

sports

Lions look tough as season nears

by Andy Dobry
Collegian Staff Writer

After compiling a record of 11-14 last season and losing the nation's leading rebounder to graduation, you might not expect a very good outlook for the Behrend basketball team. However, this year's team may be better than ever.

The 1987-88 edition returns three starters from a team that won eight of their last 11 games in the last season. Throw in two redshirted players who have started in the past and what Coach Doug Zimmerman calls "the best freshman recruiting class I've ever been associated with," and you can see why optimism abounds over this year's team.

In looking at this year's roster, it quickly becomes evident that this team has more depth than any Behrend team of the past. It is for this reason that Coach Zimmerman is reluctant to reveal a starting five, saying that any eight or nine players are capable of starting.

At point guard, Wayne Snyder will share playing time with Randy Baughman. Joe Weed, last year's starter at the point, is lost for the

season, due to injury. Snyder, a 5'11" senior, matured a great deal last season, showing good shooting skills and leadership qualities. Leader is also the perfect word to describe Baughman, a 5'9" Freshman from East High. He has a great presence, as he sees all of the court and knows how to get the ball inside.

Jim Webb, a 6'2" junior from Cathedral Prep who was redshirted last year because of a leg injury, figures to hold down one of the wing positions. 6'2" senior Gary Zang should be a leading candidate to start at the other wing. Zang was among the area leaders in shooting percentage last year, and has excellent inside skills.

No fewer than six players will push Webb and Zang for starting spots. The most pleasant surprise to Lion fans may be Mike Jenkins, a 6'2" freshman from Academy High School. Jenkins was a crowd favorite at Academy and runs the court with blazing speed. Two transfer students, Dave Gurska from Shenango and Bob Minford, a junior, should see plenty of action. Another freshman, Girard's Brian Maslar, brings a deadly

shooting eye to the lineup. Rick Askey, a sophomore from Conneaut Valley, may prove to be a key player later in the season. Sophomore Brian Phillips will miss the first part of the season because of a hand injury. Phillips, from Seneca High, is the type of all-around athlete who benefits any program.

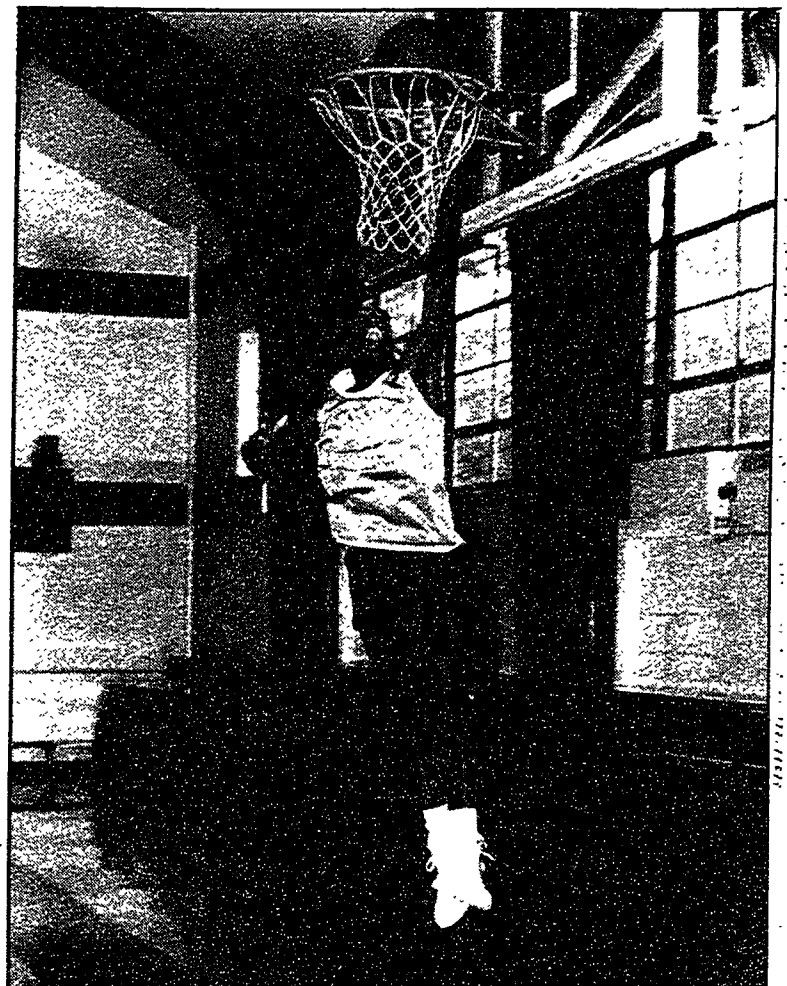
Depth in the inside game will be Behrend's biggest weakness this season. Only four players on this year's roster are over 6'2". These four, however, are very talented. Gene Gorniak, a 6'7" junior from North East, will provide much needed size inside. Gorniak's intensive play should move him out of the shadow of brother Randy and into the spotlight as the Lion's leading rebounder. Greg Green, the other player redshirted last season, returns to this year's lineup. Green, a senior from Cleveland, showed signs of brilliant play two years ago, including three resounding dunks against highly rated Gannon University. Greg should develop into this year's enforcer. Spelling these two players will be a pair of freshmen. Prep's Rick Demski, a 6'5" leaper, and Fort Leboeuf's

