

Sports Bits

by Joe Mottillo
Collegian Staff

Upset: Number one ranked Indiana fell to Ohio State, 81-77. Jamie Skelton's three-point shot with three seconds left, put OSU up 71-70. Skelton hit another trey with forty seconds left in overtime to put the Buckeyes up for good.

Caught: Pat LaFontaine of the Buffalo Sabres has caught Mario Lemieux in the NHL scoring race with 104 points. Lemieux has played in 40 games compared to LaFontaine's 59. Mario is expected back either this week or next.

Shoot out: The Western Conference All-Stars defeated the Eastern Conference, 135-132, in the annual NBA All-Star game. Phoenix Suns Dan Majerle and Charles Barkley each hit threes to put the West up for good in overtime. Michael Jordan of the East led all scorers with 30 points while Mark Price set an all-star record with six three pointers.

Halfway there: The NBA is halfway through the season. My pick to win the title is the Seattle Supersonics, who added inside strength with the trade for Sam Perkins. MVP for the season is Charles Barkley of the Phoenix Suns. If the Sonics don't win the title, Sir Charles and the Suns will. This is probably his best chance of a NBA title. My choice for Rookie of the Year is easy, Shaq, no contest.

Play ball: With the start of spring training, opening day is only around the corner. The teams that helped themselves the most are probably the Atlanta Braves, the New York Yankees and the San Francisco Giants. The teams that didn't help themselves would have to be the Pittsburgh Pirates, the Oakland A's and the Los Angeles Dodgers. I pick Toronto to repeat as World Series champions.

Perfection: Julio Cesar Chavez remained undefeated as he TKOed Greg Haugen in a WBC super lightweight title fight. The fight was held at Mexico's Aztec Stadium. Chavez stretched his record to 85-0 with 73 KO's as he stopped Haugen in the fifth round.

Spikers win: The Penn State-Behrend men's club volleyball team defeated Slippery Rock last night in five games. After losing 7-15 in the first game, the Lions won the next two 15-7 and 15-6. SRU won the fourth game 15-11, but Behrend was too tough as they prevailed 15-11 to win the match.

Hot off the Respress

by Keith E. McFall
Sports Editor

The Athlete of the week for this week is a person most people have seen in action or at least heard about at some point in the last two years here at Behrend.

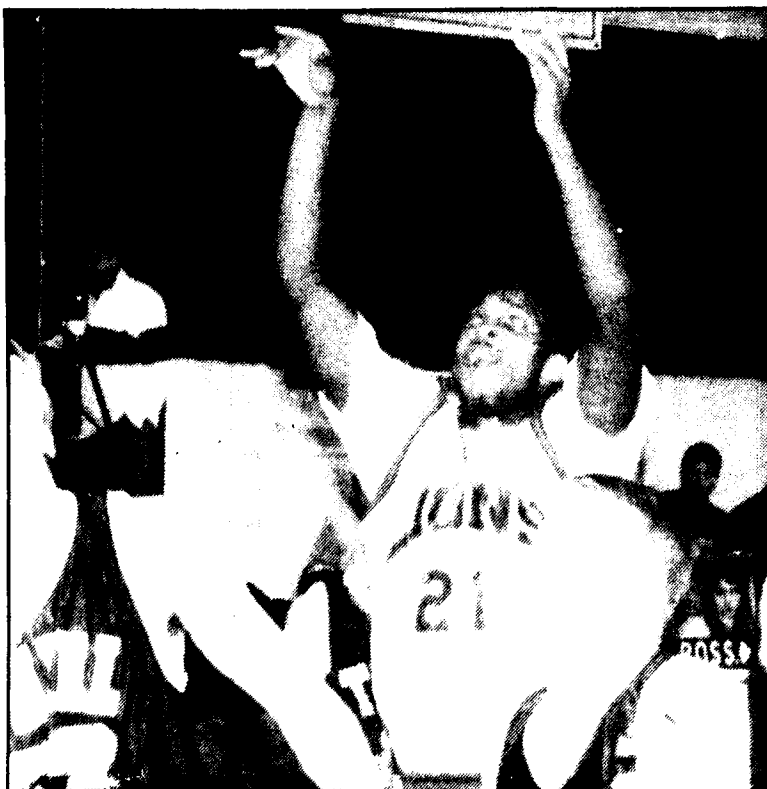
Stephen Respress is a standout forward on the men's basketball team who came here in 1991 and had a serious impact on the basketball program. "People like to watch players like Steph. He's an exciting player," said Head Coach Fred Paulsen.

