

# Sims confident, seeks improvement

If one were still entertaining doubts over Behrend having the stuff needed for a championship team, last Friday's 85-76 victory over St. John Fisher should have put any pessimism to rest. The feeling around town (and especially on campus) is that Behrend will have an excellent bid for the NAIA District 18 Championship.

Coach Sims, however, isn't one for counting his chickens—or his championships—before they hatch. "I'm not even concerned about playoffs yet. We've got 24 regular season games—with some tough ones coming up."

Those words, spoken in an interview a few hours before Behrend went on to beat the Cardinals, show the coach's level minded approach to the season. He is equally realistic about the sport of basketball in general. When asked about the twin victories at Mercyhurst, he replied "I'm pleased we won the tournament, but I feel we can still improve. I'm a perfectionist; I believe in perfection. I've heard that you can't be perfect, but we're sure going to try."

His basic approach, his stoic philosophy towards sports—it is no accident that his coaching methods involve a great deal of fundamentalism. He related how

difficult it was to coach the Peruvian National Olympic Team. "I wasn't a fundamentalist before, but I sure became one fast. We had to go back to step one. You know, 'this is a pass. . .'. Even language posed problems, but after that, it all followed pretty well."

Things have followed well for Jim Sims since he first took to coaching basketball teams. The 35-year-old Pittsburgh native began his career just a few miles south of here, at Edinboro State College. He helped engineer a winning performance that took Edinboro to Kansas City for the NAIA National Championships. That was 1965-66, when Edinboro took the District 18 Championship.

From there, it was on to Keystone Oaks High School, where he eventually took Section IIA Coach of the Year awards.

He was assistant basketball coach at Duquesne University in 1974, then took the enviable post of Director of National Basketball Program in Lima, Peru. He coached the men's Olympic Team to a pair of bronze medals in the South American Championships and the Pan Am Games. The women's team took the gold in the South American Championships. It was here that

Sims "relearned fundamentals," though that is not the key element (he feels) to a winning season.

"Of course I gained experience, but I realized that certain areas were always the same. Some of my coaching experience is the same—so my philosophy is basically the same too. It's built around team togetherness, offensive and defensive togetherness. And discipline; a winning team must have discipline. But togetherness is the key issue. That's why we won the games we won—we're playing as a team."

He stated the coach's prime role in directing a team to victory. "I feel that I have to be a motivator. It's the coach that must find the key to motivate his

team." Sims does not see any one opponent as an obstacle to the District 18 Championship. Rather, he sees a need to constantly improve, and a constant vigilance over the "academic health" of his players. "Every

person now has his own link on the team; we must stay together as a team."

If that's so, that the Cubs solidify as a team, and continue to improve, they will then be all that closer to a great winning season.

"Associated with a winner. . ."

## Local area eyes sports

Commenting further on a related topic, Coach Jim Sims expressed an understanding for

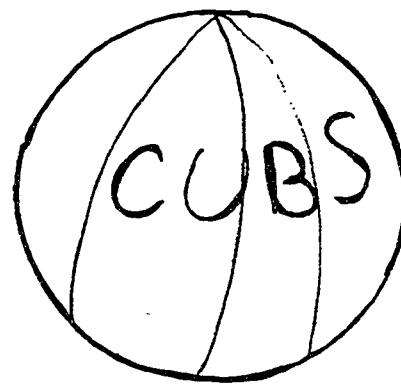
Coach Sims goes over game strategy with one of the players shortly before a big game.



the relatively new "basketball phenomena" in Erie. When asked about the new attitude towards the sport in this area, he replied, "Erie's unique; it recognizes and respects good athletes."

The discussion moved on to big name teams, and the publicity they generate. Gannon College came to mind. "Gannon has been here years and years," he said. "It has established a tradition. We hope Behrend can establish a tradition as well."

And what would be the benefits of a successful basketball team? "It helps all around—not just good press for the players. It helps further recruitment, of course, but it also helps enrollment as well. People want to be associated with a winner. They'll go to a school that has made a name for itself."



