



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**MINNESOTA STATE NAMED 2014-15 PRESEASON WCHA FAVORITE
BY LEAGUE COACHES AND MEDIA**

***Mavericks and Ferris State picked 1-2 in both polls;
Bulldogs G C.J. Motte and Minnesota State F Matt Leitner split Player of the Year votes***

EDINA, Minn. – Sept. 29, 2014 – Minnesota State, the defending Broadmoor Trophy champion, has been tabbed as the favorite to win the MacNaughton Cup 2014-15 in both the *Mankato Free Press* WCHA Coaches' and the *Bemidji Pioneer* WCHA Media preseason polls.

Ferris State, which captured the league's 2013-14 regular season title before falling to MSU in the Final Five championship, was picked to finish second in both polls. Both teams were NCAA Tournament participants a year ago, with the Bulldogs advancing to the second round.

The two polls flip-flopped on third and fourth place finishers, with WCHA coaches placing Michigan Tech in the higher slot and the media tabbing Bowling Green third. Alaska was picked fifth in both ledgers; but, while coaches slotted Alaska Anchorage sixth and Northern Michigan seventh, media reversed that order. Bemidji State, Lake Superior State and Alabama Huntsville rounded out both polls.

Ferris State senior goaltender C.J. Motte, a returning Hobey Baker Award finalist, was selected as the league's Preseason Player of the Year by WCHA coaches after tallying a 19-6-2 record, .927 save percentage and 2.29 goals-against average in conference play last year. Minnesota State senior forward Matt Leitner, who tallied a league-best 39 points in WCHA games last year and ranks third among all active Division I players with 121 career points, was the media's choice.

Minnesota State freshman forwards C.J. Franklin and Brad McClure tied for WCHA coaches' Preseason Rookie of the Year honors, while Bowling Green defenseman Mark Friedman garnered the media nod.

Motte and Leitner were chosen to both Preseason All-WCHA Teams, joining forwards Tyler Morley, a junior from Alaska, and Jean-Paul LaFontaine, a senior from Minnesota State; and defensemen Colton Parayko, a junior from Alaska, Zach Palmquist, a senior from Minnesota State (coaches' only), and Shane Hanna, a sophomore from Michigan Tech (media only).

2014-15 Mankato Free Press WCHA Men's Hockey Preseason Coaches' Poll

| Rk | Team (1 st place votes) | Points |
|-----|------------------------------------|--------|
| 1. | Minnesota State (9) | 81 |
| 2. | Ferris State (1) | 67 |
| 3. | Michigan Tech | 64 |
| 4. | Bowling Green | 57 |
| 5. | Alaska | 44 |
| 6. | Northern Michigan | 40 |
| 7. | Alaska Anchorage | 38 |
| 8. | Bemidji State | 33 |
| 9. | Lake Superior State | 17 |
| 10. | Alabama Huntsville | 9 |

Predicted order of finish. Based on a 9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1 scale. Coaches could not vote for their own teams.

Preseason WCHA Player of the Year

C.J. Motte, Sr., G, Ferris State (4 votes)

Others receiving votes: Matt Leitner, Sr., F, Minnesota State (3); Jean-Paul LaFontaine, Sr., F, Minnesota State (1); Scott Allen, Sr., F, Alaska Anchorage (1), Colton Parayko, Jr. D, Alaska (1)

Preseason WCHA Rookie of the Year

C.J. Franklin, F, Minnesota State and Brad McClure, F, Minnesota State (4 votes each)

Others receiving votes: Brett Beauvais, D, Bemidji State (1), Oliver Mantha, G, Alaska Anchorage (1)

Preseason All-WCHA Team

Forwards

Tyler Morley, Jr., Alaska; Jean-Paul LaFontaine, Sr., Minnesota State; Matt Leitner, Sr., Minnesota State

Defensemen

Colton Parayko, Jr., Alaska; Zach Palmquist, Sr., Minnesota State

Goaltender

C.J. Motte, Sr., Ferris State

Others receiving votes: Forwards—Scott Allen, Sr., Alaska Anchorage; Blake Tatchell, Jr., Alaska Anchorage; Justin Buzzeo, Sr., Ferris State; David Johnstone, Sr., Michigan Tech; Tanner Kero, Sr., Michigan Tech; Alex Petan, Jr., Michigan Tech; Blake Pietila, Sr., Michigan Tech. Defensemen—Austin Coldwell, Sr., Alaska Anchorage; Matt Prapavessis, Sr., Bemidji State; Jason Binkley, Sr., Ferris State; Shane Hanna, So., Michigan Tech. Goaltenders—Cole Huggins, So., Minnesota State.

2014-15 Bemidji Pioneer WCHA Men's Hockey Preseason Media Poll

| Rk | Team (1 st place votes) | Points |
|-----|------------------------------------|--------|
| 1. | Minnesota State (23) | 256 |
| 2. | Ferris State (4) | 226 |
| 3. | Bowling Green | 180 |
| 4. | Michigan Tech | 178 |
| 5. | Alaska | 163 |
| 6. | Alaska Anchorage | 128 |
| 7. | Northern Michigan | 112 |
| 8. | Bemidji State | 101 |
| 9. | Lake Superior State | 60 |
| 10. | Alabama Huntsville | 26 |

Predicted order of finish. Based on a 10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1 scale.

