



Jon Klein/The Behrend Beacon

Senior forward Adam Potter and senior guard Adam Kaiser close in on Fredonia's senior guard Brad Cooper. The Lions held Cooper, Fredonia's leading scorer, to 16 points in a 69-65 Behrend victory.

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Lions win fourth in a row

ALEC ITALIANO
sports editor

Twelve games into the season the Behrend Lions have accumulated an impressive 9-3 record half-way through the season. The team is looking to build up for the AMCC tournament during the second half of the season.

"I am fairly pleased with what we have done. We have had two tough losses on the road against very good teams. We had a good chance to win both but did not," said head coach Dave Niland, according to psblions.com.

February 23 marks the first date of the tournament and will be the ultimate test for the Blue and White to cap off this season and hopefully continue it into NCAA. However, the team is focusing on the process it has to go through to be competitive for the AMCC Tournament.

"Our expectations for the next month is to keep on winning and playing to our full po-

tential every night," said senior guard Adam Kaiser.

It has truly been a team effort so far in the season for the Lions as eight players have accrued at least 15 minutes of playing time per game. Junior guard Justin Kovac leads the team in minutes with 342 followed closely by senior forward Adam Potter with 311 minutes played.

Kovac leads the team with 18 steals and 52 assists. Doing a lot of the dirty work inside the paint, Potter leads the team with 27 personal fouls and 25 turnovers.

Junior forward Chris Saltzman leads the team with 171 points, and was named Athlete of the Week way back in November after the team pulled out a close four-point victory against Fredonia.

The bench players have contributed greatly to this relatively young team and have been the make or break difference in the close games so far this season.

"[Sophomore guard] Nick Thorsen really worked hard in the offseason, and it has paid off. Niland said, according to psblions.com. "[Sophomore guard] Nick Collela has been a key guy as well. Russ Conley and Nick Dvorsky have been impressive as freshmen."

Conley has been the most productive youngster so far Coach Niland. He leads the team with 12 blocks and has racked 116 points for the season. He is averaging just over 10 points a game.

After handling the La Roche Redhawks on the road last week, 58-55, and the Hilbert Hawks 80-66 at Hilbert College. The Behrend Lions will host rivals Penn State Altoona this Saturday in the Junker Center at 3:00p.m.

"We look ahead game to game, and practice to practice in trying to improve," Niland said, according to psblions.com. "If we do that then we should have a chance to reach our team goals."

SWIMMING AND DIVING

Swimming team shattering records

AMANDA STETZ
staff writer

Behrend's Men's and Women's Swimming and Diving team has turned some heads with record breaking performances over the course of the season.

Recent performances at meets have allowed for six members of the Swimming and Diving team (junior Ben Strunk, sophomore Amy Lawrence, freshmen Jake DesRoches, junior Krystal Kovach, senior Steve Graves, and freshman Hunter Backstose) to receive the AMCC players of the Week honor.

Behrend's great victory this season came when the men placed first as the Fredonia State Invitational.

Overall, the men have dominated in most of the team's meets. At the Fredonia Invitational, the men 400 freestyle relay with a time of 3:15.60. The team consisted of junior Josh Weaver, freshman Everett

Sargent, sophomore Dane Dombrosky, and freshman Hunter Backenstose.

The Behrend men have also set a new record time for the 800 freestyle relay at 7:20.18 with the team consisting of Dombrosky, Weaver, freshman Brian Mong, and Backenstose. There were also individual accomplishments at the meet as well with junior Ben Strunk setting a new Behrend record at 58.75.

Standout swimmers for the women include junior Katie Van Epps and sophomore Amy Lawrence, who placed in the top eight at Fredonia.

The two standout divers on the team certainly have not gone unnoticed. On the women's side, junior Krystal Kovach returned after competing in the NCAA Diving Championships last season.

She set a new record for Behrend in the 3m diving at 294.30 during the St. Vincent meet, and has placed well at every meet.

Along with Krystal, senior diver Steve Graves has made quite the impression by breaking the Behrend record for both the 1m diving (268.12) and 3m diving 258.90. With such success, Wallace has optimism for both divers.

"They both have the potential and have dove better the first half of the season than any other season," Wallace said. "Diving is tricky due to its subjective scoring."

Freshmen on the men's team are standing out. Backenstose and Altomese have earned spots to compete in the ECAC Championship later this season.

"This year's freshmen are a great addition to an already strong men's program," Wallace said.

While the team has had success on both sides, the season is not over yet, and it is not without its challenges.

"We [are stronger] than last season, but we just do not have as much depth as I would like,"

Wallace said. "The Individual Medley is a weak point on the men's side."

The coaching staff has emphasized their strength as a team, which is a hard thing to grasp in a more individualized sport. However, Wallace believes that this has been an important factor in the team's success.

"At Fredonia State, not only did the men and the women work hard for their achievements, they really came together to cheer and support and push one another," Wallace said.

And as for the upcoming AMCC Championships February 17-20?

"I do not make predictions, as there are too many variables," Wallace said.

"I think we have the potential to win the AMCC Championships for the fourth year in a row, and I think we have the potential to have a great post-season."