It's music, man

## Future times for "Yes," another roundabout?

Though not a big fan of most popular rock music being played nowadays, there was an album released a few months ago that I waited a long time to hear. It is the latest release of that avant-garde super-group, "Yes." I bought it, took it home, and immediately subjected it to the critical scrutiny of my headphones. And I immediately got sick.

That entire week the album, "Tormato," was played only once more, with the results only confirming my initial onset of nausea. Even though I rarely like an album the first time I hear it, I was sure this one would in no way stand up to the lofty image of other "Yes" accomplishments. Again, I forgot how I disliked the last two releases of that same group—until I had fully digested the new music.

Let's face it, the group has changed—dramatically. John Dean no longer does their illustrious album covers. One never knows if Rick Wakeman is going to stay around, or just helping out between solo efforts. As with "Going For The One," their last LP, few comparisons can be drawn to their earlier releases.

My initial resentment was due to the "watered-down" content of Jon Anderson's lyrics. The five-and-dime fairy tale imagery of "Circus of Heaven" turned me off completely. I was looking for cryptic hints and ciphers—and got a carnival ride to the tune of \$6.98. Not that I wasn't warned. The album cover pictures the group members with a smashed tomato superimposed on them. The album title, "Tormato," sneered at me when I decided that that was what the thing deserved—a rotten tomato thrown against it.

After a while though, the magic takes hold. We all know this; play a song over and over again, and you'll take to liking it. Look at all the blurry disco we digest day in and day out. We actually let noxious tunes like "YMCA" grow on us.

With "Tormato," it was a little different. Convinced the lyrics contained no deep meaning, I

surrendered to the music, and began to appreciate the music for what it was. Chris Squire is as versatile as ever, delivering runs and patterns that outreach anyone else who calls himself as bass guitarist. He even commands the lead on "The Silent Wings Of Freedom," one of the album's best cuts.

Rick Wakeman is noticeably present, perhaps as much as in "Fragile," where his influence gave "Yes" the unique sound quality they are now associated with. His fantastic ability at keyboards "thickens" their pieces, and runs beautiful parallels to Steve Howe's guitar virtuosity. Though not as clean and diversified as he was in other efforts, Steve's energy is considerable in delivering the driving impact of all their faster songs. He confines himself to chords over notes at times, leaving to waste his incredible talent for finger picking on electric or acoustic guitars. This can be overlooked, if one considers that Steve helped compose only a few of the pieces, while Jon Anderson had a big share in arranging the material.

This is the final issue at stake; how the group is handling their own direction. Though more electronic, they certainly haven't forged a "new" sound. There is markedly less acoustic work and keyboard leads, but nothing of equal taste is substituting for it. Even the vocal harmonies, once so clear, variant, and sweet—they too are missing from their latest work. In their place is more drive, more "beat" tunes, with the accent on force and steady tempo. I don't totally dislike this, in fact, I really enjoy the first side, all the way from the optimistic "Future Times," to the "fight-song" melody, "Release, Release." It just has to be acknowledged that the music of Yes, and probably the group as well, is undergoing a metamorphosis. Quite conceivably a self-initiated change, but a change just the same. I only hope that record sales are not the barometer by which the group measures the value (and future direction) of their music.

Cubs pacing all others. . .

# Behrend cagers continue unbeaten

Beginning with an 80-61 romp over Pitt-Johnstown in the Friday night opener of the Mercyhurst Invitational Tourney last week, the tenacious Cubs of Behrend College have established themselves as the team to beat in the local "Big Five" area.

Springboarding off the Pitt-Johnstown win, they went on to defeat rival Mercyhurst, 66-57. A few nights later, the spotlight shifted to Erie Hall, where Behrend extended their winning streak to three, as they scored an impressive 65-50 victory over Fredonia State. As a final test, they faced a tough, accurate-shooting St. John Fisher, and walked away triumphant again, 85-76 over the previously unbeaten team.

