

# Sports

## Lions battle Top-10 team; come up short

In the Wizard of Oz, the Tinman, looking for his heart, walked miles, took on a witch, and stood up to flying monkeys.

He had it easy! The Lions (9-8) of Fred Paulsen had to show the strength of their pumpers against a Top-10 team, Buffalo State College.

The #9 ranked Bengals entered Eric Hall with just two defeats on the season (now 13-2) and a lineup loaded with elite college talent. The Buff State roster was dotted with Division I transfers and solid role players. The Lions needed to be on.

Unlike last season (Buff State, 64-56) when Paulsen chose to pull the ball out against the Bengals, slow the pace down, and frustrate the talented team from Buffalo, the second-year Behrend boss looked the visitors in the eye and said, "Let's see what you have."

The best crowd of the year piled in and had their presence felt early as the Lions jumped out to four leads that topped fourteen points in the opening half. The Lions had solid ball movement, hit their shots and had solid contributions from a host of players to settle for a 42-36 halftime advantage.

Byron Thorne, obviously pumped to play, hit for eight in the first twenty minutes to lead PSB, but a handful of others were not far behind. Don Plyler also collected eight, six of which came on two long balls.

John Hawthorne, playing his best ball of the year, added seven. Stephan Respress clicked for seven as well from his power forward spot. Post man Rich Buzalka, an Academic All-American candidate, added six, and Tim Cook four.

"With Rick Clark limited to a few minutes (concussion vs Houghton), we needed some people to step up and give us confidence," Paulsen said. "Hawthorne and Cook especially came through early. Their minutes have been limited in other games, but they were there for us tonight."

On the other side of the coin, Buffalo State kept calling the number of Nathaniel Gainey and what a call it was. The 6'1" senior guard exploded for 21 first half points to keep the Bengals within breathing distance. No other player had more than six at intermission.

A Rich Buzalka jumper from the paint gave PSB a 44-36 lead

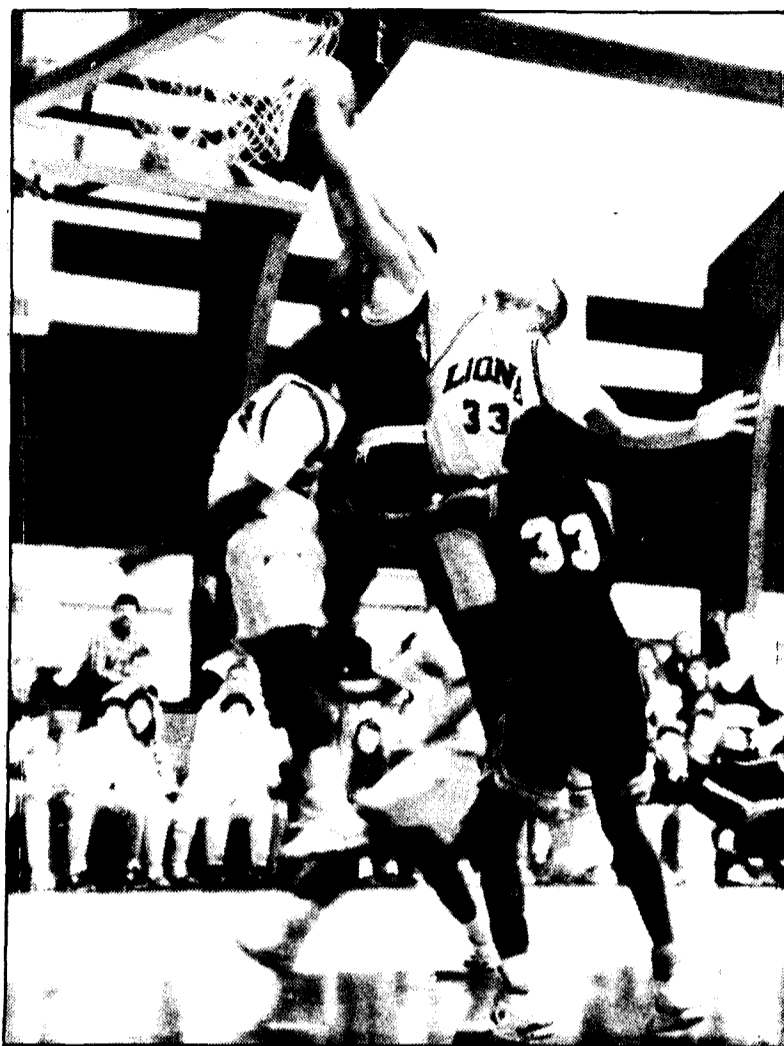
just in to the second stanza when thunder hit. The Bengals went off on a 23-4 run over the next 9:34, highlighted by Gainey (15 points in the run) and offensive boards. After the smoke had cleared, Buffalo State had a 59-48 lead with ten minutes to play.

