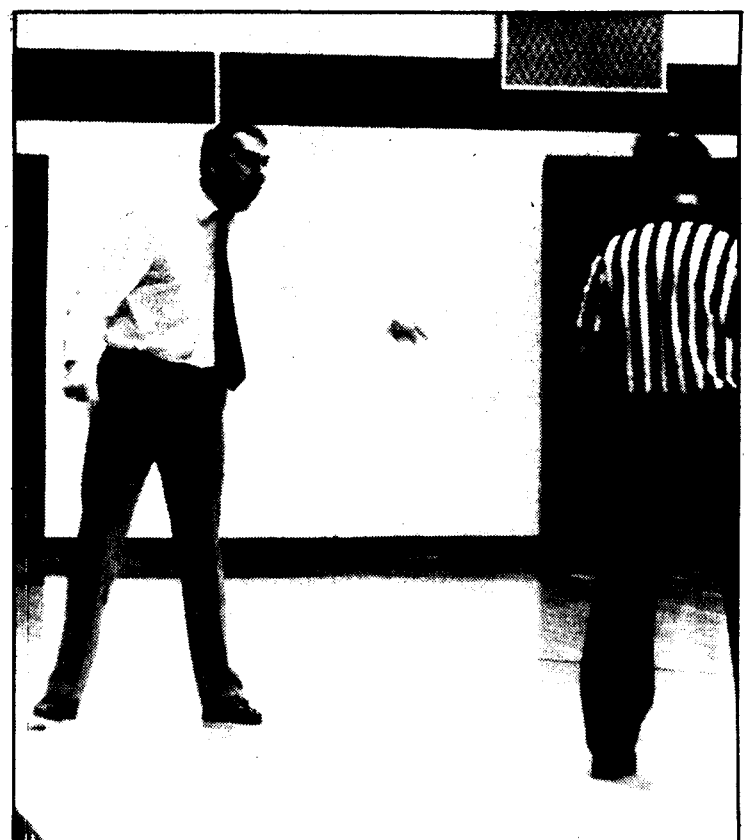
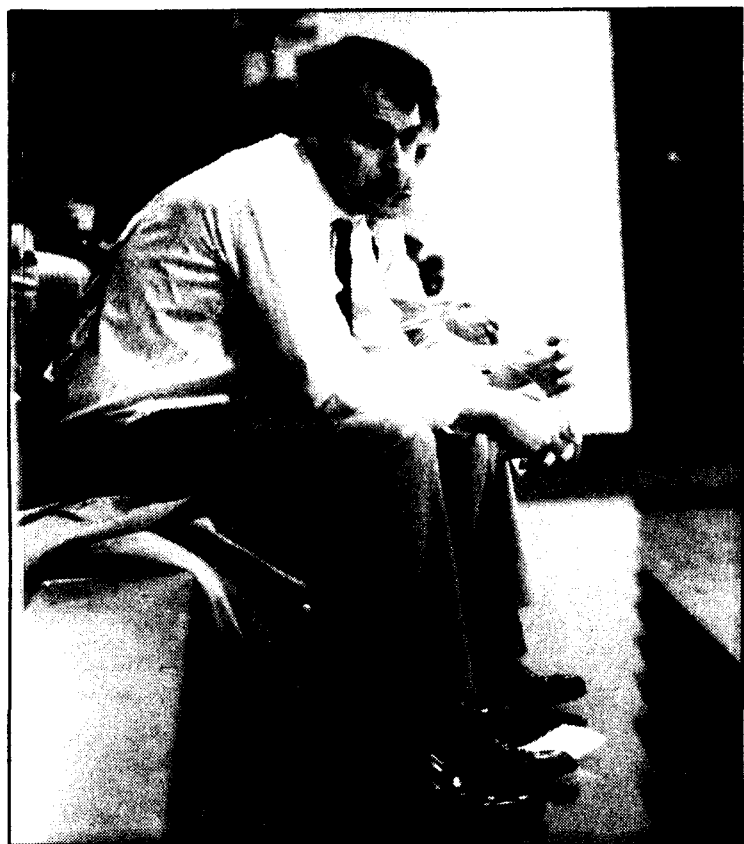


One bad call



Greg Geibel/The Collegian

Open your eyes: Head Coach Fred Paulsen reacts to a referee's call during the final minutes of the Keuka game.