Preseason WCHA Player of the Year

Matt Leitner, Sr., F, Minnesota State (12 votes)

Others receiving votes: C.J. Motte, Sr., G, Ferris State (6); Jean-Paul LaFontaine, Sr., F, Minnesota State (5); Tyler Morley, Jr., F, Alaska (1); Colton Parayko, Jr., D, Alaska (1)

Preseason WCHA Rookie of the Year

Mark Friedman, D, Bowling Green (9 votes)

Others receiving votes: Peter Krieger, F, Alaska (5); Brad McClure, F, Minnesota State (2); C.J. Franklin, F, Minnesota State (2); Max McHugh, F, Alabama-Huntsville (1); Olivier Mantha, G, Alaska-Anchorage (1); Gerry Fitzgerald, F, Bemidji State (1); Evan Anderson, F Michigan Tech (1); John Siemer, F, Northern Michigan (1)

Preseason All-WCHA Team

Forwards

Tyler Morley, Jr., Alaska; Jean-Paul LaFontaine, Sr., Minnesota State; Matt Leitner, Sr., Minnesota State

Defensemen

Colton Parayko, Jr., Alaska; Shane Hanna, So., Michigan Tech

Goaltender

C.J. Motte, Sr., Ferris State

Others receiving votes: Forwards—Josh Kestner, Fr., Alabama-Huntsville; Scott Allen, Sr., Alaska-Anchorage; Blake Tatchell, Jr., Alaska Anchorage; Cory Ward, Jr., Bemidji State; Adam Berkle, Sr., Bowling Green; Dan DeSalvo, Sr., Bowling Green; Justin Buzzeo, Sr., Ferris State; Alex Globke, So., Lake Superior State; Tanner Kero, Jr., Michigan Tech; Alex Petan, So., Michigan Tech; Blake Pietila, Jr., Michigan Tech; John Siemer, So., Northern Michigan. Defensemen—Matt Prapavessis, Sr., Bemidji State; Jason Binkley, Sr., Ferris State; Zach Palmquist, Sr., Minnesota State; Mitch Jones, Sr., Northern Michigan. Goaltenders—Tommy Burke, Jr., Bowling Green; Cole Huggins, So., Minnesota State; Mathias Dahlstrom, R-Fr., Northern Michigan.

Participants

Jack Hittinger, *Bemidji Pioneer*; Shane Frederick, *Mankato Free Press*; Tim O'Donnell, *Fairbanks News-Miner*; Jerry Taylor, ABC 10 UP sports director; Geof Morris, UAH Hockey.com; Michael Napier, UAH Hockey.com; Drew Evans, BGSU Hockey.com; Bruce Cech, Alaska Nanooks radio play-by-play; Chris Dilks, SBN College Hockey; Kevin Kurtt, *Let's Play Hockey Magazine*; George Sipple, *Detroit Free Press*; Kurt Haider, Alaska-Anchorage radio play-by-play; Kevin Gordon, BGSU Hockey.com; Ryan Steig, *Marquette Daily Mining Journal*; Mike Sullivan, Minnesota State radio play by play; Greg Buckner, *Big Rapids Pioneer*; Scott Williams, Lakeland Sports & KBUN Bemidji; Ryan Satkowiak, *Bowling Green Sentinel-Tribune*; Justin Bradford, Penalty Box Radio Nashville; John Wagner, *Toledo Blade*; Dave Danis, Northern Michigan radio play by play; Brian Halverson, *Minnesota Hockey Magazine*; Lee Benson, Lakeland Public TV sports director; David Tuttle, Alaska-Anchorage color commentator; Rob Roos, *Sault Ste. Marie Evening News*; Brandon Veale, *The Daily Mining Gazette* (Houghton)

About Mankato Free Press WCHA Men's Hockey Preseason Coaches' Poll

The 2014-15 *Mankato Free Press* WCHA Men's Hockey Preseason Coaches' Poll was conducted by Shane Frederick, staff writer, The Free Press Media. (www.mankatofreepress.com; www.mankatofreepresshockey.blogspot.com; Twitter/@puckato)

About Bemidji Pioneer WCHA Men's Hockey Preseason Media Poll

The 2014-15 *Bemidji Pioneer* WCHA Men's Hockey Preseason Media Poll was conducted by Jack Hittinger, staff writer. (www.bemidjipioneer.com; www.bemidjipioneer.com/users/jhitt; Twitter/@jackhitts)

About Western Collegiate Hockey Association (WCHA)

The Western Collegiate Hockey Association, among the most historic, tradition-rich and successful conferences in all of collegiate athletics, proudly marks its 63rd season of men's competition in 2014-15. Covering five time zones and more than 4,200 miles, the 10-team Division 1 conference consists of the University of Alabama in Huntsville (Chargers), the University of Alaska Anchorage (Seawolves), the University of Alaska (Nanooks), Bemidji State University (Beavers), Bowling Green State University (Falcons), Ferris State University (Bulldogs), Lake Superior State University (Lakers), Michigan Technological University (Huskies), Minnesota State University (Mavericks) and Northern Michigan University (Wildcats).

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