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HOME OF A RECORD 37 MEN'S NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP TEAMS SINCE 1951

1952, 1953, 1955, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1962, 1963, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1968, 1969, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1987, 1990, 1991, 1997, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2011

MEN'S MEMBER TEAMS

University of Alabama in Huntsville
University of Alaska Anchorage
University of Alaska Fairbanks
Bemidji State University
Bowling Green State University
Ferris State University
Lake Superior State University
Michigan Technological University
Minnesota State University
Northern Michigan University

2014 WCHA FINAL FIVE

March 21-22
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HEAD COACHES TAB MINNESOTA STATE AS 2013-14 PRESEASON FAVORITE IN MANKATO FREE PRESS WCHA MEN'S HOCKEY PRESEASON COACHES POLL

POLL HAS FERRIS STATE SECOND, MICHIGAN TECH THIRD, BOWLING GREEN FOURTH; MINNESOTA STATE FORWARD MATT LEITNER IS WCHA PRESEASON PLAYER OF THE YEAR; MAVERICKS' FORWARD ZACH STEPAN IS PRESEASON ROOKIE OF THE YEAR

Minnesota State has been tabbed as the favorite to win the MacNaughton Cup, garnering nine of 10 first-place votes in the Mankato Free Press WCHA Men's Hockey Preseason Coaches Poll. The Mavericks, who are coming off their best season in a decade, also have the Preseason Player of the Year in junior forward Matt Leitner and the Preseason Rookie of the Year in freshman forward Zach Stepan.

Ferris State was picked to finish second in the league, edging Michigan Tech, which received the other first-place vote. Bowling Green was fourth, followed by Alaska, Northern Michigan, Bemidji State, Lake Superior State, Alaska Anchorage and Alabama Huntsville.

Leitner, a third-team All-WCHA pick last season and the fourth returning point-scorer in the nation (17-30=47), received five votes for Preseason Player of the Year. Michigan Tech sophomore forward Alex Petan (15-19=34) an All-WCHA Rookie Team selection last season, received two votes.

Stepan, a forward who comes to Minnesota State from the USHL's Waterloo Blackhawks, received eight votes for Preseason Rookie of the Year. He was a fourth-round draft pick of the NHL's Nashville Predators in 2012.

Leitner and a pair of Minnesota State teammates, junior defenseman Zach Palmquist and sophomore goaltender Stephon Williams were selected to the Preseason All-WCHA team, along with Petan, Bowling Green junior forward Ryan Carpenter and Ferris State junior defenseman Jason Binkley. Williams was the WCHA's Rookie of the Year last season, as well as a first-team and All-WCHA Rookie Team pick. Carpenter was a second-team All-CCHA selection last season.

2013-14 MANKATO FREE PRESS WCHA MEN'S HOCKEY PRESEASON COACHES POLL

Predicted order of finish (first-place votes in parenthesis). Based on a 9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1 scale; coaches could not vote for their own teams

Rank	Team	First Place Votes	Points
1	Minnesota State	9	81
2	Ferris State	—	65
3	Michigan Tech	1	64
4	Bowling Green	—	58
5	Alaska	—	54
6	Northern Michigan	—	40
7	Bemidji State	—	35
8	Lake Superior State	—	25
9	Alaska Anchorage	—	18
10	Alabama Huntsville	—	10

PRESEASON WCHA PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Matt Leitner, Jr., F, Minnesota State (5 votes); Alex Petan, So., F, Michigan Tech (2); Ryan Carpenter, Jr., F, Bowling Green (1); Cody Knyk, Sr., F, Alaska (1); Blake Tatchell, So., F, Alaska Anchorage (1).

PRESEASON WCHA ROOKIE OF THE YEAR

Zach Stepan, F, Minnesota State (8); Brent Baltus, F, Michigan Tech (1); Shane Sooth, F, Northern Michigan (1).

PRESEASON ALL-WCHA TEAM

Forwards: Matt Leitner, Jr., Minnesota State; Ryan Carpenter, Jr., Bowling Green; Alex Petan, So., Michigan Tech. **Defensemen:** Zach Palmquist, Jr., Minnesota State; Jason Binkley, Jr., Ferris State. **Goaltender:** Stephon Williams, So., Minnesota State.

Others receiving votes: **Forwards:** Blake Tatchell, So., Alaska Anchorage; Matt Bailey, Sr., Alaska Anchorage; Cody Knyk, Sr., Alaska; Garrett Thompson, Sr., Ferris State. **Defensemen:** Colton Parayko, So., Alaska; Matt Prapavessis, Jr., Bemidji State; Mike Sullivan, Jr., Bowling Green; Ralfs Freibergs, So., Bowling Green; Scott Czarnowczan, Sr., Ferris State; Kevin Czuczman, Jr., Lake Superior State; C.J. Ludwig, Sr., Northern Michigan. **Goaltender:** Kevin Kapalka, Sr., Lake Superior State.

The 2013-14 Mankato Free Press WCHA Men's Hockey Preseason Coaches Poll poll was conducted by Shane Frederick, staff writer, The Free Press Media (www.mankatofresspress.com; www.mankatofreepresshockey.blogspot.com; [Twitter/puckato](https://twitter.com/puckato)).