

SPORTS

Men's tennis captures back-to-back championships

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The Behrend men's tennis team proved they are the best in the their conference for the second consecutive year by winning the 2009 AMCC Men's Tennis Championship on April 19 at the Oxford Club in Wexford, Pa.

By winning the championship, the team is back-to-back AMCC Champions and this, also, marked the fourth time in eleven years that they have claimed the title.

"A lot of our success is based on players working hard and working together," head coach Jeff Barger said. "They are a team first. They want to win for each other and that helps a lot. All of the guys did well. We had some illnesses and injuries and everyone stepped up to fill the voids left in the lineup."

Sophomore Elliot Blackstone, who was playing back in his hometown of

Wexford, led the Behrend Lions by taking first in number one singles over Frostburg State's Greg Shedd. This year was the second year that Blackstone has won an AMCC singles championship as he did in 2008 for the number two singles.

"Last year was more important to me; the score of the tournament was a lot closer," Blackstone said. "I felt really good, especially since Frostburg had switched their one and two singles players so I had never played the guy from Frostburg before."

According to Barger, Blackstone moved from the number two singles and doubles this year and did an outstanding job.

Junior Shane Mosier won the number three singles and senior James Getty won the singles championship as he took the number five singles.

"Our leadership this year from James Getty, a senior, also helped," Barger said. "He did his best to keep the guys

focused."

The Behrend Lions captured two of the three doubles championships.

"Our doubles play has been better the last couple of years," Barger said. "It really helps to get those points."

Blackstone teamed with sophomore Jon Henderson in number one doubles winning 8-3. Junior Kelly Manning and sophomore John Michalko won the number three doubles against Frostburg State.

Behrend ended the day with 22 points and was followed by Penn State Altoona and Frostburg State with 16 points apiece. Altoona was named runner up based on tiebreak criteria.

The criteria was based on the team with the most team points in conference matches in the regular season. Pitt-Bradford and Pitt-Greensburg had eight and one team points respectively.

The Blue and White finished the year with a perfect undefeated conference record of 8-0

and 12-7 overall.

Changes in attitude have really helped everybody on the team raise their game, according to Blackstone.

"Our goal is always to try hard and play hard," Barger said. "Those things usually lead to wins. We want to keep

the streak of match wins going. The guys will work hard in the summer and in the fall to get us to that point."

Blackstone has team goals and personal goals for next season.

"My goals for the team are another great season and

another championship," Blackstone said. "I'm going to be focusing more on leadership and I'm just going to try to keep my game fresh and not get worse over the summer."



The men's tennis team poses with their AMCC champions plaque.

Swimming and diving teams claim AMCC Championship

By Christine Newby
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The Behrend Lions men's and women's swimming and diving team claimed their third straight AMCC Championship on Feb. 12-14 at Grove City.

"We had a great season," said assistant coach Joe Tristan. "Everyone exceeded the expectations of the coaching staff and by doing so, helped bring back to Behrend another AMCC Championship."

The women's team had strong performances from sophomores Krystal Kovach and Katie Van Epps, and freshman Anne Lawrence.

Kovach won both the one- and three-meter diving championships with a score of 405.35 and 422.8 respectively. According to the Behrend website, Kovach's scores are both consideration scores for the NCAA Championships, which will take place March 12-14.

Sophomore Katie Van Epps took first place in the 200 yard butterfly and second in the 200 and 400 IM. Freshman Anne Lawrence came in first in the 100-yard butterfly and the 200-yard backstroke, which gave her two AMCC Championships.

Kovach felt the women's

team had a good overall performance this season.

"I feel that we did well this year," said Kovach. "The team consisted of mostly freshmen swimmers, so to see the girls working hard and winning AMCCs was impressive. I'm very proud of all the girls and I hope we can work just as hard next year and bring back another championship for the 09-10 season."

The men's team was led by sophomores Josh Weaver and Ben Strunk, and freshmen Dane Dombrosky and Steve Zomicik.

Scoring 43 points at the meet, Weaver proved to be the high-point winner. Weaver placed first in the 100- and 200-yard freestyle and second in the 500-yard freestyle. Dombrosky finished first in two individual races: the 500-yard freestyle and 100 fly.

Weaver, Dombrosky, Zomicik, and Strunk won four AMCC relay championships. The relay team won the 400, 200, and 800 freestyle relay with times of 3:19.07, 1:29.28, and 7:20.88 respectively. The team also won the 400 yard medley relay.

Dombrosky believes that themen's swimming and diving team kept improving throughout the season.

"The men's swimming and diving has continued to

impress me throughout the season," said Dombrosky. "At every meet there was constant improvement; faster times here, and higher diving scores there. It is just wonderful to see everyone pushing themselves and putting their best foot forward when race day comes around. It was another outstanding season as the team is now three time, back, to back, to back AMCC Champions."

