

Sports

Off and running

Defense powers Lions to 2-1 start despite a sputtering offense

by Brad Kane
The Collegian

Thanks to some tenacious defensive efforts, the Behrend men's basketball team is off to a solid 2-1 start.

Following a second place finish in the Hamot Sports Medicine Classic played November 16 and 17 on the Lions' home court, Behrend throttled Pitt-Bradford on the road last Tuesday to go above the .500 mark.

In the first round of the Hamot Classic, Behrend used a strong defensive effort to down York University, 75-59.

Up by just a point at the half, 31-30, Behrend turned on the 'D' in the latter stanza and outgunned York 44-29 to run away with the game.

While the Lions shot an inconsistent 48 percent from the field, senior point guard Randy Baughman hit 10 of 11 from the charity stripe en route to a 20 point performance to lead the Lions. Behrend also received strong efforts from senior Rick Demski (14 points, 8 rebounds), and junior Rich Buzalka (12 points, 7 rebounds).

"We played hard," said Behrend Head Coach Fred Paulsen after the game. "We were up by one at the half and came out and played really strong. A lot of people expected York not to be that good, being from Canada, but they have some talented people on their team."

The next night, in the tournament championship, SUNY-Brockport spoiled Behrend's own tournament by upending the home squad 67-54.

This time, team shooting got the best of Behrend as the Lions shot a paltry 33 percent from the floor. Behrend had been up by three with 13 minutes to go in the contest, but according to Paulsen, "mental mistakes" allowed Brockport to go on a ten point run which put the game away for good.

The shooting for Behrend was so poor, even team leader Baughman was effected as he didn't even get a shot off. Backcourt mate Chris Viscuso did score 18 points, but shot only five of 14 from the field. Demski hit only four of 11, and Jeff Cowan sunk just two of seven. The nightmarish shooting was compounded even further by the fact that the Lions shot only 57 percent from the free throw line, unlike their 83 percent performance versus York.

"I was very disappointed in our effort," said Paulsen. "From the 13 minute mark until about the eight to seven minute mark we didn't do a very good job. You can't afford not to play for a full 40 minutes."

Behrend overcame the poor shooting bug at Bradford by using defense as the remedy in a 78-55 win.

Despite shooting just 41 percent, Behrend made 24 of 37 from the foul line, outdoing the Panthers' 7 of 13 performance.

Baughman keyed the Lion effort once again from the line, hitting 12 of 14 as he put 18 points up on the board. Freshman Byron Thorne came alive in the shooting department following a sub-par showing in the Hamot tournament, hitting five of nine

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Mike Benson/The Collegian

In a crowd: Senior guard Chris Viscuso puts up a shot amid a host of Brockport defenders in the Nov. 17 Hamot Sports Medicine championship.



Mike Benson/The Collegian

Big guns: Seniors Randy Baughman (left) and Rick Demski were named to the Hamot tourney team.



Mike Benson/The Collegian

Easy two: Junior Jeff Cowan gets two of his 11 points in the Lions 75-59 win over York in the opening round of the Hamot tourney.