76 ERA last season, will lead the team from the mound.

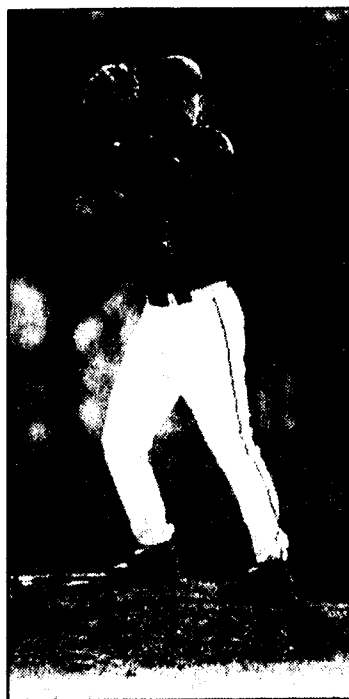
Fyffe and Dubensky, playing shortstop and third base respectively, could provide the backbone of the team's offensive efforts. Last year, the two combined for 71 RBIs; Dubenski's own 46 was the highest on the team and second highest in the league.

"As nice as it is to focus on the past, you need to put the future in front of you," says Cain. For him, it may be difficult: he limited opponents to a .190 batting average. "Now everyone knows what I have. Everyone knows what the team can do. People are gunning for you."

For coach Benim, the quote on his wall is what will inspire him to get his team working hard to prepare for the season. It contin-

ues: "98 percent of success is hard work, doing what one enjoys, and self-discipline. Luck and inheritance are part of the other 2 percent."

For his players, the inheritance of last year's championship will soon be set aside for a team with sights set high in 2009.



Left: Cain gets ready on the mound. Right: Chnabak lets go of the pitch.

University Park basketball 17-8 overall

By Shawn Annarelli

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Wednesday night, in West Lafayette, Indiana, against the #20 AP ranked Purdue Boilermakers (18-6, 7-4), the Nittany Lions Men's basketball team (17-8, 6-6) had the opportunity to halt a two game losing streak, as well as show the college basketball world that they

deserve to be ranked among the top 25 teams in the country.

Purdue also entered the night's contest with a two game losing streak, which can be largely contributed to the absence of team co-captain, Robbie Hummel, who sat out his third game in a row with a hairline fracture in his

lower back.

Having beaten the Boilermakers earlier in the year 67-64, Penn State could not have foreseen the 61-47 thumping they would take.

The first half featured a terrific display of basketball between two ruthless teams.

The Boilermakers and Nittany Lions alike played strong defense and consistently traded hard to come by baskets.

Led by Senior Forward, Janelle Cornley, Penn State jumped out to its largest lead of the night, 22-16, with 6:47 left to play before the half.

Cornley scored a game high 16 points, while no other Nittany Lion reached double digit scoring.

Undeterred, Purdue, led by Julian Johnson, who dominated the game by scoring a Purdue high 14 points and recording game highs 13 rebounds and 4 blocked shots, slowly but surely chipped away at Penn State's defense and smothered their

offense to mount a 28-26 lead at the half's end.

In the early goings of the second half it was painfully clear Purdue was playing to make a statement, and the Lions were not as nearly as tenacious as they were in the first half.

The Boilermakers and Lions traded two point baskets in the first minute of the second half before the Boilermakers went on a 16-0 run, leaving the Lions scoreless for over 6 minutes.

With a 17 point lead and 12:49 remaining Purdue had all but put away the Lions.

For the remainder of the game, Penn State displayed resilience by outscoring Purdue 19-15. The teams also came to a deadlock for almost four minutes when neither team recorded a basket, giving credence to the high level of defense played by each team for most of the contest.

The key component of the Boilermakers game-plan revolved around shutting down Lions

guard Talor Battle, who scorched the Boilermakers for 21 points earlier in the season and leads the Big Ten with over 18 points per game.

Purdue Guard, Lewis Jackson, matched up against Battle for most of the game and completely made Battle a non-factor.

Battle, while amassing a game high 6 assists, did not record a single basket off of seven attempted shots.

