



WCHA WEEKEND PREVIEW: JAN. 23-25, 2015

News and notes for the upcoming weekend of WCHA hockey

Opening Face-Off

- **Three WCHA Teams in the Top 10:** Led by the top-ranked team in the country, the WCHA has three top-10 teams in both the USCHO.com and *USA Today/USA Hockey Magazine* polls for the first time this season – No. 1 Minnesota State (for the second straight week), No. 6 Bowling Green (highest ranking in program history) and No. 10 Michigan Tech.
- **A Look at the PairWise:** That trio is also well-represented in the PairWise rankings, with the Mavericks atop the standings, the Falcons third and the Huskies 11th.
- **Mavs Rolling:** Minnesota State has the nation's longest current unbeaten streak at eight games (7-0-1), is 13-1-1 in its last 15 contests and is 18-4-1 overall to lead the country for wins and winning percentage (.804).
- **Winning Hockey:** The Mavericks, Huskies and Falcons also give the WCHA three of the nation's top 10 winning percentages - tied with Hockey East for most among any conference. Minnesota State's .804 mark leads the country, Bowling Green is fourth at .727 (14-4-4) and Michigan Tech is tied for 10th at .688 (16-7-1).
- **Nonconference Success:** Entering the season's final extended stretch of out-of-league games, the WCHA has the nation's third-best nonconference winning percentage at .516 (28-26-8). The 28 victories surpass the league's entire 2013-14 output (26-46-12, .381) and includes a 13-10-2 mark (.560) against ranked nonconference opponents.

The Week Ahead

- **Light Intraconference Week:** After two straight weekends of full WCHA schedules, only two league sets are on tap this weekend. Fresh off its first sweep of the season, Lake Superior State skates against No. 6 Bowling Green. Elsewhere, No. 10 Michigan Tech hosts Alaska in Houghton.
- **North Star College Cup:** The WCHA's two schools from the State of Hockey - Bemidji State and No. 1 Minnesota State - will compete in the North Star College Cup this weekend at the Xcel Energy Center in Saint Paul (home of the 2015 Final Five). The Beavers will face No. 7 Minnesota Duluth and the Mavericks will skate against No. 17 Minnesota on Friday, with the Third Place and Championship Games slated for Saturday.
- **A Trip to University Park:** Northern Michigan, which will play a nonconference road series two of the next three weekends, visits Big Ten leading Penn State.
- **National Exhibition:** Alabama Huntsville, which with seven wins (including a sweep last weekend) has equaled its victory total of the last three seasons combined, hosts the U.S. National Under-18 Team for a pair of exhibitions.
- **Both WCHA series, along with Alabama Huntsville's exhibition contests, can be viewed live via [WCHA.tv](http://www.wcha.com).**
- **For the full WCHA weekly release, visit:**
<http://www.wcha.com/men/pres1415/201501/jan20wcm.pdf>
- **For "Where Legends Are Born," a feature on the North Star College Cup, visit:**
<http://www.wcha.com/men/pres1415/201501/jan22nsc.php>

All rankings listed by USCHO.com poll first, followed by *USA Today/USA Hockey Magazine* poll

WCHA

Lake Superior State (5-13-0, 10 pts. / 6-19-1) at No. 6 Bowling Green (10-2-2, 22 pts. / 14-4-4)
BGSU Ice Arena; Bowling Green, Ohio

Friday, Jan. 23 and Saturday, Jan. 24 (7:07 p.m. ET both nights) – WATCH LIVE ON [WCHA.TV](#)

- No. 6 Bowling Green hosts Lake Superior State in a renewal of a longtime rivalry that dates back to the 1970-71 season.
- The Falcons hold a 78-70-10 lead in the all-time series, including a 44-25-4 mark at the BGSU Ice Arena. The Lakers, however, won three out of four contests last season.
- BGSU, which is 7-1-3 in its last 11 games, has ascended to the highest ranking in program history. The Falcons' 14-4-4 record is their best start since the 1994-95 season and gives them the nation's fourth-best winning percentage (.727).
- Bowling Green has the nation's top penalty kill unit at 93.3 percent (83-for-89), while the Falcons also own the second-highest scoring offense in the WCHA (12th nationally) at 3.27 goals per game.
- LSSU, which swept Bemidji State last weekend, is 3-2-1 in its last six games.
- Lakers' freshman G **Gordon Defiel**, who stopped 76-of-78 shots last weekend, leads the nation with 758 saves. His .950 save percentage in six games since Dec. 28 ranks sixth nationally.

Alaska (7-10-1, 15 pts. / 12-11-1) at No. 10 Michigan Tech (11-4-1, 23 pts. / 16-7-1)
MacInnes Student Ice Arena; Houghton, Mich.