Frank Keller will see plenty of action giving Gorniak and Green a rest.

Coach Zimmerman is pleased to finally have a good blend of seniors, juniors, sophomores and freshmen on the roster. After a series of good practices, Zimmerman rates the team's strengths as shooting inside and outside, team speed and overall depth. Their biggest strength, according to Zimmerman, may come from within. "This year's team has an attitude about them in a positive sense, that makes them different from previous teams. It could be due to last year's strong finish. They sense that they can win, and want to go out and do it."

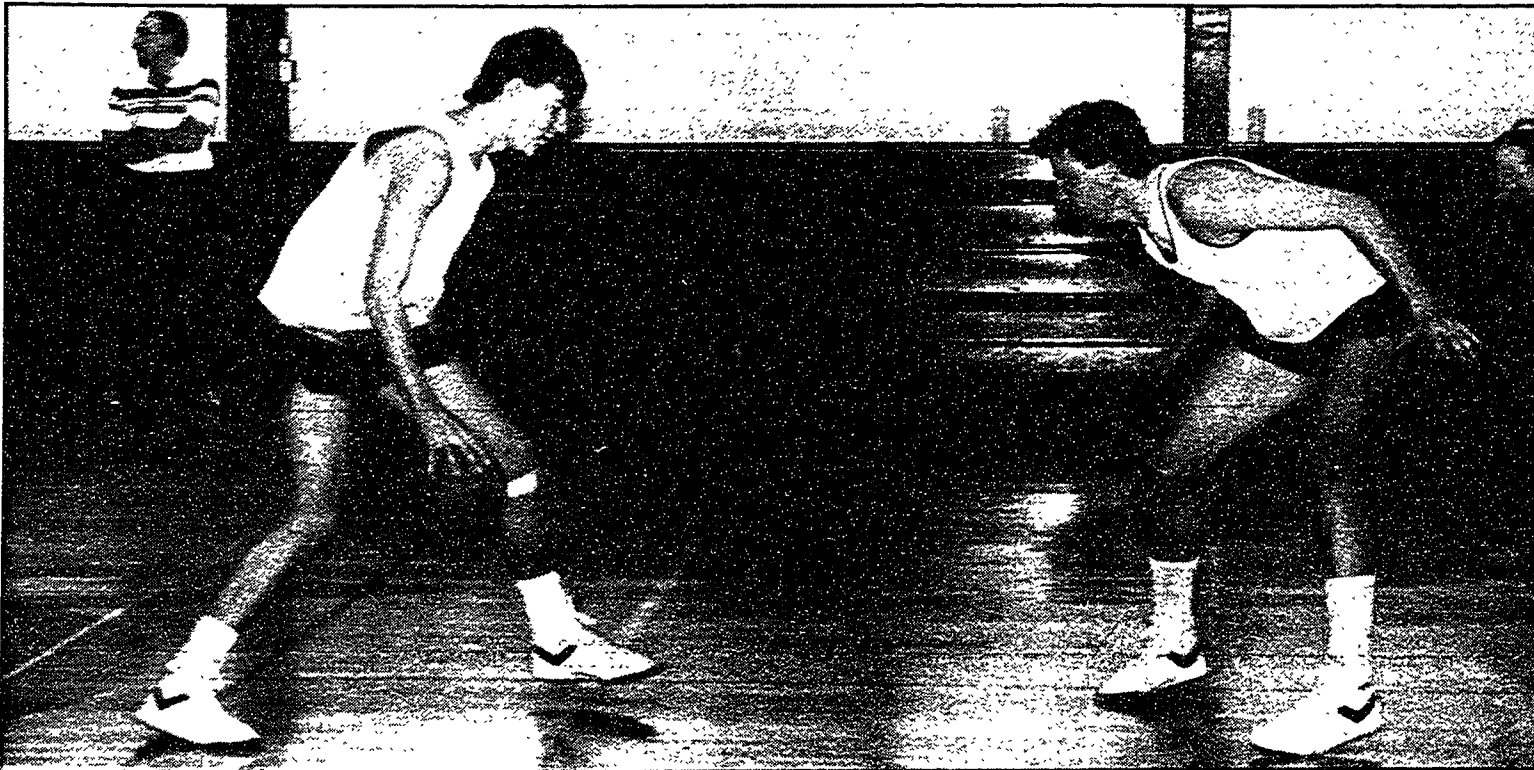
Look for the Lions to be much more aggressive both offensively and defensively. Zimmerman plans to run the ball after made shots as well as after missed shots, and to press more on defense. "We're going to make teams play 94 feet of the floor," said the coach.

