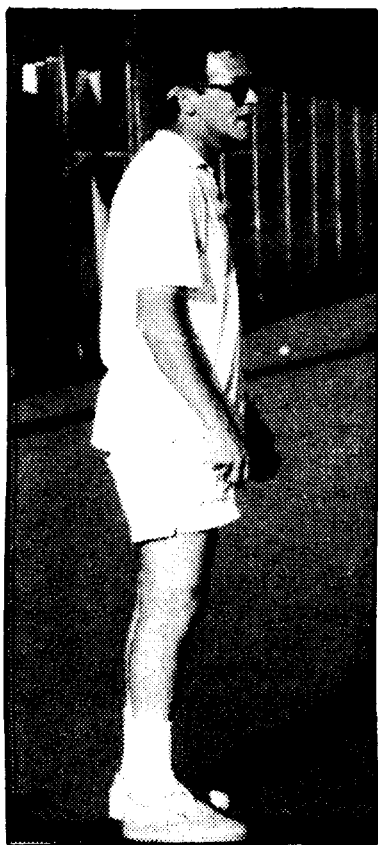


Lady netters start season under new coach

Gallegos brings experience, enthusiasm to struggling program



Dan Gallegos

by Robert Kitchen
Collegian Staff Writer

The 1990 women's tennis team is enthusiastic about the upcoming season.

Dan Gallegos will be the new head coach for this year's team. The lady netters finished 4-6 last year under Michael Grignol, who retired at the end of the season.

There are three returnees from last year's squad.

They are Melissa Clark, Steffani Rasche, and Karen Major.

New to the team are Linda Marquardt, Kathy Nicolls, Kathy Hartman, Jenniffer Scribner, Katherine Rozumny, Louisa Urgo, and Michelle Schaffner.

Other players may be joining in the future. The number of players out for the team is up over previous year's teams.

A new concept built into the tennis program this year is that the women and men practice together. Gallegos is confident these methods will help the team.

"It gives the women all levels of competition," said the recently hired coach.

Rasche said, "It helps improve our game because we play people better than ourselves. Also, the guys get preseason practice."

Strong points for the team include enthusiasm and a good work ethic.

Weaknesses are a late start in practicing and inexperienced players.

Gallegos is an Erie native and a graduate of Clarion University. He served as a tennis head coach at Rocky Grove High School (Franklin, PA) from '69-76. He compiled a 69-15 match record.

He was also an assistant at Allegheny College in '76-77. Additionally, he is a former Middle States Tennis Allegheny and Mountain Tennis Coach of the Year winner, both in '76.

Gallegos' goals for the season are, "For everybody to enjoy themselves" and to "improve their skills."

When asked if there would be

one thing he would like to see accomplished this season, Gallegos said, "I want to lay a foundation for the future."

The hardest thing to overcome this season according to Gallegos is that "we only have 10 days to get ready for the first match."

Clark, the number one seed from last year, says her expectations for the team this year are, "To win as many games as we can and to be strong and play the best we can while having fun."

Clark comments on Coach Gallegos by saying, "He seems to be a really great guy. He's eager to coach and eager to teach us. Winning isn't one of his top priorities, he wants to make it fun for us."

Major says "We've been working hard, and working on a lot of drills. Our new coach seems very, very qualified. He's

really nice and he knows what he's talking about."

Rasche comments on the season by saying, "I think that this year we are going to have a stronger team than last year. We have more enthusiasm this year than last. The coach is going to be a definite benefit to our team this year."

"He's an exceptional coach. He takes everybody's concerns into consideration. He helps improve everybody's concerns into consideration. He helps improve everybody's game and enjoys what he does."

The tennis team's first match is this afternoon September 6th against SUNY-Fredonia. The match is at home and will begin at 3 pm.

A look back

Lady Lions finish season with record-breaking win total

by John Musser
Collegian Sports Editor

The women's softball team has accomplished what no other varsity squad at Behrend could do last year.

The Lady Lions finished with a winning record, and at the same time set a new mark for wins in a season for the second year in a row.

In the '89 season, the lady softballers won 18 games, breaking the old school record of 10 in 1980. They also qualified for post-season play for the first time since the school joined the NCAA in 1985.

The 18-win record didn't last for long. The Lady Lions, despite struggling early on, finished the '90 season last May with 19 wins.

They also had the distinction of being the only team of the nine varsity sports at Behrend to post a winning record.

For those with a short memory, softball has not always been this successful.

Before Sports Information Director Brett Banker took over the coaching reins, the softball program at Behrend was average at best, miserable at worst.

In the seven years prior to Banker's first year, the softball team had a record of 37-98. Under the direction of Banker, the softball team has won 37 games against 20 losses in only two years, facing the same rigorous schedule as his predecessors.

Why has the softball program at Behrend become so successful? Coach Banker explains:

"The school has made this a full-time position, which is very important for recruiting, talking to players daily off the field, and making contacts with high

school coaches."

Banker continues: "In the past, the softball coaching position was part-time and those people had other jobs. Those jobs were off-campus, and they couldn't devote the time needed to the program," he said.

It also doesn't hurt that the team has a solid group of talented athletes, most of whom are returning for another season.

That group includes Tammy Altsman, Melanie Dunn, Kellie Jordan, Jen Mowris, Cathy Pervuznik, and Erica Scribner, all of whom batted above the .300 level.

Dunn and Scribner had the second and third best averages in school history, respectively (.383 and .373). As a team, the Lady Lions hit .308.