Lions go 4-3 over break, play competitive tournaments

While most of us saw family, met up with friends, skied, skated, slept, and waited every day by the mailbox to intercept those grades, the Lions of Coach Fred Paulsen were assigned extra work.

The team played seven games over break, going 4-3 overall. The one-decision-over-.500-slate for the holidays was significant as four of the contests came during trips to highly competitive tournaments.

The Lions enter this week's lull in their schedule 9-7 after stubbing their collective toes in their two most recent outings; an overtime loss at Fredonia, and a "short end of the stick" game with Houghton. The record had blossomed to 9-5 prior to those games.

The Western Connecticut Tournament

The Lions returned to campus just a day after many celebrated Christmas. After two days of hard practice cutting into slabs of turkey and dressing nestled around the midriffs of Paulsen's players, the team bused out to New England.

On opening night the team met up with the host, Western Connecticut. Western has a history of post-season tournament play, and demonstrated why with an 86-73 win over the Lions. PSB shot like crazy in the first half (71 percent from the floor) but trailed 46-42 at the break. Western outscored the Lions by nine in the second half.

Rick Clark led Behrend with 25 points. Don Plyler was the only other Lion in double figures with 11. He also dished off five assists and came up with three steals.

The loss placed PSB in to the consolation contest with Frostburg State University (MD). The Lions are a familiar foe of Frostburg, having met three of the last four seasons.

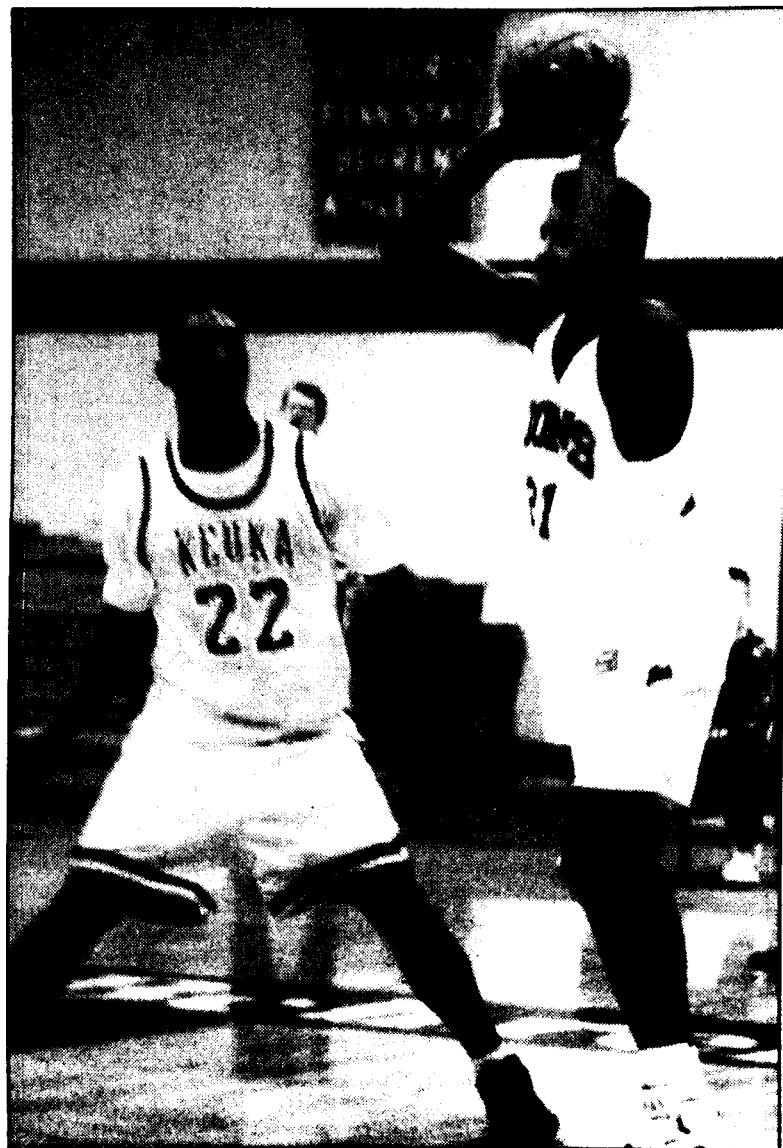
Once again PSB prevailed over the Bobcats, this time by a count of 83-75. Don Plyler was on fire all night hitting for 28 points on 9 x 10 shooting from the floor and an 8 x 10 slate at the line. Rob Hunt collected 14 points while Clark put up 13.

