

Western Collegiate Hockey Association

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Home of a Record 37 NCAA Men's 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 Playoff Championship Friday, March 21 & Saturday, March 22 Van Andel Arena, Grand Rapids, MI

Tickets available at the Van Andel Arena® and DeVos Place® Convention Center box offices, online at www.ticketmaster.com, at Ticketmaster outlets – including D&W stores and select Family Fare and Walmart locations, or charge by phone at 1.800.745.3000.

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February 21, 2014/For Immediate Release

WCHA Final Five Championship Set to Hit Grand Rapids, Van Andel Arena in Just Four Weeks

Area Gearing Up to Host Premier College Hockey Tournament March 21-22; Northwest Corner Hotels Offering Great Room Rates, Discount Ticket Packages; Three Days of Fun-Filled, Family-Friendly Activities to Include WCHA Kick-Off Event and WCHA "The Voice" Contest on Thursday at the Deltaplex, The Purple Community Game to Fight Cancer on Friday, USA Hockey Youth Coaching Workshop and Sports Madness Pre-Championship Game Tailgate Party on Saturday; "Dance Mania" Contest to be Featured at All Three Final Five Games

College hockey's most historic and successful conference – the Western Collegiate Hockey Association – is bringing its men's post-season tournament, the 2014 WCHA Final Five, to Van Andel Arena and the City of Grand Rapids for the first time. And there's still time to get tickets, book hotels and join in on all the fun and activities that will surround this March 21-22 rockin' weekend of championship hockey.

Three-game WCHA Final Five reserved seat ticket packages are \$95 and \$50 and can be purchased at the Van Andel Arena® and DeVos Place® Convention Center box offices, online at www.ticketmaster.com, at Ticketmaster outlets – including D&W stores and select Family Fare and Walmart locations, or can be charged by phone at 1.800.745.3000. Groups of 10+, who save \$5 per ticket, can reserve tickets by phoning Rebecca Chesnut at 616.742.6185 or via e-mail to: groupsales@smggr.com. Single game tickets, if available, will go on sale March 10.

Four premier Northwest corner-area hotels, sponsors of the WCHA Kick-Off Event on Thursday, are currently offering great rates on rooms, discount tournament ticket packages and free shuttle transportation for fans to and from all three WCHA Final Five games. Fans booking rooms for the championship at Holiday Inn Express Hotel & Suites North (616 647-4100), Riverfront Hotel – Grand Rapids (616 363-9001), SpringHill Suites North by Marriott (616 785-1600) and Hampton Inn North (616 647-1000) can also receive special rates of only \$80 on tournament ticket packages, instead of the usual \$95. The Northwest corner is one of Grand Rapids' most vibrant areas, filled with hotels, restaurants and plenty of great shopping.

"We couldn't be more thrilled about staging our WCHA Final Five tournament in the friendly, sports-loving city of Grand Rapids," said WCHA Commissioner Bruce M. McLeod. "Van Andel Arena is one of the country's premier sports facilities and combined with a dynamic downtown and surrounding area, this will give our teams and fans a truly first-class experience."

The tournament schedule includes two semifinal match ups on Friday at 2:07 pm ET and 7:07 pm ET, followed by the Broadmoor Trophy championship game on Saturday at 7:07 pm ET. The field for the WCHA Final Five will consist of the four winning teams from the first round of league playoffs. The Final Five champion receives the Broadmoor Trophy and the league's automatic bid to the NCAA tournament. The 10 men's WCHA teams are the Alabama



Huntsville Chargers, the Alaska Anchorage Seawolves, the Alaska Nanooks, the Bemidji State Beavers, the Bowling Green Falcons, the Ferris State Bulldogs, the Lake Superior State Lakers, the Michigan Tech Huskies, the Minnesota State Mavericks and the Northern Michigan Wildcats.

