

SPORTS

Men and women set records on track and field

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Penn State Behrend's track and field team recently began the outdoor portion of their season as they competed in the Bill Van Horne Invitational on March 28, as well as the William and Jefferson Invitational this past Saturday. History was made in both meets as several school records were broken by Behrend athletes at each invitational.

The Bill Van Horne Invitational at Wheeling Jesuit University set the stage for sophomore Bryson Hartzler, fellow sophomore Jenna Fatica, and freshman Brittany Wallace to capture Penn State Behrend's school records in their respective events.

Wallace set her record as she participated in the women's heptathlon.

The women's heptathlon is a contest in which the women perform in the 100 meter hurdles race, high jump, shot put, 200 meter race, long jump, javelin throw, and the 800 meter race.

At the end of all seven events the women's scores are totaled. Wallace finished with an impressive 1,943 points and a place in Behrend's record books.

Fatica won the 800 meter run in record fashion with a time of 2:20:28.

She also teamed in the women's 4X100 meter relay with sophomore Mandy Wherle, junior Dana Turley, and junior Virginia Rodgers-Owens.

The women finished in fourth place in the event and qualified for a spot in the ECAC Championships on March 14 and 15.

The women, as a team, would go on to finish in seventh place at Wheeling.

Hartzler led the Behrend men in Wheeling to an overall second place finish.

Hartzler made his own small piece of history as he competed in the high jump.

His 2.05 meter jump put his name in the record books, qualified him for the ECAC meet and a NCAA provisional qualifier.

Hartzler's jump is second best in Division III competition.

Hartzler worked hard to prepare himself to perform at his best.

"When my freshman season ended last year not quite the way, I had planned I knew I had to put in some extra work this year. When I arrived on campus this fall, Coach Stratton and Coach Copper had a workout plan designed for me. I just follow their workout plan to the best of my ability."

Hartzler wasn't the only male athlete having a good day in Wheeling. The men's 4X100 meter relay team consisting of junior Doug Stevenson, senior Phil Stuczynski, Gregory freshman Benscoter, and sophomore Joe O'Connor qualified for the ECAC meet.

In the men's decathlon sophomores Michael Stark and Ronson Mazany finished second and third respectively and also qualified for the ECAC meet.

At the William and Jefferson Invitational, the men's and women's team each captured their field's titles. The men's team finished with 128.5 points and the women with a score of 97.5 points.

Much like the Bill Van Horne Invitational the William and Jefferson Invitational was just another stage for several of Behrend's best athletes to rewrite the record books, and qualify for the ECAC Championship meet.

Mazany won and set Behrend, as well as, Invitational records in the long jump where he soared for 22' 11.75".

The jump also qualified him for the ECAC meet and was also a NCAA provisional qualifying mark.

Mazany then finished second to Hartzler in the high jump. Hartzler set a meet record and qualified for the ECAC Championship meet with a 6'6" high jump.

Junior Earl Bass continued the assault as he finished third in the 110 meter hurdles and qualified for the ECAC meet.

Sophomore Calvin Schmader followed the other men's lead and broke Penn State Behrend's shot put record with a staggering 43' 8.5" throw.

The Behrend women weren't far behind, if behind at all, as they dominated the women's 12 team field.

Rodgers-Owens qualified for the ECAC meet by setting a new Behrend and Invitational record with a time of 12.55 seconds in the hundred meters. Freshman Katie Moniskie then set a Behrend record with a 112' 9" discus toss.

Despite several school and meet records being broken for a second consecutive invitational meet, there appears to be plenty of room for improvement as the standings showed a riddled list of Behrend athletes just missing first place finishes.

Coach Copper commented on the team's progress as they lunge further into the invitational season.

"We look at each invitational as an opportunity to set a new personal best or to be more competitive in their event, and hopefully to make an ECAC or NCAA qualifying mark in the athletes events," Cooper said. "As we get closer and closer to the end of the season, the hope is that our athletes will be able to compete at a greater level and do their best at the championships."

Cooper also stressed the fact that Hartzler needs to be in his best form for championships.

"For Bryson (Hartzler) the focus is on making sure he's at

his best for the NCAA championships," Cooper said. "Bryson (Hartzler) currently holds the fifth best high jump in the nation, but he can still go higher."

Mazany will be working on his technique to improve his performance.

"For Ronson (Mazany) we are still working on technique and trying to get his performance better so that he will be selected to compete at the NCAA championships," Cooper said.

Cooper also said that he wants to see improvement from the women's side as well.

"For Jenna (Fatica) and Virginia (Rodgers-Owens), we want to see those women

improve from week to week, and to learn from their mistakes at this time of year so that they are better [prepared] to compete when it counts for the conference championships and beyond," Cooper said. "All of the athletes on our team are shooting to be their best at the end of their season, the neat thing about track and field with the qualifying meets is that as you get better, you are in control of extending your season."