Scribner's performance netted her All-Region honors.

The pitching staff was also superb. Erika Renwick (7-6, 1.10 ERA) and Michelle Hoover (7-1, 1.69 ERA) were the aces on the mound.

In fact, Renwick suffered three one-run losses, while Hoover's only loss came against nationally ranked Allegheny on the final at bat, 1-0.

Also, Beth Balizet (3-2, 2.26 ERA) led the team in saves.

Winning seasons are not foreign to the softball skipper. Banker rarely fields a losing team.

In 13 years of coaching at various levels (high school, American Softball Association Fastpitch, and college) he has suffered only one losing season.

When Banker came onto the Behrend sports scene two years ago, he said that he wanted to "develop consistently competitive teams" and was "fully committed to building a quality softball

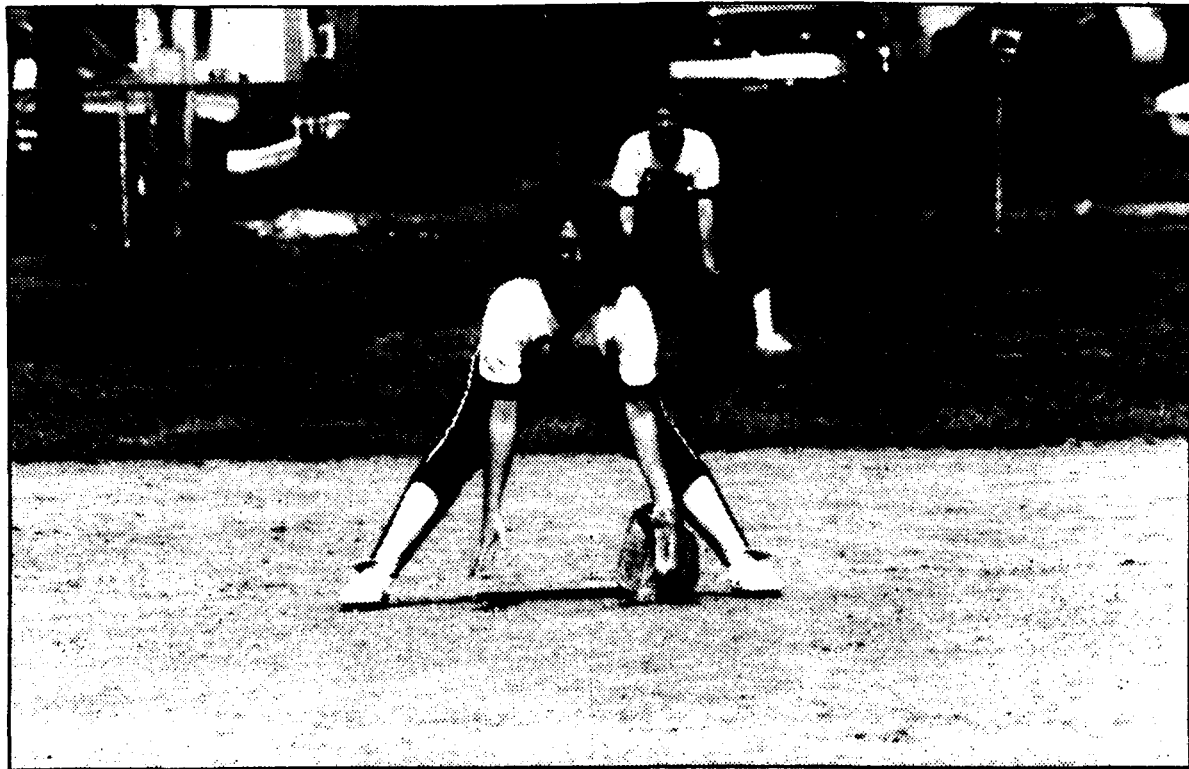


photo by Mike Schell

Ready at second: Cathy Pervuznik takes a defensive stance during action from a game last spring. In the background is rightfielder Pam Torrelli, who threw out six runners at first base

program."

It's safe to say that the team has reached this goal. Their coach believes it's time to do it again.

"I think we have achieved that goal (a quality program)," says Banker. "But to prove yourself, you have to have that quality year in and year out. A two year quick fix is not what we want."

"We need to continue this (success)."

Banker says the team will also strive for higher goals this season.

To reach this goal, recruiting will be vital to the team's future.

"One of the final goals is an NCAA bid and to remain under consideration for a bid for as many years as possible."

Fortunately, with the success on the field, Banker has found recruiting easier than when he first arrived here.

"The more you win, the expectations become higher," said Banker. "But it also gives the opportunity to recruit better athletes each year."

"Now I know where to go. And with our success, coaches and kids now call me."

Even if recruiting is getting easier, it will be difficult to top last year's recruiting class. The class provided not only the excellent pitching of Hoover, but also starters Darcie Bradley (shortstop) and Pam Torrelli (rightfield).

"It's difficult to imagine a

better class than last year's," says Banker. "Time will tell how good they will be."

This year's freshmen should also prove to be excellent. There are seven recruited frosh plus several walk-ons.

Looks like this could be another record-breaking season.

NOTES: The first test for the Lady Lions will be September 22 and 23 on the City of Erie softball fields. The two-day marathon event will include local rivals Allegheny, Gannon, and Mercyhurst. Robert Morris, an NCAA Division I school from Pittsburgh, is also scheduled to attend the event.