

SPORTS

Lion Cagers Undeclared After First Four Games

by Mike Cifelli
Collegian Staff Writer

Recently, Doug Zimmerman - Behrend's head basketball coach - wrote a message on his office chalkboard. "You play hard - good things happen," his chalkboard reads and these words seem very appropriate as his upstart Lions have posted a surprising 4-0 record to open the 1988-89 season. It is the first time in recent years that a Behrend basketball team can boast of such a start.

The Lions are also owners of a 93-points per game average. An average that, according to Zimmerman, could turn out to be one of the top ten ppg. averages in Division III.

Over the weekend, the squad traveled to Oberlin and came away with a 95 - 85 victory. The Behrend crew had four players in double figures led by Rick Demski's 32 points. Bob Minford and Randy Baughman each had 17 while Mo Pringle added 13. Demski and Pringle grabbed 12 and 10 rebounds respectively while Baughman dished out 11 assists. The team was hot from the floor hitting 59 percent while Oberlin could manage only 39 percent.

Behrend opened the season on the road; pouncing Pitt-Bradford 91-80 and thrashing Theil College 92-75. Against Pitt-Bradford, Baughman led the way with 21 points and seven assists while Chris Viscuso tossed in 16. The Lions were strong under the boards with Demski cramming in 12 points and 10 rebounds while Pringle added 11 points and eight rebounds.

At Theil, Demski proved to be the key ingredient with 25 points, and 10 rebounds. Demski was complimented by Pringle's 17 and Baughman's 14.

In the home opener, the Lions posted an impressive 94-83 upset over Allegheny College. The Gators were ranked ninth in the Division II preseason poll, but the well balanced Lions seemed far from intimidated. Double digit scorers for the Lions included Viscuso (20), Demski (17), Baughman (14), Frank Keller (13), Pringle (10), and Dave Gurska (10).

Zimmerman stated that the victory was, "good for the program." He went on to add, "we had good crowd support ... teams don't like to come here (Erie Hall) because of the heat and the crowd. It's a pit."



Freshman guard Dave Mojock takes on a couple of Allegheny Gators during the Lions' surprising 94-83 victory. photo by Jeff Majcher

In talking about his team's success, Zimmerman pointed out, "The group is responding and playing well together. We have great chemistry and balanced scoring." He also mentioned that his squad's strength are, "balance, hard play and a defense that is coming together." Pointing to his chalkboard, Zimmerman showed me his latest message, "No let down - Guard against it."

Zimmerman's philosophy is simple, he likes to use the team's floor speed to, "keep the tempo upbeat, which helps the rebounding and beats the opponent's big men up the floor."

It seems that Doug Zimmerman has become a philosopher of sorts with these words to play by. It's just possible that this coach's hoop logic will have the Lions roaring throughout the season.

Lady Lions Off To Dismal Start

by Todd J. Irwin
Collegian Staff Writer

On November 18 and 19, the Lady Lions took part in the Fredonia University Tournament to tip off their 1988-89 hoop season under first year Head Coach Jenepher Banker.

In the first round, Behrend faced nationally ranked Nazareth and came up short, 63-82. In the second round, the Lady Hoopers bounced back to defeat Alfred University by a tight 55-53. On November 22, the team traveled to Pitt-Bradford for their first dual game of the season. Despite a rather comfortable lead at the half, the Lady Lions fell 59-66. The following week took the team on the road once again. This time Division II Mercyhurst handed Behrend a loss, 65-88.

This past weekend, December 3 and 4, saw the Lady Lions travel to Alfred University for the Charity Cage Classic. In the opening round, Behrend was downed by Fredonia, 50-58. Western Connecticut, flooring a very strong team, defeated the Lady Lions, 55-72. According to both Coach Banker and her assistant, Coach Bari, poor shooting hampered the team this weekend, but the worst problem the team is having this year is rebounding. "Rebounding has been the major problem in our games," stated Banker. Bari agreed by expressing the rebounding problem as his major concern for the team, "We're just not getting to the boards." Bari also blamed inconsistency for the team's poor play. "We need chemistry and that takes a while. It just doesn't happen," said Bari. Coach Banker feels that the players are just now starting to "gel" as a team. With a new coaching staff and a new system of play, it's no wonder that the team is taking a little time to get good team chemistry. In addition, the Lady Lions have yet to play in Erie Hall this season. "I'd like to shoot at our own hoop once in a while," remarked Bari.

On the up side, the Lady Hoopers have played hard nosed defense in all of their games. Coach Banker feels that the team has been forcing a lot of turn overs by their opponents. "We've been pressuring the ball and our defense has come around real well," stated Bari. Defense is obviously the key for the team to be successful. Banker explained, "To be successful, we have to keep the other team under 60 points." Another plus for the Lady Lions is the depth of their bench. According to Banker, barring illness, "Everyone has played in every game."

Consistently strong play has been turned in by Senior guard Lisa Butch and Junior forward Michelle Madison. Butch, Behrend's team captain, leads the team in scoring, averaging 14.3 points per game and earned the honor of being named to the Fredonia University All-Tournament First Team. Madison, averaging 12 points per game, was awarded a position on the Alfred University All-Tournament First Team.

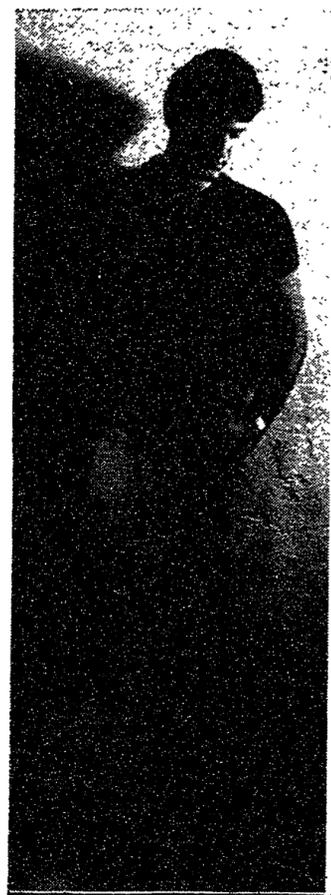
Even after the slow 1-5 start, optimism is still noticeable in both coaches. Coach Bari sums it up, "It may take some time, but we will get better as the season goes on."

As the paper went to press, the Lady Lions improved their record to 2-5 with a victory at home over Washington and Jefferson College. Down 27-31 at the half, Behrend rallied behind Michelle Madison, 24 points, to gain a one point lead with only seconds remaining. The victory was clinched when Lady Lion Connie Armstrong pulled down a defensive rebound from W&J's final shot.



Freshman Krista Fortson puts up a jumper during a 55-54 squeaker over Washington and Jefferson. photo by Jeff Majcher

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