On Saturday April 11, Behrend's track and field team will travel to compete in the Slippery Rock Invitational.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Top: Dana Turley takes a long stride to clear the hurdle.

Bottom: Behrend junior Earl Bass uses perfect form to get over the hurdle.

Evgeni Malkin: The NHL's best

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The Hart Memorial Trophy is awarded annually to the player adjudged most valuable to his team in the National Hockey League.

When it is all boiled down, there are two players in the NHL who will fight for the Hart at the end of the season. Evgeni Malkin of the Pittsburgh Penguins and Alexander Ovechkin of the Washington Capitals.

Ovechkin won it in 2008 and is the current holder of the trophy, but is he the best player this season?

Ovechkin is having an impressive season with over 50 goals and his team is in second place in the Eastern Conference.

Yes, that is very admirable. Ovechkin can definitely find the back of the net and he helps his team win games.

However, he is not the best player in the league. Ovechkin is an extremely talented player, but does he do all the other things that it takes to be an all around great player? Not necessarily.

Malkin is a player who does all of the things that makes a great player in the league, and that is why he is the best player in the NHL.

Let's take a look at goals and assists for each player, just for starters.

To date, Malkin has 34 goals and 78 assists. Ovechkin has 55 goals and 53 assists. Yes, Ovechkin has 21 more goals than Malkin, but Malkin has 25 more assists. That shows you that Malkin is more of a team player. He is looking to set up goals, rather than score them all on his own. And if you add up the goals and assists, Malkin has more points with 112, than Ovechkin with 108, and ranks first in the league.

Shots are another category we can look at. Ovechkin has tallied a staggering 522 shots this season. That is good enough for first in the league. Malkin, on the other hand, has shot the puck only 286 times, ranking eleventh. That is 236 shots less than Ovechkin. Is Ovechkin starting to look like a puck hog?

Malkin and Ovechkin are both forwards; therefore, their primary objective on the ice is to score points. However, all five players on the ice are

responsible to play defense, so let's talk about the backcheck.

For those of you who aren't hockey literate, the backcheck is basically just getting back on defense. Since Malkin and Ovechkin aren't defensemen, they are responsible for this.

According to nhl.com, Malkin has 91 takeaways (steals) at this point in the season. That ranks first in the NHL. Ovechkin only has 60, 31 less than Malkin.

Not only does Malkin lead the league in points scored, he leads the league in takeaways. A player that can lead his team in points scored and takeaways in the same season seems pretty valuable to me.

Let's talk about shot blocking. Shot blocking shows that a player is willing to sacrifice his body to injury, to keep a puck from getting to the goal.

According to nhl.com, Malkin has 38 blocked shots this season to Ovechkin's 32. This category is close, but Malkin has the advantage.

In fact, the only defensive category that Ovechkin ranks higher in than Malkin, is hits.

You can go look at stats and sure, there will be a few here and there that Ovechkin leads Malkin in, but that's ok. Like I said, Ovechkin is an extremely talented player.

When you look at the stats that I listed, it is clear that Malkin is a more valuable player than Ovechkin. This is true because Malkin plays both sides of the puck. Ovechkin neglects to backcheck, frequently leaving his defensemen hanging out to dry.

Not only does Malkin put the puck in the opponents net, he works extremely hard to keep the puck from going in his own.

Both players play with a passion, but it is Malkin's passion that makes him the most valuable to his team. He does everything he can, from his position, to help his team win.

Ovechkin's passion is strongly centered around scoring goals, and not doing all of the other important things.

Will Malkin win the Hart? We will have to wait and see. Does he deserve it? Yes, plain and simple. Compared to Ovechkin, he is the better all around player, and the most valuable to his team.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

NHL Hart Memorial Trophy candidate Evgeni Malkin.

Swishes

from page 1.

students' team returned to their mainstay of hitting threes from far behind the arc, and they widened the lead. Within minutes, they went on a 3-19 run, and opened the lead to 42-60.

"I guess we just got worn down," said Cerroni, who attempted his last-minute heroics with only a few minutes left in the game. "The faculty works all day, and students have, what, one class a

day? The reason for the fatigue is an obvious differential in workload here."

The faculty were able to score only eight points in the entire fourth quarter, and the score ended with a blowout score of 46-68 in favor of students.

James Wade, a Behrend sophomore majoring in marketing, volunteered at the event. He is part of "Team Ohio," a group within a class training Resident Assistants for fall.

"We do it for the kids," he says. "It's a way to make a difference."

Amanda Takach, also a member of the Resident Assistant class, said that was the reward she got from volunteering at the event. "We figured we could make a contribution to the community," said the freshman business management major. "This is just one small way to do it."

For Cerroni, and many of the players, much of it was about the pride of playing in the

game.

"I scored one bucket," said Cerroni after the game. "One twenty-third of our score feels pretty good, I guess."

Next year, he says, he wants to organize all classes of that week to take part on one day, so that the students are exhausted before the game. Would he play, though?

"If they had tryouts, I probably wouldn't make the cut."