Kovach, Dombrosky, and junior Steve Graves all were awarded AMCC performers of the week honors because of their strong performances.

"We knew all three performers of the week were going to put up some good swims and diving scores," said Tristan. "They feed off the positive competition brought to the pool by their teammates."

Kovach was awarded first team all-AMCC honors in both the three meter and one meter diving events. She holds all four of Behrend's diving records and has captured two Diver of the Year awards during both years that she has attended Behrend.

Dombrosky qualified for the ECAC championships due to the success of the relay races in the AMCC championship.

"It feels good to know that the hard work that my teammates and myself did paid off,"

said Dombrosky. "I am definitely proud to say I am a part of Behrend swimming and glad I could be there to help the team to another AMCC victory."

Graves was named AMCC Diver of the Year for the second time. He was also named diver of the week after his AMCC Championship performance, marking the seventh time he has received the award this season. Graves defended his AMCC title as he placed first in the one meter diving with a score of 332.25 and outscored his opponents by nearly 60 points.

Graves, Dombrosky, Zomicik, and Weaver were named on the first team all-conference for the men's team.

Dombrosky was also named as first team all-conference individually in the 500 freestyle and the 100 fly.

Additionally, Weaver was honored as first team all-conference in the 100 and 200 freestyle along with the four relays.

In the 50 freestyle, Zomicik received individual honors and broke the AMCC championship meet record with a time of 22.14 in the 50 freestyle event.

Just like the men's team, the women's swimmers and divers earned AMCC all-conference awards as well.

Kovach received the AMCC Women's Diver of the Year award. She also was named first team all-AMCC in both the three meter and one meter diving events.

"I was excited," said Kovach when asked about her reaction after she found out she was the AMCC Women's Diver of the Year. "I feel I did my best to improve my skills from last year so I could do better this year and it is really nice to be recognized for my efforts and hard work."

Van Epps was named first team all-AMCC in the 200 fly as well as the 200 free relay, 400 medley relay, and 400 free relay.



The Behrend swimming and diving team claimed the AMCC title.

Lawrence was named first team All-AMCC in the 100 fly and earned first team honors in the 200 free relay, 400 medley relay, and 200 medley relay.

Freshman Hilary MacManus earned first team All-AMCC honors as part of the all four relay races. Freshman Julie Cook was a member of three first team All-AMCC relay teams.

Junior Danielle Wilson made the All-AMCC first team as a part of two relay teams, the 200 medley relay and 400 free relay. Freshman Heather Vickery was named to the All-AMCC first team in the 400 medley relay.

According to Tristan, Behrend will have five participants in the ECAC Championships. Kovach, Weaver, Dombrosky, Zomicik,

and Strunk will be competing in Boston, Massachusetts on Feb. 28 through March 1.

"Really, my only goals are to do the best I can," said Kovach. "That's been my goal all season and I would like to keep that up. If I try my best and I do well, I know that I will achieve something that I really want."

Dombrosky also has goals in mind for the upcoming championship.

"At the ECACs, the team plans to once again break the school record in the 800 freestyle as well as lower all of our times in our individual events," said Dombrosky. "We are ready for the meet and our main goal is to place higher than where we are seated going into the meet."



A Behrend swimmer competes in an event.

Bettis: A champion's way

continued from page 1.

Junker Center he said that he hoped to win two National Championships at Notre Dame.

Unfortunately for "The Bus", he did not become a champion in his college career.

Bettis was drafted tenth overall in the 1993 draft by the Los Angeles Rams where he played three seasons before going to the Steelers.

"I thought that I was the missing piece to the Steelers," said Bettis. "I believed that it was the opportunity of a lifetime."

Bettis thought that he would finally become a champion shortly after signing with the Steelers. Little did "The Bus"

know that it would take ten more years for him to finally raise the Vince Lombardi trophy and be called an NFL Champion.

"To be a champion you have to have love and passion for what you are doing."

Jerome Bettis

At the Junker Center, "The Bus" emphasized the fact that every year he would hope to win the Super Bowl. He said that he was physically and emotionally drained and was set for retirement after the 2004-2005 season.

In the 2005-2006 season, Bettis finally accomplished what he had been wanting to do his entire life; to be a cham-

pion. The Pittsburgh Steelers defeated the Seattle Seahawks in Super Bowl XL by a score of 21-10.

The Super Bowl was played

in Bettis's hometown of Detroit, Mich. which made the victory extra special and unique.

"So what does a champion look like?" Bettis asked. "A champion doesn't look like anyone. To be a champion you have to have love and passion for what it is that you are doing, commitment, and a strong work ethic."



Jerome Bettis recognizes a dream as he celebrates as a Super Bowl Champion.