MLK AND BLACK ATHLETES

Black athletes paved way for King Jr.

SHAWN ANNARELLI
managing editor

Before Martin Luther King Jr. could have any effect on the sports world, legendary black athletes were entrenching a path for King to take.

There was four-time track gold medalist Jess Owens, the black Babe Ruth, Josh Gibson, and the first black boxing champion, Jack Johnson.

Prior to these legends, black athletes occasionally played on the same field, court and rings as white athletes. Jackie Robinson broke a racial barrier in 1947, but the first black professional baseball player, Bud Fowler, was signed by a New

Castle, PA. team in 1878.

William Heffelfinger was the first black professional football player. He signed a \$500 contract with the Allegheny Athletic Club in 1892.

Colored athletes brushed the shoulders of white athletes infrequently between the late 1870s and late 1950s. White owners, coaches, players and fans apprehensively welcomed colored players into the professional sports world well into the early 1970s.

The emergence of successful black athletes from the late 1940s to the late 1960s changed the way parts of white populations perceived black people.

In 1947, Boston Red Sox

owner Tom Yawkey said, "Well, naturally, [Jackie] Robinson is out there running faster, jumping higher, and hitting the ball farther. Blacks are more athletically gifted than whites. Sports is what they're good at."

Fast-forward 19 years later to the 1966 NCAA Basketball Championship and Kentucky head basketball coach Adolph Rupp expressed similar sentiments after losing to an all-black Texas Western team.

"I'll put it this way," Rupp said. "We'll never see a black head coach, team owner or president of the United States."

Frankie Robinson became the first black manager professional sports team in 1975 with

the Cleveland Indians.

In 2002, Robert Johnson paid \$300 million to be the first black majority owner of a professional sports team.

Barack Obama is this nation's first black president.

What King did for black athletes is the same thing he did for all black Americans. He gave them a clear, distinctive voice, unwavering in courage and unquestionable in intent.

Black athletes rarely spoke out during the civil rights movement, and they matched King's attitude.

"I'm not concerned with your liking or disliking me," Jackie Robinson said. "All I ask is that you respect me as a human."

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Q&A with head coach Roz Fornari

SHAWN ANNARELLI
managing editor

Q: Coach, for the third straight season the team is hovering around .500 basketball. What is your take on the teams current standing with a 6-6 overall record and a 4-4 conference record?

Coach: "Right now we have ten players, and six are freshmen. We've been playing pretty inconsistently, and it is not surprising that a young team might play that way. It is not that we are playing poorly. We just are not finishing games well or starting well either. It is not ideal."

Q: In the team's recent game against La Roche, the Lions took a four-point lead into the half, but were outshoot 52 to 31 percent in the second half. How can the team avoid such slumps?

Coach: "The four-point lead is deceiving because we hit a three with three seconds left. In the second half, one of their guards, [Chantelle Jennings], beat us up over and over, and we could not stop her. We have to defend her well next time we play them. We also could not get baskets and missed 18 lay-ups. When you do that you will not win many basketball games. We are going to set some first and second half goals."

Q: Which of your players are stepping as leaders on the court?

Coach: Amy Oldach is stepping up. She is a great distributor and does very well on defense. I would like to give her more time off of the court, but we need her out there. Kimmy Pol has the most steals, and she really gets going defensively. Kelly Nowacinski's individual speed really helps us out there

all over the floor. The three of them can defensively shut down a lot of guards.

Q: As a freshmen, Taylor Lotis leads the team in points and was recently named the Athlete of the Week. What does she bring to the table?

Coach: "She plays pretty cozy. It is not that she does not think. She is just instinctive. When she plays loose she plays her best. When she plays tight or distracted she does not play as well. I do not bug with her, and I just let her play."

Q: It appears the team's greatest struggle is around the paint. Behrend has been out-blocked 50 to 20 and out-rebounded 473 to 442. What can the team do to improve near the basket?

Coach: "Well, those are statistics, and sometimes they can be deceiving. We play in the full court with my guards going into the paint and sometimes in for lay-ups. When Amy or Kimmy go in they might get blocked more frequently, because at 5'5" and 5'3" they are going up against girls that are taller forwards. As for rebounding we should not worry about that. We are out-shooting our opponents by a wide margin, which is why opponents are going to get more rebounds defensively."

Q: Going into the second half of the season, what can Behrend fans and AMCC opponents expect from the Lions?

Coach: "Hopefully, improvement. We are young and getting there. We are definitely better than we were a month and a half ago. We need to continue doing that. We have been our worst enemy to this point, and we can win some more games if we can avoid some early and late slumps."

Intramural Deadlines:

- *Friday Night Indoor Soccer, begins Friday, Jan. 15.
- *3-Point Basketball Shootout, register by Monday, Jan. 18.
- *Sunday Night Chess League, begins Sunday, Jan. 24
- *Sunday Night Horseshoe League, begins Sunday, Jan. 24
- *Intramural Swimming, register by Friday, Jan. 22.

Little Caesars

Every Tuesday
FREE PIZZA