

# Hamot Tourney champs, Lions even at 2-2

The Lions of Fred Paulsen enter Thursday evening's match-up with Fredonia even-up at 2-2, after falling to Washington & Jefferson on the road Tuesday, 73-72.

The two losses for the Hamot Sports Medicine tourney champs have been by a combined total of four points.

Paulsen's crew started the year on a high winning the title of the second Hamot tourney.

The tournament boasted a loaded field with Walsh, a perennial NAIA power, Nazareth, an ECAC or NCAA tournament participant every year since '84, and Mt. Union, a member of the powerful Ohio Athletic Conference.

Game One of the tournament set the stage for the entire weekend as Walsh and Nazareth battled through overtime before Nazareth escaped with a 91-90 OT win. Meanwhile, the Lions prepared for the Purple Raiders of Mt. Union.

"We were very pleased with the field before the weekend began," head man Paulsen stated. "But afterwards, we realized how

competitive the field was. It was the best show in town."

The Lions topped Mt. Union 65-59 in Game Two to earn a slot in the finals.

Senior Rick Clark led the team with 18 points, followed by Stephan Respress (14 points), and Byron Thorne's 11. The

Behrend had built a 45-36 lead at the half thanks to shooting 57% from the floor in the first 20 minutes. In the end the Lions were led by tourney MVP Byron Thorne and his 24 points, and All-Tournament selection Don Plyler (16 pts).

"The tournament championship

contest they led by as many as 13 with ten minutes left.

Once again the Paulsen club shot well early, hitting on 56% of their shots in the first half to trail by one, 33-32.

Turnovers down the stretch and a 21 X 29 free throw shooting slate by the Gators (75% in the

This past Tuesday the Lions traveled I-79 to Washington, PA to take on the Presidents of Washington & Jefferson. The club led with four minutes left to play 65-64 after a Clark jumper, but were outscored down the stretch to fall, 73-72, for their third straight nail-biter.

"The positive out of the Allegheny and W & J contests is that our personnel will begin to handle the pressure at the end of games," Paulsen comments. "These teams are solid teams. We expect these games to help us overall."

Rick Clark led the Lions with 20 points on 7 X 16 shooting. Thorne (13), and Plyler (10) were in double figures as well. Buzalka grabbed a season-high ten boards.

The Lions head to Christmas break after hosting Fredonia Thursday at 8 pm, and traveling to St. Vincent College Saturday.

December 28th finds the Lions heading east to Western Connecticut State University for a holiday tournament.

*"The positive out of the Allegheny and W & J contests is that our personnel will begin to handle the pressure at the end of games. We expect these teams to help us overall."*

**-Fred Paulsen  
Lions Head Coach**

difference was at the line where Behrend outscored Mt. Union 23-5 from the charity stripe.

Walsh left town 1-1 after winning the consolation prize over Mt. Union. In the tournament finals the Lions won the crown with a heart-stopping 67-66 win over Nazareth.

was a great way for us to kick off the season," Paulsen continued. "With such a tough field, to go 2-0 and win the title demanded our team to play great basketball at both ends."

The Lions visited the Allegheny Gators just before Turkey break and fell 74-71 in a

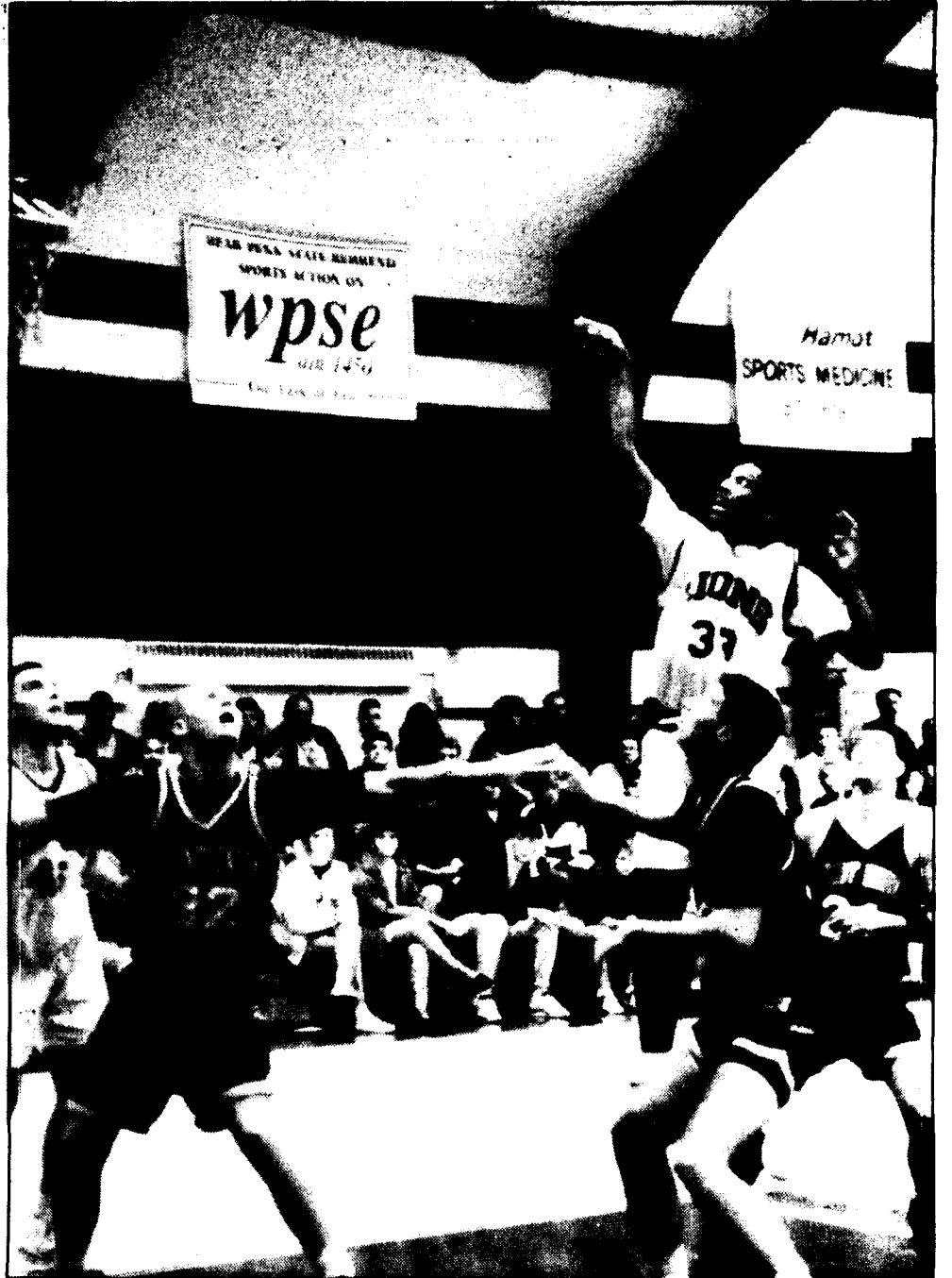
2nd session), took its toll on the Lions.

Plyler was high man with 16 points while dishing out six assists. Pivotman Rich Buzalka was next with 13 and a team high nine boards, while Clark (11), and Scott DeFoggi (10) registered double figures as well.



Greg Geibel/The Collegian

**Can't touch this:** Byron Thorne looks for an open man during the Hamot Classic. Thorne was named MVP with his 24 points.



Greg Geibel/The Collegian

**Up for two:** Rob Hunt drives into the lane and puts up a jumper for two against Mount Union during the Hamot Classic.