Behrend opens the season November 21st at Westminster. The first home game will be Tuesday, November 24th at Erie Hall.



Mike Jenkins shows off for the camera.

photo by Mary Beth Zawistowski



Rick Demski goes one-on-one against a determined Gene Gorniak

photo by Mary Beth Zawistowski

Profile: Doug Zimmerman

by Andy Dobry
Collegian Staff Writer

Men's Basketball Coach Doug Zimmerman is an individual with an impressive background and an even brighter future. A native of Erie, he attended East High School and spent two years at Behrend before moving on to Slippery Rock, where he earned a Bachelor of Science and a Master of Science degree in Physical Education.

Coach Zimmerman was an All-American athlete in both baseball and basketball at Slippery Rock. He was drafted by the Pittsburgh Pirates and played for them at the Double-A level.

He began his coaching career at Slippery Rock as an assistant for three years and was promoted to head coach. He held that position for four years before accepting a position at Alabama-Samford as a first assistant and Assistant

Athletic Director. He remained at Samford for four years before returning to Behrend as Head Basketball Coach. Zimmerman resides in Erie with his wife and two children.

It may seem odd that a coach with a promising future at a Division One school, would leave the Alabama climate to return to Erie, but Zimmerman does not regret his decision. Two main reasons for returning were Coach Herb Lauffer and Dr. Roger Sweeting. "All through my life I have been fortunate enough to have had people push and guide me into accomplishing my goals. I wanted to be associated with class people, and the people here are good individuals. They have a commitment to make this campus a good one. Unfortunately, this doesn't happen fast enough for most people."

Zimmerman also desired to return to his home town, and feels that Erie gets a bad rap, undeservingly so. According to the coach, the city has many positive things to offer. "Those who complain probably haven't been outside the city limits very much," stated Zimmerman.

A third reason for returning to the area was to put the Behrend program on a national level. The area is in a triangle between basketball hotspots Cleveland, Pittsburgh and Buffalo. "Look at the roster of any NBA team and you'll be shocked at how many pro players are from the area," said the coach.

As a coach, Zimmerman is concerned with helping his players reach their potential both individually and as a team. The first priority that he sets with his players is the classroom. He pushes them to do their best, reminding them that academic success is their main reason for being in college. He also desires to see his players reach their potential as individuals. The coach feels that adding athletics to academics helps them to reach their potential more quickly. Finally, Zimmerman pushes each player toward success on the basketball court.

He believes that he is making steady progress in each area, gaining ground each year. He knows that maturity is a slow process, not something that happens when a coach snaps his fingers. He believes that the solid foundation he has been building for the past five years at Behrend is starting to pay off. "As an athlete, you're put into situations where you need to perform. If you don't perform, a lot of people know about it. Athletic experience can be a big help in allowing someone to reach their potential

more quickly." Zimmerman knows that this experience can carry over into the classroom and into life.

The key word to his philosophy is discipline, which he defines as, "very simply put, doing what is needed, when it is needed, and doing it right."

