

Sports

NHL Playoffs

by Todd J. Irwin
Collegian Sports Editor

Patrick Division Finals

Philadelphia Flyers vs. Pittsburgh Penguins

This classic rivalry may not be used to the playoff scene, but it will definitely entail its usual intensity and fury. The Flyers upset the Washington Capitals in first round action, but took six games to do so. The Pens swept the Rangers in four straight and have been resting up, not without reason. It took them over a decade to finally win in the Spectrum, but they have beat the Flyers the past two times there.

Goalie Ron Hextal may be one of the best in the league, but he must face the league's leading goal scorer in Pittsburgh's Mario Lemieux. What it all boils down to is this. Philly's first round stand was noble, but if the Pens continue to play the way they have been, they'll be unstoppable, at least for the Flyers.

Adams Division Finals

Boston Bruins vs. Montreal Canadiens

Besides the Penguins, the only other team to sweep their opponents in the first round were the Montreal Canadiens who canned the Hartford Whalers in four. The Boston Bruins took five games to eliminate the Buffalo Sabres in order to advance to the Adams Final.

Cam Neely has led the Bruins with two game-winning goals in the playoffs. Boston is generally considered to be the team that relies more on its hustle and desire than on its sheer talent. The Bruins must continue their infamous forechecking to contend with the mighty Canadiens who racked up 115 points during the regular season, second only to the Calgary Flames in total points in the NHL. Boston will not fold easily, but Montreal will make losing easier for the Bruins.

Smythe Division Finals

Calgary Flames vs. Los Angeles Kings

This should be the most interesting matchup in this round. The Flames posted the best record during the regular season, but had just about all they could handle in the first round as the Vancouver Canucks took the Flames to overtime of their seventh game before taking off the glass slipper.

The Kings accomplished an incredible feat as they became only the sixth team in NHL history to overcome a 3-1 deficit in the playoffs to advance against the Edmonton Oilers. The Kings are again upset minded as they follow Wayne Gretzky to Calgary in hopes of catching the Flames in the same daze that they played in during the first round. The Flames may have been guilty of looking past the Canucks, but they won't make that same mistake this round, and Gretzky can only do so much.

Norris Division Finals

Chicago Blackhawks vs. St. Louis Blues

The Chicago Blackhawks upset the division winning Detroit Red Wings in six games during the first round of the playoffs and the Blues stopped the Minnesota North Stars in five games to advance to the division finals. This match up could go either way as the two teams match strength against strength. St. Louis goalie Greg Millen is the team's mainstay as he collected six regular season shutouts. Blackhawk Steve Larmer will be who Chicago fans look to for scoring punch as he led his team with 43 goals and 87 points on the season.

The Blackhawks will be riding the upset wave in from Detroit, but the honeymoon's over and the Blues are better rested. The winner here doesn't much matter as they will have to face the Smythe Division champion.

Tennis Team Takes Two

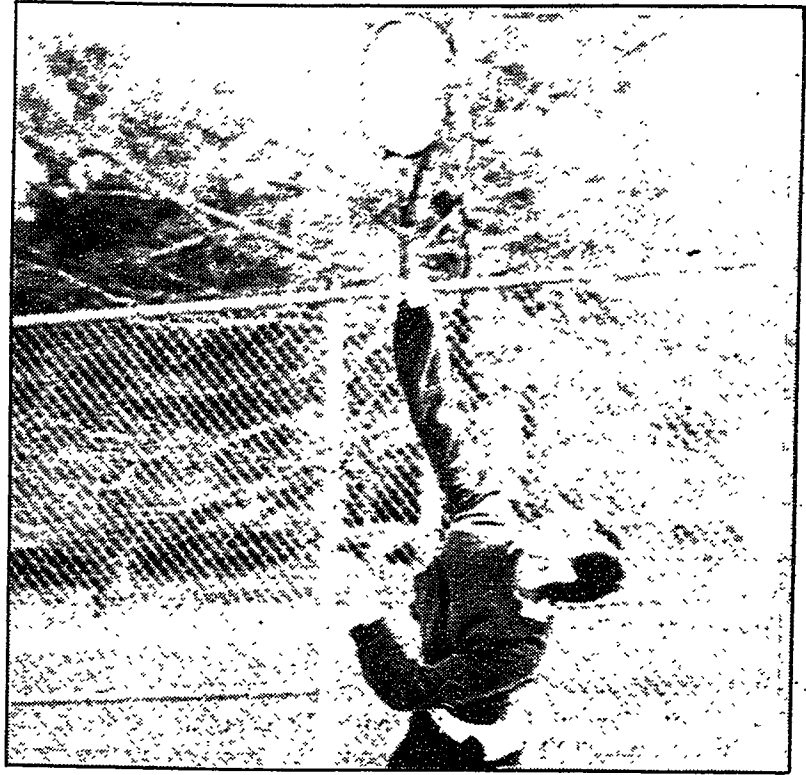
by John Musser
Collegian Staff Writer

The Behrend Men's Tennis team raised their season record to 5-3 by taking two of three matches during the past week, the only loss coming against a strong Division II team.

