



## WCHA WEEKEND PREVIEW: JAN. 30-31, 2015

### *News and notes for the upcoming weekend of WCHA hockey*

#### Opening Face-Off

- **Three WCHA Teams in the Top 10:** For the second straight week, the WCHA has three top-10 teams in both the USCHO.com and *USA Today/USA Hockey Magazine* polls. Minnesota State and Bowling Green are Nos. 3 and 6, respectively, in both polls, while Michigan Tech is No. 8/9.
- **A Look at the PairWise:** Despite dropping two slots in the opinion polls, Minnesota State remains atop the PairWise rankings. Bowling Green is sixth and Michigan Tech is 10th.
- **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 .780 mark (19-5-1) leads the country, Michigan Tech is sixth at .712 (18-7-1) and Bowling Green is seventh at .708 (15-5-4).
- **Across the Board:** A look at recent hot stretches by WCHA teams reveals the league's burgeoning depth: Minnesota State is 14-2-1 in its last 17 games, Bowling Green is 8-2-3 over its last 13 contests, Bemidji State is 6-2-3 in its last 11 outings, Lake Superior State is 4-3-1 since Dec. 29 and Alabama Huntsville is 4-2-1 over its last eight games.

#### The Week Ahead

- **Return to WCHA Play:** The eight WCHA teams in action this weekend all go head-to-head in conference play.
- **Dogs and Mavs in Mankato:** Reigning MacNaughton Cup champion Ferris State meets current WCHA leader and third-ranked Minnesota State for the second time in three weeks, this time in Mankato. The Mavericks swept the series in Grand Rapids, Mich. two weeks ago.
- **Cup Champs Return Home:** Bemidji State brings the North Star College Cup back to Sanford Center, where the Beavers will host No. 6 Bowling Green.
- **Michigan Tech Continues Homestand:** No. 8 Michigan Tech continues its nine-game homestand by welcoming Alabama Huntsville to the John J. MacInnes Student Ice Arena.
- **Seawolves and Wildcats:** After scoring nine goals in two road games last weekend, Northern Michigan returns home to face Alaska Anchorage.

#### WCHA.tv

- All eight WCHA games this weekend, spanning four series, can be viewed live via [WCHA.tv](http://wcha.tv)

#### Weekly Release and Plays of the Week

- For the full WCHA weekly release, visit: <http://wcha.com/men/pres1415/201501/jan27wcm.php>
- Watch the WCHA Plays of the Week at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Um8GzuXcCjg>

*-Series previews begin on the next page-*

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

## WCHA

**Ferris State (8-8-0, 16 pts. / 11-13-1) at No. 3 Minnesota State (15-2-1, 31 pts. / 19-5-1)  
Verizon Wireless Center; Mankato, Minn.**

**Friday, Jan. 30 at 7:37 p.m. CT and Saturday, Jan. 31 at 7:07 p.m. CT – WATCH LIVE ON [WCHA.TV](#)**

- Reigning MacNaughton Cup champion Ferris State meets current WCHA leader and third-ranked Minnesota State for the second time in three weeks, this time in Mankato. The Mavericks swept the series in Grand Rapids, Mich. two weeks ago and hold the all-time series lead at 9-4-2.
- FSU senior G **CJ Motte** has been stellar in net for the Bulldogs and is a 2015 Hobey Baker Award candidate. He currently holds a .927 save percentage, a WCHA-leading four shutouts and is only four wins away from matching school-record holder Mike Brown's all-time mark of 63 victories.
- MSU holds a plethora of national ranks, both individually and as a whole. Junior F **Bryce Gervais** leads the WCHA and is tied for 11<sup>th</sup> in the nation with 15 goals, while freshman F **C.J. Franklin** leads the team at +15 (fifth among all NCAA freshmen). In net, junior G **Stephon Williams** is third nationally for victories (15-3-1), complementing a 1.80 GAA and .918 save percentage.
- As a team, the Mavericks rank first in the nation in wins (19), winning percentage (.780), power-play goals (27), goal margin (+38), shot margin (+295), fewest shots on goal allowed per game (21.48) and shots on goal margin per game (+11.8).