Houghton 61 - Lions 59

In this one the Lions led throughout after taking the intermission lead, 37-34. At times in the second half the Lions had the opportunity to push Houghton down and out, but could not find the final nail to silence the Highlanders.

The Lions couldn't find anyone to help Clark on this night, as his 17 points were the lone scoring numbers in double digits.

The Lions hit for only eight field goals in the final session, scoring just 22 points while shooting 36 percent, to drop a close decision. The intense defensive pressure by the Lions,



Greg Geibel/The Collegian

Playing keep away: Junior forward Stephan Respress looks for an open man during the Keuka game.

who limited Houghton to 27 points in the second half, kept the Lions close down the stretch.

The RIT Tournament

The coaching staff of the Lions, Paulsen, Terry Thompson, and Chris Viscuso, have hung their hat on defense since October 15th when practice began. The first round match-up with Messiah must have looked like a masterpiece to them.

The Lions held Messiah to 38 percent shooting, 20 first half points, on their way to a 57-52 win to move in to the title game versus host RIT. An attractive scoring sheet with balance throughout spelled the difference for PSB. Four players hit for double figures led by Stephan Respress with 14 points. Byron Thorne (13 points + 10 boards), Clark (12), and Plyler (11) all put solid numbers up.

The championship contest went to RIT. The host team shot 60 percent on the day to down the Lions, 70-58. The Lions tried to place the same defensive pressure on RIT as they had just one day earlier versus Messiah, and for twenty minutes it worked. At the half RIT led, 24-17.

After the intermission, adjustments by RIT broke the game open. RIT scored 47 points in the second half to win. Plyler led the Lions with 24 points, hitting 6 x 12 from beyond the three-point-arc.

The sophomore from Maplewood added five steals. Respress added 13 to his 14 from the night before to earn All-Tournament honors. The junior transfer grabbed eight rebounds. Byron Thorne added 11 points. Plyler, along with Respress made the All-Tournament team.

Lions 80 - W & J 72

It was revenge time at Erie Hall in this one. Earlier in the year the Presidents had won on their home floor by a single point, 72-71. The Lions came out focused and prepared as they jumped to a 37-31 lead at the break. Both teams shot 50 percent from the floor in the first half as the up-tempo game and the pin-point shooting had Erie Hall blazing.

The Lions actually improved on their shooting ledger as they finished at 53 percent from the field. Ball movement, penetration and dishes for easy jumpers, and a well thought out game plan lifted the Lions over the Presidents.

Rick Clark led with 22 points. Plyler added 17, Respress 15, and Thorne 12.

Lions 66 - Keuka 62

If you missed this one, or worse yet, if you left early, you missed out. The Lions and the Warriors of Keuka College battled in Erie Hall for thirty minutes. The frantic Lions,

(continued on page 11)