The Lions battled back and had the lead down to five with minutes left. A missed shot in the lane, that would have cut the lead to three, spelled trouble and the Bengals banged in their foul shots to win, 75-68.

"Buffalo State came in ranked ninth in the country," Paulsen concluded after the contest. "They showed why. They have different scorers showing up every night, they are big on the boards, they are simply a very talented team."

Thorne finished with 15 points to lead the Lions. Plyler hit for 11 and dished out six assists. Respress added 11 as well on five x eight shooting. Buzalka clicked for 10 and grabbed a team high eight boards. Hawthorne's nine points and Cook's season high of eight were big contributions as well.

Next up for the Lions is a Thursday trip to St. John Fisher, the #20 ranked team in the nation.



Greg Geibel/The Collegian

**Almost got it:** Sophomore forward Rob Hunt stretches for a rebound beside a Buffalo State defender.

## Lady Lions set record; enter Mid-Atlantic Region at #3

by Paul Benim  
The Collegian

The 1991-92 women's basketball team sets the first of what may be many records this season with their 14th win.

The record-setter came Thursday night in Eric Hall as the Lions smashed Fredonia State 79-39.

The Lions moved to 14-2 with the win. Nine games remain on the schedule. They entered the week as the #3 team in the Mid-Atlantic Region of the NCAA, the first such ranking in the women's basketball history.

Against Fredonia, the Lions seemed to win the ball game in the first three minutes, if that's possible. The full court pressure defense and some sharp shooting by the Lady Lions jump started Penn State-Behrend to a 10-0 start. Although Fredonia falls to 6-6, they are a much tougher team than Thursday's game indicated.

"Our players were obviously focused and prepared for Fredonia," Coach Banker said. "Our defensive pressure forced the tempo and allowed us to get out and run a bit. Fredonia is a solid team, we just jumped on them early and they never recovered."

Jenepher Banker's club continued on a torrid shooting streak hitting nine of their first twelve shots and shot 65 percent in the first half.

Kim Boyd and Krista

Hershner had the hot hand early for Behrend as the team expanded its lead to 22-5. Point guard Wendy Ebinger knocked down a jumper from the top of the key, and a Karen Strait rebound and score pushed the half-time lead to 47-19.

Center Anne Bonner lead the squad at the half with seven rebounds and six points, Hershner added six, and Boyd tossed in 14.

The defense continued to turn the screws in the second half limiting the Blue Devils to only 20 points in the final twenty minutes and forcing 28 turnovers by Fredonia. In addition, the Lions shot a solid 48 percent from the floor whereas Fredonia State shot a meager 29 percent.

Boyd led with 19 points, three steals and assists. Forward Heather Shearer dropped in ten and played superb second half defense. Michelle Grover added eight off the bench. On the season the Lion bench contributes 28 points per game, an incredible figure when you consider that the Lions average 67 points per game.

Beisler, recovering from a pre-season knee injury, contributed seven points and 2 boards in her first amount of substantial minutes since her injury.

Darcie Bradley handed in a solid performance distributing the ball by dishing out a team high six assists.

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