The latest victory occurred on Behrend's home courts, as the Lions triumphed over Nazareth College, 6-3. The key to the win was in the singles matches, as Bill Schmitt, Shawn Crago, Todd Hiller, and Steve Smith all recorded straight set victories, as did the doubles team of Schmitt-Chuck Keenan. Keenan also won his singles match, despite dropping the first set.

Coach Michael Grignol was quite pleased with the victory, but has been disappointed by the lack of fans at the home matches. "You see a lot of the parents at the matches, but few of the local students have come out. Maybe part of it is not knowing when the matches are or the time is bad."

Although Grignol did not blame sparse fan support as a reason for any home losses or poor play, he would like to see Behrend get a home court



Todd Hiller serves up ball during practice. Hiller was one of four Lions to pull down two straight set victories last week.

photo by Rick Brooks

advantage by having more fans at the games.

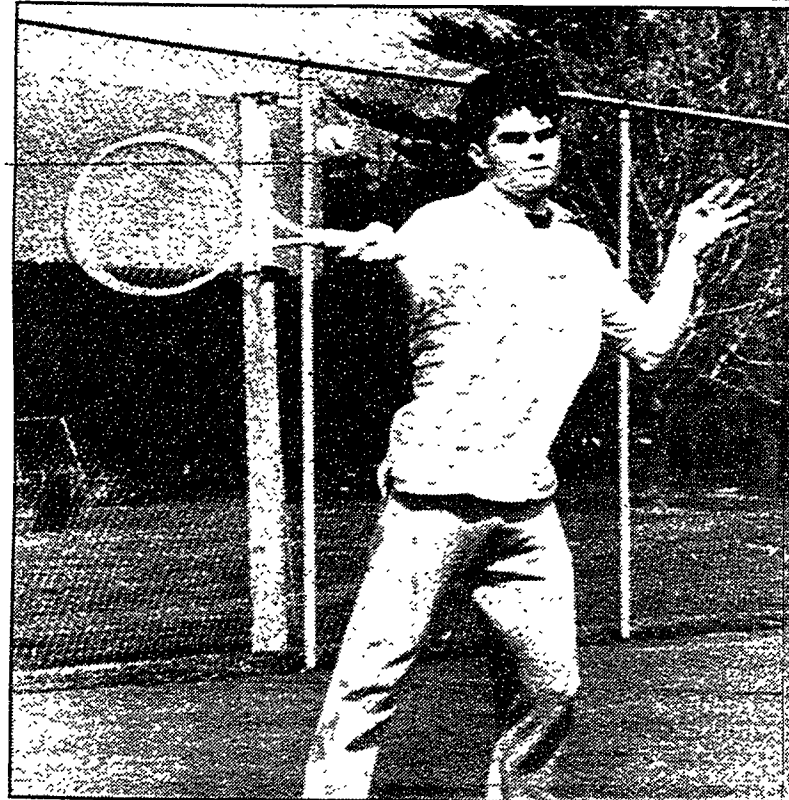
Last Thursday, the netters traveled to the University of Indiana, PA., where they suffered their worst defeat of the season as they ended their three match winning streak, losing 9-0. IUP's Jim Welker, who was ranked number 13 in Division II in the East last year, ended Schmitt's unbeaten streak at six.

On April 11, the Lions dismantled visiting Geneva College, 8-1. Behrend swept all six singles matches, with Schmitt, Crago, Keenan, Hiller, Smith, and Chris Benton all recording straight set triumphs. Schmitt-Crago and Dave Hogle-Robert Jackson were also straight set winners in doubles action.

"Everybody is beginning to play consistent matches. We are pulling out the close matches by playing good tennis and being tough in the crunch," said Grignol.

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Chuck Keenan eyes a forehand shot before crushing it over the net. photo by Rick Brooks

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