Friday, Jan. 23 and Saturday, Jan. 24 (7:07 p.m. ET both nights) – WATCH LIVE ON [WCHA.TV](#)

- No. 10 Michigan Tech continues its current nine-game homestand by welcoming Alaska to the MacInnes Student Ice Arena.
- Tech leads the brief all-time series, 4-3-0. Four of the seven meetings came last year, with each team posting a road sweep.
- Senior F **Tanner Kero** and junior F **Alex Petan** lead the Huskies with 27 points on 10 goals and 17 assists apiece. The duo is ranked 10th in the country in points and 11th in assists. Kero is tied for the nation's lead with two shorthanded tallies, while Petan's five game-winning goals are third.
- Petan has logged multi-point efforts in three of his last four games and four of his last six (11 points total).
- The Nanooks have taken at least one point off every ranked opponent they have faced this season. Alaska earned a tie against Bowling Green, while posting victories over Minnesota State, Northern Michigan and Wisconsin (latter two both ranked at the time of the game).
- Alaska is 6-2-0 against teams from Michigan, including sweeps of Northern Michigan and Ferris State in WCHA play. The Nanooks split a conference series against Lake Superior State and a nonconference set against Western Michigan.

NONCONFERENCE

Northern Michigan (6-8-4, 16 pts. / 9-8-5) at Penn State (5-2-1, 11 pts. B1G / 11-7-3)
Pegula Ice Arena; University Park, Pa.

Friday, Jan. 23 at 7:00 p.m. ET and Saturday, Jan. 24 at 4:30 p.m. ET (Big Ten Network)

- Northern Michigan begins a stretch of two nonconference road series in three weeks with a trip to University Park, Pa. and a matchup with Penn State.
- The series marks the first ever meeting between the Wildcats and Nittany Lions.
- NMU is 14th in the country for scoring defense, allowing just 47 goals on the season (2.14 goals per game). The Wildcats also rank seventh nationally for combined special teams at 54.5 percent (91-for-167).
- Sophomore classmates **Dominik Shine** (6g, 10a, 16pts) and **Brock Maschmeyer** (7g, 5a, 12pts) lead the team in points and goals, respectively.

NONCONFERENCE – NORTH STAR COLLEGE CUP

Bemidji State (5-8-3, 13 pts. / 7-12-3) vs. No. 7 Minnesota Duluth (8-5-1, 25 pts. NCHC / 13-8-1)
Xcel Energy Center; Saint Paul, Minn.

Friday, Jan. 23 at 4:00 p.m. CT (FOX Sports North PLUS)

- Bemidji State makes its first appearance in the second year of Minnesota's showcase tournament, the North Star College Cup.
- The Beavers will face No. 7 Minnesota Duluth in the opening game at the Xcel Energy Center.
- BSU and UMD first squared off Feb. 8, 1947 in Duluth – just the 13th game in BSU program history. The Beavers trail the all-time series, 11-22-1; however, BSU is 9-7-1 in the last 17 meetings.
- In the only other meeting between teams on the Xcel Energy Center ice, Bemidji State won a 2011 WCHA Final Five quarterfinal contest.
- Despite dropping a pair of games last weekend, Bemidji State is still 4-2-3 in its last nine contests.

No. 17 Minnesota (2-2-2, 8 pts. B1G / 11-7-2) vs. No. 1 Minnesota State (15-2-1, 31 pts. / 18-4-1)
Xcel Energy Center; Saint Paul, Minn.

Friday, Jan. 23 at 7:00 p.m. CT (FOX Sports North PLUS)

- No. 1 Minnesota State opens its second appearance in the North Star College Cup with a first-round matchup against No. 17 Minnesota.
- The Mavericks hold the top spot in the national rankings for the second straight week. Minnesota State owns the nation's longest current unbeaten streak at eight games (7-0-1) and is 13-1-1 in its last 15 contests.
- The Gophers lead the all-time series, 35-10-6. The Mavericks' last victory was a 2-1 triumph Jan. 25, 2013 at Mariucci Arena.
- Mavericks' sophomore D Casey Nelson, who has 12 points in the last 12 games (3g, 9a), has 19 points overall (5g, 14a) to tie for seventh among all NCAA blue liners.
- Minnesota State ranks first in the nation in wins (17), winning percentage (.804), power play goals (25), goal margin (+38), shot margin (+290), fewest shots on goal allowed per game (21.43) and shots on goal margin per game (+12.6).

The North Star College Cup will continue on Saturday, Jan. 24, with the Third Place Game at 4:00 p.m. CT and the Championship Game at 7:00 p.m. CT. Both games will be televised live on FOX Sports North.

EXHIBITION

U.S. National Under-18 Team at Alabama Huntsville
Von Braun Center; Huntsville, Ala.

Saturday, Jan. 24 and Sunday, Jan. 25 (2:00 p.m. CT both nights) – WATCH LIVE ON WCHA.TV

- Alabama Huntsville, which with seven wins (including a sweep last weekend) has equaled its victory total of the last three seasons combined, hosts the U.S. National Under-18 Team for a pair of exhibitions.

MEDIA CONTACT

Matt Hodson
Associate Commissioner for Public Relations
E: mhodson@wcha.com
O: 952.818.8872
M: 612.801.2808

MORE INFORMATION

Website: wcha.com
Twitter: [@wcha_mhockey](https://twitter.com/wcha_mhockey)
Facebook: facebook.com/wchahockey
WCHA.tv: wcha.com/men/tv.php