**No. 6 Bowling Green (11-3-2, 24 pts. / 15-5-4) at Bemidji State (5-8-3, 13 pts. / 9-12-3)  
Sanford Center; Bemidji, Minn.**

**Friday, Jan. 30 and Saturday, Jan 31 (7:07 p.m. CT both nights) – WATCH LIVE ON [WCHA.TV](#)**

- Coming off its North Star College Cup championship, Bemidji State hosts No. 6 Bowling Green.
- The Beavers will look to turn around a four-game losing streak against the Falcons, who also hold the series lead of 4-2-0.
- For the second straight week, BGSU is ranked 6<sup>th</sup> in the USCHO and *USA Today/USA Hockey Magazine* polls – the highest ranking in program history. The Falcons are in the midst of playing 16 consecutive WCHA games to end the season.
- BSU freshman G **Michael Bitzer** leads the nation with a .951 save percentage since Dec. 12, going 5-2-1 with a 1.12 goals against average in 482:04 minutes played.
- The Beavers have now snuffed out 32 of its opponents' last 36 power-play opportunities, and the unit is .889 on the kill since Dec. 5. A large part of BSU's success is the combination of senior D **Sam Windle's** 51 blocked shots (tied for 10<sup>th</sup> in the nation), and the team's WCHA-low 9.3 penalty minutes per game this season.
- The Falcons have also had their share of success on the man-down, going 60-for-61 on the kill since Nov. 8. BGSU's 93.8 (91-for-97) penalty kill percentage has propelled them to the top spot in the nation for that category.

**Alabama Huntsville (6-12-0, 12 pts. / 7-16-3) at No. 8/9 Michigan Tech (13-4-1, 27 pts. / 18-7-1)  
John J. MacInnes Student Ice Arena; Houghton, Mich.**

**Friday, Jan. 30 and Saturday, Jan. 31 (7:07 p.m. ET both nights) – WATCH LIVE ON [WCHA.TV](#)**

- No. 8 Michigan Tech continues its nine-game homestand by welcoming Alabama Huntsville, which is 4-2-1 in its last eight games, to Houghton for a weekend matchup.
- The Huskies own the all-time series lead over the Chargers with a perfect 4-0-0 record.
- UAH freshman F **Max McHugh** leads the Chargers with 17 points (7g-10a), placing him in a tie for 17<sup>th</sup> in the NCAA and second in the WCHA for points by a rookie.
- Sophomore D **Brandon Carlson** has been solid in the defensive zone for the Blue and White, registering an NCAA-leading 66 blocked shots this season. His contribution has helped the Chargers rise to third in the country in overall blocks with 507.
- MTU junior F **Malcolm Gould** is on a three-game point streak where he has tallied four assists. He has a point in seven of the last nine games, with four goals and four assists in the span.
- Fellow upperclassman forwards, junior **Alex Petan** and senior **Tanner Kero**, are tied for the team lead with 11 goals and 19 assists and rank seventh in the nation in points (30).

**Alaska Anchorage (4-10-2, 10 pts. / 7-11-4) at Northern Michigan (6-8-4, 16 pts. / 9-9-6)**

**Berry Events Center; Marquette, Mich.**

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- Following a nine-goal weekend on the road, Northern Michigan returns home to face Alaska Anchorage in their second meeting of the 2014-15 campaign.
- The matchups will be the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> of the all-time series, with the Wildcats seeing a slight edge in the overall record of 13-11-1. The two teams split the only other series this season, both in shutout fashion.
- Special teams have been key to NMU's success, as the Wildcats are 7-0-4 when scoring a power-play goal. NMU is also fourth in the WCHA (20<sup>th</sup> nationally) with a penalty kill percentage of 85.1 (86-of-101).
- Idle last weekend, UAA returns to the ice for the first time since a Jan. 16-17 sweep at Alaska. Junior F **Blake Tatchell** (two assists Jan. 16 and OT game-winner Jan. 17) and freshman G **Olivier Mantha** (80 saves in two games) earned WCHA Offensive Player and Rookie of the Week honors, respectively.
- With a .928 save percentage during his rookie campaign, Mantha is on pace to eclipse UAA's single-season record of .921 (set in 2003-04 by Chris King).

**IDLE:**

- **Alaska (7-12-1, 15 pts. / 12-13-1)**
- **Lake Superior State (6-14-0, 12 pts. / 7-20-1)**

***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 63<sup>rd</sup> 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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