As for the future, Zimmerman believes that two things need to happen for the basketball program to substantially improve. Most immediate is a renovation of Erie Hall. Although a new Life-Fitness Center is promised in the future, the need for renovation of the current facility is immediate. Because of the small confines of Erie Hall, teams are reluctant to play here, especially with the Behrend team constantly improving. The coach believes that the current facility gives the Lions a cozy advantage. It is now more difficult to bring in good teams to play, as witnessed by the recent refusals of Gannon and Mercyhurst to play any more games at Behrend.

Zimmerman also desperately wants to get Behrend involved in a conference. This would make it easier for the Lions to schedule games, especially during the months of January and February when the other teams are involved in a conference schedule. A conference would also open the door to post-season play, and give some recognition to deserving individuals and the program on both a regional and national level. Finally, involvement in a conference would develop rivalries and stir up local interest in the program.

With the basketball team improving each year, and the promise of a new home gym and possible conference involvement, Doug Zimmerman should finally reach some well-deserved goals.



photo by Mary Beth Zawistowski

Intramural Tales

by Angie Papaleo
Collegian Staff Writer

The end of the semester also brings the end of the athletic season, which includes the Intramural program. Currently the flag football and soccer seasons are being completed, with playoff games scheduled for the first week of November.

There were 31 teams entered in flag football and all but three have been eliminated. Krush Attack will definitely play in the championship game and will square off against either Air Attack or the Mackenzie Brothers.

The Women's champion has already been decided, when Sigma Theta Chi defeated The Party Pack, 25-6.

Eight teams participated in the soccer program, and they have finished the regular season. The championship game will be played sometime in early November.

The final intramural sport this

semester will be three-on-three basketball. The season began on Nov. 5, and will run until the week before finals.

Bombardment, a Behrend favorite, might be played during the last week before finals and will run throughout that week.

The unpredictable Erie weather has not put a damper on the activities, according to Bob Peck, Intramural Director. "Overall, I've been very pleased as well as surprised by the turnout this season, there is obviously a great amount of interest and enthusiasm in intramurals at Behend."

Peck also wanted to express his gratitude to the people who officiated games this semester. "We were very fortunate to have these people help out with the program," said Peck.

Peck has a few ideas for more events, including a cross-country race and even a Trivial Pursuit tournament, so keep your eyes open.

Volleyball Notes

by David Bruce
Collegian Sports Editor

A lack of bench strength has begun to take a toll on the Behrend Women's Volleyball team. In the last few weeks, fatigue has cost them at least two victories.

The Lady Lions lost a tri-match against Grove City/Westminster in straight sets on Oct. 22. They played well, according to Coach Jan Wilson, especially Gwen Jones who had three serving aces and four kills against Grove City.

"They're (Grove City) a nationally ranked team," said Coach Wilson, "...we played well, we surprised them...but then we couldn't bounce back against Westminster."

On Oct. 27 they played another tri-match, this time versus Fredonia/St. John Fischer. Coach Wilson said, "They were consistent but using a new setter, as we had to do, really upset the team."

The squad then traveled to West Virginia to play Bethany and Salem Colleges. Against Bethany, the Lady Lions played well but lost in three sets; "...we simply made too many errors," said Coach Wilson.

They played even better against Salem, winning 15-11, 7-15, 15-12. Gwen Jones, who had nine kills and two serving aces, was one of the key players in the victory. The

team as a whole had 14 serving aces; "They played consistently well...not many errors, Cathy Cadonic had an especially good game," said Coach Wilson. Cadonic is the new setter for the Lady Lions, and is improving steadily in her play.

On Nov. 2, Behrend entertained Canisius, a Division I team. The Lady Lions actually led the Match at the end of three sets, 2-1. However, the lack of bench strength cost them dearly as they lost the final two sets; the score was: 1-15, 15-13, 15-11, 6-15, 11-15.

Coach Wilson believed that this match was the team's most consistent, they had 35 total kills and 12 serving aces. Individual stars were Beth Beres who had 13 kills and Erica Scribner who had four serving aces.

The Lady Lions' final match was on Nov. 5 against Thiel, by now the team was reeling from injuries and simple fatigue due to a lack of replacements. Coach Wilson was forced to use a makeshift line-up. Sandy Taylor, in her first match as a hitter, had five saves and three kills in a losing effort.

Coach Wilson said that there will be Spring volleyball next semester with perhaps several tournaments. She was pleased with the players' attitudes and hopes they gain more experience in the spring for next season.

The Collegian is looking for sportswriters for next semester: if you're interested, call the Collegian Office at 898-6221.

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