After he played two years at Penn State- Shenango, Respress transferred to Behrend to complete his degree and his basketball career.

He averaged 14.7 points per game through the first 23 games, to lead all scorers. In the last two games, however, he has averaged 21.5 points per game.

He had 24 points against Houghton on February 20, and added 19 on Tuesday night at Keuka.

Why this sudden outburst in point production towards the end



Kristie Guldner/Photographer

"Count It!": Thiel defenders watch helplessly as Behrend forward Stephen Respress gets nothin' but net.

of the season? "The added pressure of making the playoffs was gone near the end of the season, and Coach told us to go out and enjoy ourselves," said Respress.

Paulsen added, "Steph's mind was more focused the last couple of games, and I think he wanted to go out and prove himself at the end of the season."

Respress attended Union High School in New Castle, Pa, where he amazingly only played one year of high school basketball.

Luckily, two factors convinced him to play his senior year. "I played football and baseball for 3 years and I wanted to play all three sports my senior year, and my basketball coach talked to me about it and convinced me to play," he said.

He was selected to the All Section and All State teams at wide-out on the football team, and played centerfield for the baseball team.

Respress has one semester left before he graduates with a degree in Management, but his eligibility has run out for basketball.

When asked what he will remember about his career at Behrend Respress said, "My relationship with the students and athletes is what will stick in my mind the most."



Amel Balchita/Photographer

Keymaster: Behrend forward Krista Hershner shows her Thiel opponent how it's done. The girls won on the road at Greenville.

Lions wait

by Hal D. Coffey
Collegian Staff

It's March Madness time for the Behrend Lady Lions basketball team. Unlike Division I where teams are playing to get into post-season tournaments, Divisions III teams are receiving bids and starting their tournaments.

For Behrend, that means time to get ready for a repeat appearance in the ECAC south regional tournament.

After easily handling Grove City and Thiel College, coach Jeneffer Banker believes that this year's team is ready to go. "We're probably the hottest team in our region going into the ECAC's," commented Banker.

With the starting lineup well intact and healthy, the ladies plan on having lighter practices this week in preparation for next week's probable bid announcements. Once Behrend knows who they will have to play, then the real workouts begin.

Banker plans on many of running drills and 5 on 5 scrimmaging so the team will not be out of their routine.

Coach Banker does not have an immediate plan for the play-offs, but in order to claim their second straight ECAC crown, they must continue their tenacious defense, keep their foul totals down, and they MUST play like they have in their last few games of the season.

Graduate making the grade

by Joe Mottillo
Collegian Staff

Not even a year out of college, Paul Benim has done more with the post-college experience than others his age. A spring '92 graduate of Behrend and '88 graduate of Iroquois High School, Benim has found himself involved in one of the most successful women's athletic programs in the country here at Behrend.

He is completing his second

season as the women's assistant basketball coach and is entering his first season as head women's softball coach.

"As an assistant, you give input and suggestions. Sometimes they're used, sometimes they're not. As a head coach, you make the decisions," said Benim.

"Because the athletes I coach and I are close in age, I can relate to them. I also have to remember that I'm their coach," commented Benim.

With the women's basketball and softball seasons overlapping, Benim was asked if there is any conflict.

"I think I do a decent job of separating the two. When I'm at basketball practice, I focus on that. When I'm at softball practice, I focus on that. During the day, I bounce between both."

"Brett Banker set things up very well (with the softball team). I need to keep things going in the same direction," he

said.

"I'm very enthusiastic about it (head softball coach). It is a very big challenge. I'm reaching a comfort zone with the players."

"A goal for softball would be for us to win 30 out of 40 games. I think that's what it would take to go to the NCAA's."

With his other job as assistant basketball coach,