In the first game, it was a strong second-half rally that gave Behrend the edge, after a slow first half marked by turnovers on both sides. Ernie Cooper, a 6-9 senior from Houston, tallied a quick nine points in the rally. Ron Williams and Greg Vaughn each contributed six additional points, as a 22 point burst clutched the game for the Cubs. Cooper ended up with 25 points, John Luster had 19, Vaughn 16, and Williams nailed another 10.

Team shooting was slightly under par, the Cubs averaging 48.6 per cent from the floor. A better percentage was held at the

foul line, where Behrend sunk 12 of 19 free throws. The rebound edge went to the Cubs as well, as they brought down 41 off the boards to Pitt-Johnstown's 36.

The next night, host Mercyhurst fell to another shooting barrage, 66-57. John Luster scored an impressive 20 points, making visible a small portion of the overall super talent the Cubs possess. Coming off the bench and sparking several rallies, Greg Vaughn played with enough energy to earn him Most Valuable Player honors for the tourney.

When the scene shifted to their home campus, Behrend proved to be even more charged-up, as they handed Fredonia State, 65-50. Guards Ron Williams and Mike Powell, along with Kirk Farbacher, were instrumental in shutting down Fredonia's offense. The Cubs clamped down once again with their high pressure defense. And again, it was the second-half rally that netted the game for Behrend. At intermission the Cubs were ahead by a single basket, 32-30. It was going to man-to-man coverage in the second half that threw the Fredonia game plan out of order. Mike Powell's defensive tactics highlighted this effort as the Cubs began to drop baskets at a rate too fast for Fredonia to match. Kirk Arbacher coming down with ten

rebounds at this time also demonstrated the control Behrend began to have in the game. Fredonia had to contend with many turnovers as they saw their offensive attack bog down. John Luster and Ernie Cooper racked up 16 points apiece for Behrend. Greg Vaughn chipped in an additional 12.

A packed Erie Hall once again, this time Behrend meeting their toughest challenge in the form of 3-0 St. John Fisher. The New York powerhouse set out to establish immediate ball control, their shooting accuracy a clean 55.6 per cent. Cardinal Bob Rezny scored a game-high 26 points, but all in a losing effort. The key to the 85-76 victory for Behrend was its improved shooting percentage (50.6 per cent), and also its nagging man-to-man defense. The tight defense, a distinct characteristic of Coach Sims' explosive team, forced the Cardinals to work hard for good shooting opportunities. This was no easy feat, Sims acknowledging that St. John Fisher was the hottest shooting team the Cubs have faced. But Behrend proved a match, at one time shooting a 58.3 fieldgoal percentage. They also pressured 21 turnovers from the Cards. Ernie Cooper was high man for Behrend with 22 points, John Luster right behind with 19. Greg Vaughn and Ron Williams assisted with 13 each.

### 1978-79 BEHREND COLLEGE BASKETBALL ROSTER

Name	Yr.	Height	Weight	Hometown	Home School
Ernie Cooper	Sr.	6-9	225	Houston, Texas	Dickinson
Kirk Farbacher	Jr.	6-7	205	Pittsburgh	Shaler
John Grulich	So.	6-1	180	Erie	Cathedral Prep
Kevin Hudson	So.	5-8½	140	Philadelphia	Gratz
John Luster	Jr.	6-7	195	Louisville, Ky.	Louisville C.
Steve Melzer	So.	5-10	160	Erie	Harborcreek
Mike Powell	So.	6-0	155	Philadelphia	W. Philadelphia
Sibley Robinson	So.	6-4	165	Philadelphia	William Penn
Rick Slagle	So.	6-3	185	Titusville	Titusville
Charles Smith	So.	6-1	170	Pittsburgh	Schenley
Gary Spencer	So.	6-6½	207	Philadelphia	S. Philadelphia
Greg Vaughn	So.	6-4	198	Pittsburgh	Westinghouse
Ron Williams	Jr.	6-2	180	Philadelphia	W. Philadelphia
Tony Thomas	Fre.	6-0	175	Bronx, N.Y.	Fordham Prep.