

Interview: Herb Lauffer

Review of 1990 soccer season

by Brad Kane
The Collegian

On paper, the 1990 Behrend soccer season was not a bright one. After all, a 4-11-1 record, a 1.3 goals per game average, and a 2.65 goals allowed per game average are not the stuff dreams are made of.

But don't tell Lions Head Coach Herb Lauffer that this year was forgettable.

"When I look at how they (the team) played and how they improved, I think it was a very good season," said Lauffer. "We saw some people who individually matured a lot and who gained confidence in their ability to play and began to play some of their best soccer since they've been here. That bodes well for next year because many of these players are returning."

The improvement Lauffer speaks of comes by way of the differences between this year's team and last year's squad.

"Basically, the two teams are comparable," said Lauffer. "But the thing I would say regarding this year's team is that they had a lot of adversity to overcome. But I believe that this team from the very beginning of the season until the end improved more than any other team has in the past (under Lauffer at Behrend)."

Another source of improvement sprang from the constant development of teamwork on the field.

Said Lauffer: "I think that this season was more rewarding in the fact that the guys worked better as a unit and attempted to play as a group a little bit more effectively. I think that that was the most significant thing about the team's performance this year."

But in the teamwork oriented system present at Behrend, individual improvement took place as well. Coach Lauffer is careful with his praise.

"When you single out players individually, you run the risk of someone saying 'Boy, this Lauffer guy didn't think that I improved very much,'" said Lauffer.

Some of the Lions deserve recognition for quality play. One such player is sophomore Ron Peterman, the club's leading scorer.

"His play has steadily improved," said Lauffer. "Ron's the type of guy that has a tremendous attitude. I mean, he's a ninety minute player and he continues to get better."

Lauffer also reserved praise for midfielder Sam Condeluci.

"As the year went on, he became stronger and stronger. He became more focused in what he was doing. I think he was confident that we were going to leave him out there close to ninety minutes a game and that he could relax in that situation. I think that he just grew under those circumstances tremendously."

Who else does Lauffer think has improved?

"I also think of Chris Filoon, who is a junior academically but who is really in only his first season of intercollegiate soccer. We started out using him at outside back. When we felt there was some changes to be made, we asked him to take a more responsible role by playing center back for us and he continued to get better and better as the year went on."

The play of freshmen goaltenders Phil Double and Les Spear was also lauded by Lauffer.

"I think that both of them got better as the year went on. They were thrust into a situation when Tom Bajus (the normal starter in goal) broke his foot. They're true freshman and they're thrown into the fire. We said 'Hey, you've got to perform,' and as the year went on their confidence went up and they began to play better."

"We also saw Yasser Daoudi improve a lot," continued Lauffer. "He started to appreciate playing the ball off a little bit more. Yasser's not a selfish player, but it started to make some sense to him to look for other people and move himself into positions where he could support what was going on."

Lauffer also appreciated the work of three freshman on the squad.

"I think that the two we put on the outside, Mike Whiteman and Mike Dalzall, showed improvement. I also think of Jeff Marsden, who unfortunately had mono at the end of the season and missed the last five matches. We put him in the first game with about ten minutes to go in the first half and he stayed in the rest of the game. He started the next game and just steadily improved from there."

In all of this improvement, Lauffer realizes that the club can't rest on it's laurels.

"There's still a ways to go and they'd (the players) say that too. The improvement has to continue and the commitment has to remain. They have the character to do that and they have shown a willingness to improve. Now, can we go to the next level? Once you can do that then the record starts to show how much they've improved."

Women's hoop ready to roll

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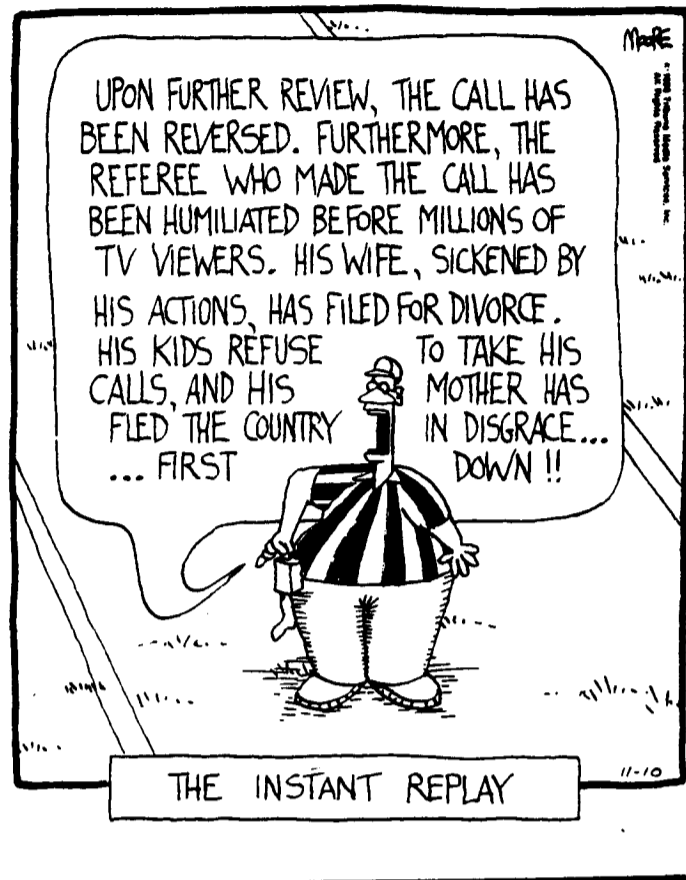
plaguing the club this year. Lisa Butch, Assistant Coach, has been out for several weeks due to mononucleosis, and she is not expected to return for at least one more week. There have also been two freshmen out with stress fractures and one more freshman with pneumonia.

The loss of record setter Michelle Madison is not expected to be a problem this year, says Banker. "We have a more roundabout team now. We lost a lot of rebounds and we lost a lot of points when we lost Madison, but we will look to every position to score this year."

In essence, Banker is positive and is looking forward to this season. She said that the players she has coming in mixed with the players already there combine well to make a good team. Banker says that the team "hustles and works well" together. "We have a lot of internally motivated players, which is a coach's dream."

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by Steve Moore



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