According to comcast.net, Jackson said of Battle, "He's shifty with the ball, I'm just fast enough that I can stay with him. I just tried to move my feet good. I have a little bit of upper-body strength on him, so I used that to my advantage."

The Boilermakers also held Penn State's other high scoring Guard, Stanley Pringle, to just two baskets for five points.

According to ESPN.com, Penn State coach Ed DeChillis explained, "Our guard play is really important to us, as with any

team. We're not getting production out of the two guys, (Battle and Pringle), that have been pretty good for us all year."

The Purdue bench also made a considerably large contribution to the Boilermakers winning effort.

Back-ups Bobby Riddell and Nemanja Calasan scored 13 and 12 points respectively and combined to make a brilliant 9 of 13 shots from the field, including shooting an impressive joint 4 of 6 from three point range.

The Lions have six games remaining on their schedule, two of which are against the #20 AP ranked Illinois.

For their next game, Penn State will play host to the Minnesota Gophers who they lost to 79-59 in their first contest, in Minnesota.

The Lions will look to propel themselves into a 4th place tie in the Big Ten while putting an end to their longest losing streak of the season.

THIS WEEK'S
SPORTS SCHEDULE
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13

The swim team competes in the AMCC Championships @ Grove City at 10 a.m.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14

The swim team continues the AMCC Championships @ Grove City at 10 a.m.

The Men's and Women's Indoor Track & Field travels to Cornell and competes at 10 a.m.

The Women's Basketball team (11-10) plays an AMCC game at Franciscan (4-14) at 1 p.m.

The Men's Basketball team (15-7) also plays at Franciscan (4-17) following the womens game at 3 p.m.

The Men's Tennis team starts off their 2009 season at Baldwin-Wallace at 1 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18

The Women's and Men's Basketball team play a double-header against AMCC opponent, La Roche. The women's game starts at 6 p.m. followed by the men's at 8 p.m.

LAST WEEK'S
SPORTS

All wins in *italic text*

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7

W. Basketball: Behrend 82 Penn State Altoona 72
M. Basketball: Behrend 77 Penn State Altoona 60

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11

W. Basketball: Behrend 57 Medaille 60
M. Basketball: Behrend 62 Medaille 65

All scores based from Sports Calendar and individual team page results. If your sport is not listed and you feel that it should be, contact cis5060@psu.edu

Adam Kaiser awarded AMCC
Player of the Week

By Christine Newby

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Penn State Behrend junior guard for the men's basketball team, Adam Kaiser, was awarded the AMCC Athlete of the week for the week of Feb. 9, 2009.

"It was very nice to receive the award," said Kaiser. "I was happy to receive it. It means a lot."

Kaiser helped the Behrend Lions to their seventh straight win as he contributed 15 points in the victory against Penn State Altoona 77-60 on Saturday, Feb. 7.

Last week, Kaiser and the Lions defeated Hilbert, another AMCC opponent. Kaiser and Tom Newman had a game high of 21 points.

On Wednesday Kaiser had a game high of 17 points against Medaille; however, the Behrend Lions lost by a close three points 62-65.

According to the Behrend website, Kaiser is averaging a league-best 3.3 three-pointers per game

with 42.6% accuracy, and is tied for the team lead in scoring with a 13.8 points per game average.

"I have just been shooting the ball with a lot of confidence and my team really has faith in my shooting," said Kaiser.

As a team, the Behrend Lions are ranked nationally at the Division III level.

According to the Behrend website, they are ranked fourth in the nation in scoring defense limiting their opponents to 58.7 ppg. The Blue and White are also ranked ninth in free-throw percentage at 77.4 percent.

The men's basketball team has three games left in the regular season. They travel to Franciscan and La Roche before ending the season at the Junker Center against Pitt-Bradford on Feb. 21.

"We have to win the rest of the games which is going to be hard work, but something that I think we can do," said Kaiser.



DANIEL SMITH/TheBehrendBeacon
Adam Kaiser was chosen as the AMCC Player of the Week.