

Athlete's dream realized



Dan Jaecks/Collegian Photographer

Pro bound: Chris Ackerman, a Behrend student, will have a shot at a pro soccer career when he tries out in England next fall.

by Joe Mottillo
Collegian Staff

Many players dream of making it to the pros, but usually it remains only a dream. Behrend has one in our midst who has turned dreams into reality.

He is Chris Ackerman, his sport is soccer, and the pro league that he'll be playing in is the English Premier League.

"A few weeks ago, my coach got a call from a representative of the EPL, and he contacted me," said Ackerman concerning his shot at the pros.

"I'm going to have to bulk up though. Over there, everybody is big, so I can't rely just on my speed."

Ackerman started his formal soccer career at Fishburn Military Academy in Virginia. While there he also played on several club and international teams, two of which were the East-West Soccer Ambassadors and the Virginia National team.

The East-West Soccer Ambassadors is "like an exchange program," according to Ackerman. Players from the U.S. go to Europe and play on teams there and vice versa.

After graduation from Fishburn in 1989, he went to California University of Pennsylvania to continue his soccer career.

Since then, his career has been on hold because he broke his leg in January.

"My play is at 40% right now and I know there is room for improvement," said Ackerman about his recovery from his injury.

"When I go over there, I'll try out to see what level in the City of Wimbledon system I'll end up in," said Ackerman.

City of Wimbledon is the top team in the system. If he doesn't make that team he'll probably get sent to either of the farm teams at Millanti or Edinburgh.

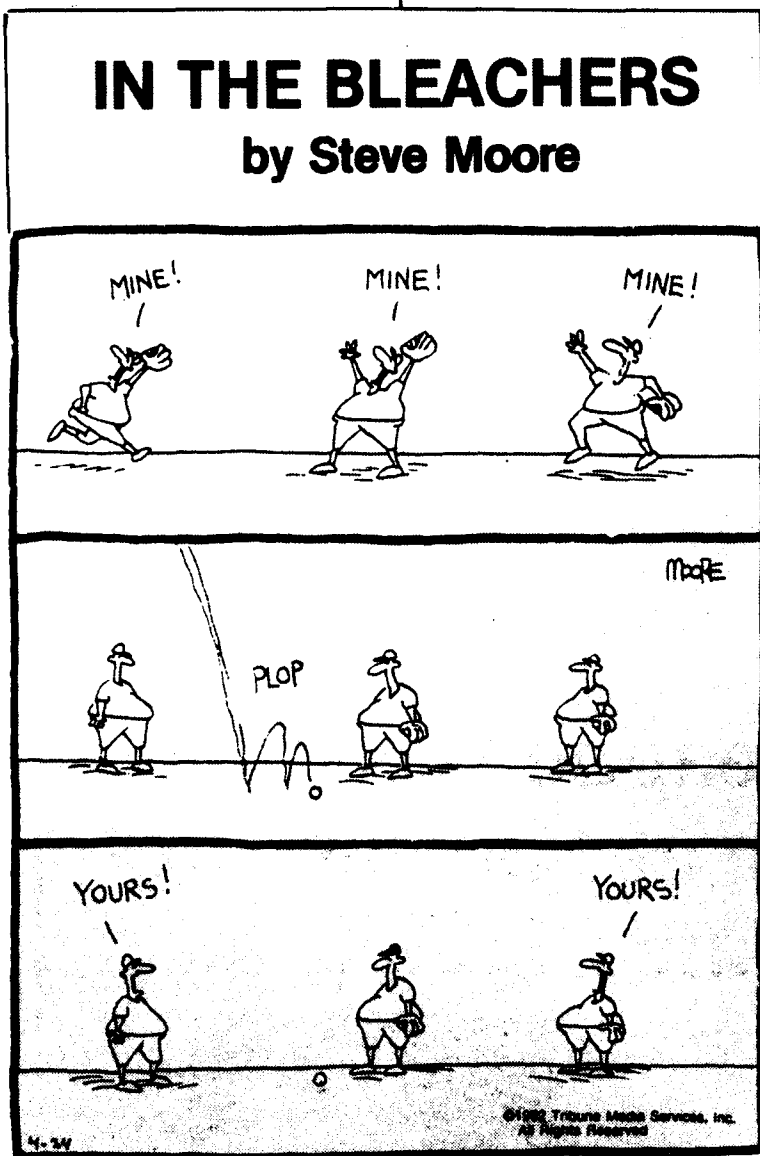
"It's more intense and taken more seriously. It's to England what baseball is to America," said Ackerman over the difference between the European and American styles.

"Chris is a good player and plays hard with a lot of heart," said John Ciotti, one of Ackerman's summer coaches.

Ackerman leaves for tryouts in the fall. Until then he'll just have to sit back and wait out his dreams.

Happy Birthday
Linder
Love, Stacer

Flawless ball



Arnel Balcita/Collegian Photo Coordinator

Schwing: Right fielder Jennifer Young tries to take one deep in a recent game.

from FLAWLESS page 16

5-2. Five different Lions each had an RBI as Varrassa picked up the mound victory. "Offensively, we've had different people step up at different times," said Benim.

"We have to play one game at a time to position ourselves for a post-season tourney (ECAC or NCAA)," he added.

For NCAA, only 20 teams are taken from the nation.

Right now, the Lions, 17-3, must get in all their games. They've already split with nationally ranked Buffalo State and Allegheny, and have a strong, well-respected Bethany team coming up on April 26.

If the Lions get in all their games and keep playing the same way, a NCAA tournament bid is a strong possibility.

Lions' Notes:

The Lions are 50 for 55 in

stolen base attempts.

Strait is a perfect 61 for 61 in the field. The error she committed against W & J was changed to a filder's choice when she threw a runner out at home. Strait hasn't made an error in her collegiate career.

Mazur and Pegher are the only Lions to have been in the line-up for all 20 games.