Fans can celebrate all the excitement of the WCHA Final Five and college hockey with music, games, food, beverages and more at the WCHA Kick-Off Event on Thursday from 4:00 to 8:00 pm at the Deltaplex Arena and Conference Center in Grand Rapids. The WCHA Kick-Off Event will also include “WCHA – The Voice”, a singing contest that will award the winner with an opportunity to sing live at the Final Five. The Deltaplex is located at 2500 Turner Ave NW.

On Friday night at the WCHA Final Five, Van Andel Institute, a biomedical research and science education facility, will be sponsoring a *Purple Community Game* to promote its grassroots fundraising program.

“*Purple Community* increases awareness about the prevalence of cancer and neurodegenerative diseases and raises funds to support groundbreaking research at Van Andel Institute in Grand Rapids,” said Nikki Outhier, *Purple Community* National Programs Manager. “We’re excited to be a part of the WCHA Final Five and represent this important part of our community. 100% of all donations made at the game directly benefit disease research.”

Van Andel Institute, located in downtown Grand Rapids and founded by Jay and Betty Van Andel in 1996 with a vision of enriching and enhancing lives worldwide through biomedical research and education, promotes its mission through *Purple Community – 100% Hope* events. To learn more about the Van Andel Institute, its research and its educational programs, please go to www.vai.org.

Then on championship Saturday (March 22) at the Final Five, fans and visitors can also take part in a host of fun activities centered around the championship and located in the downtown and Van Andel Arena area. Free shuttles will be available on Saturday to take folks from fan hotels to the arena.

From 9:00 am to 3:30 pm, USA Hockey will host a High Performance Workshop for youth coaches in the Kent Room (second floor) of the Marriott Courtyard Downtown, 11 Monroe Avenue, Grand Rapids 49503. The workshop will feature specific player and coach development subjects and an on-ice simulated practice to highlight effective organization and teaching methods. Interested coaches may enroll on the USA Hockey web site at: www.usahockey.com.

Then from 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm on Saturday afternoon, fans are encouraged to attend the pre-championship ‘Sports Madness’ indoor tailgating event at the renowned B.O.B. (Big Old Building) in downtown Grand Rapids, located directly across the street from Van Andel Arena. A landmark destination, the 70,000-square-foot, four-story, red brick building includes numerous restaurants, shops and a comedy club. ‘Sports Madness’ will feature tailgating food, games, beverages, prizes and more. We’ll also have live sporting events running on multiple big-screen TVs and pool and foosball tournaments.

And don’t forget to bring your dance moves and join in for the ‘Dance Mania’ contest to be held throughout all three Final Five games. The winner of ‘Dance Mania’ receives \$250 and tickets to the 2016 WCHA Final Five.

All Final Five weekend events are free and open to the public.

About *Purple Community*

Purple Community – 100% HopeSM is Van Andel Institute’s grassroots fundraising initiative which connects people who want to join the fight against cancer and neurodegenerative diseases, like Parkinson’s, to the resources needed for action. It provides individualized tools and customized support to people who want to create awareness and fundraising opportunities in their communities. *Purple Community* gives local action global potential. All fundraising and awareness activities organized through *Purple Community* fund research and science education at Van Andel Institute. Find out more about *Purple Community* by visiting www.PurpleCommunity.org 100% to Research, Discovery & Hope[®].

For more information on the WCHA Final Five, Van Andel Arena, the City of Grand Rapids and more, please visit:

- WCHA Final Five: <http://wcha.com>; WCHARoadtoVanAndelArena.com
- Download the 2014 WCHA Final Five Fan Guide: <http://wcha.com/men/tourney/index.php>
- Van Andel Arena: <http://vanandelarena.com>
- City of Grand Rapids: <http://www.experiencegr.com>. Includes information on hotels, things to do, events, restaurants, etc.
- Deltaplex Arena (site of WCHA Kick-Off event): <http://deltaplex.com>
- Grand Rapids Area Hotel Reservations: <https://aws.passkey.com/g/20157200>
- The B.O.B.: <http://www.thebob.com>