



WCHA WEEKEND PREVIEW: MARCH 6-7, 2015

News and notes for the upcoming weekend of WCHA hockey

Opening Face-Off

- **Two of the Top Four:** The two league frontrunners, No. 2 Minnesota State and No. 4 Michigan Tech, give the WCHA two of the top four teams in the country, according to both the USCHO.com and *USA Today/USA Hockey Magazine* opinion polls.
- **A Further Look at the Rankings:** No. 13 Bowling Green rounds out the WCHA presence in the opinion polls. In the all-important PairWise rankings, Minnesota State is second, Michigan Tech is seventh and Bowling Green is 14th.
- **Winning Hockey:** Minnesota State, Michigan Tech and Bowling Green also give the WCHA an NCAA-best (tied with Hockey East) three of the nation's top 12 winning percentages. The Mavericks are tied for the top spot with a .773 mark (24-6-3), the Huskies are third at .735 (24-8-2) and the Falcons are tied for 11th at .632 (19-10-5). MSU and MTU are tied with North Dakota for college hockey's most victories.
- **Beavers on the Move:** Bemidji State is tied for the second-longest active unbeaten stretch in the country at six games (5-0-1). Going back even further, the Beavers' .690 winning percentage (12-4-5) since Nov. 29 is tied for the sixth-best in the country over that span. That longer run includes a 4-2-1 mark against ranked opponents.
- **Nanooks Rising:** Alaska was one of only two NCAA teams to finish February undefeated, matching top-ranked North Dakota with a 5-0-1 mark during the month.
- **20/20:** At 20-3-3 in conference play, Minnesota State has joined the 1997-98 and 1998-99 North Dakota teams as the only in WCHA history to post consecutive 20-win league seasons in a 28-game slate. The WCHA 28-game schedule wins record (24 such seasons) is 24 (UND in 1998-99), while Wisconsin reached 23 in 1999-2000; and, five schools recorded 21 victories.
- **Playoff Picture:** The MacNaughton Cup, the final home ice position and the last two available spots for the 2015 WCHA playoffs are all up for grabs entering the season's final weekend. A full list of playoff seeding scenarios and tie-breakers can be found on pages 2-3 of this release.
- **Chasing Hobey:** Of the WCHA's seven Hobey Baker Award candidates, MSU's **Bryce Gervais** is tied for fifth nationally with 21 goals, MTU's **Tanner Kero** is tied for 10th with 41 points, Alaska's **Tyler Morley** is tied for 19th with 37 points, and MTU's **Jamie Phillips** is in the top 10 for wins (2nd - 23), winning percentage (t-5th - .750), GAA (5th - 1.80), save percentage (6th - .934) and shutouts (t-4th - 4).

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- All 10 WCHA games this weekend, spanning five series, can be viewed live via WCHA.tv

WCHA

No. 2 Minnesota State (20-3-3, 43 pts. / 24-6-3) at Bemidji State (11-10-5, 27 pts. / 15-14-5)

Sanford Center; Bemidji, Minn.

Friday, March 6 (7:37 p.m. CT) and Saturday, March 7 (7:07 p.m. CT) – [WATCH LIVE ON WCHA.TV](#)

- One of the country's hottest teams (Bemidji State) hosts the nation's second-ranked team (Minnesota State) with plenty at stake. The Beavers are in a three-way race for the league's final home ice playoff slot, while the Mavericks have a point magic number of two to capture the first McNaughton Cup in school history.
- Becoming the first goalie to post 13 or more wins in a season since Dan Bakala in 2010-11, BSU freshman G **Michael Bitzer** was named as the WCHA Defensive Player of the Week. The rookie leads all WCHA netminders with a .937 save percentage in league play and is second with a 1.59 goals against average.
- Leading the Mavericks is junior F **Bryce Gervais**, whose 21 goals stands tied for fifth in the nation and lead all players in the conference. In the point column, senior F **Matt Leitner** sits atop with seven goals and 27 assists for a total of 34 points.
- MSU is tied for the nation's lead with 24 wins and winning percentage (.773) and leads the country in power player goals (38), shot margin (+379), fewest shots on goal allowed per game (21.8) and shots on goal margin per game (+11.5).
- BSU is 48-44-13 versus Minnesota State all-time, in a series that got its start in 1974. However, the Mavericks are 5-1-0 in the last six contests.
- Bemidji State is riding a Sanford Center-record nine-game home unbeaten streak (7-0-2).

Northern Michigan (11-11-4, 26 pts. / 14-14-6) at No. 4 Michigan Tech (19-5-2, 40 pts. / 24-8-2)

Friday, March 6 at 7:07 p.m. ET, John J. MacInnes Student Ice Arena; Houghton, Mich.

Saturday, March 7 at 7:07 p.m. ET, Berry Events Center; Marquette, Mich.

[WATCH LIVE ON WCHA.TV](#)

- UP arch-rivals No. 4 Michigan Tech and Northern Michigan meet in a home-and-home with the same items at stake, although both need help (Tech trails MSU by three points, while NMU is a point behind BSU).
- MTU is 8-1-1 in its last 10 games, is tied for the NCAA lead with 24 wins overall and is third with a .773 winning percentage.
- The Huskies are third nationally in goals scored per game (3.62) and second in goals allowed per game (1.82). Individually, senior F **Tanner Kero** leads all WCHA players in scoring with 17 goals and 24 assists for 41 points, ranking him 10th in the country. Sophomore D **Shane Hanna** also leads all WCHA players, and is third in the country, with a +22 in WCHA games.
- In net, MTU junior G **Jamie Phillips** sits fifth nationally with a goals against average of 1.80 and sixth in save percentage (93.4).
- Sophomore D **Brock Maschmeyer** leads the Wildcats in goals with 9, while junior F **Darren Nowick** heads the squad in assists (15) and overall points with 22.
- NMU leads the all-time series 68-52-14. Tech won 3-of-4 games against the Wildcats last season. In league games, Northern holds a slim 34-33-3 edge.

Ferris State (11-14-1, 23 pts. / 14-19-2) at Lake Superior State (7-18-1, 15 pts. / 8-24-2)

Taffy Abel Arena; Sault Ste. Marie, Mich.

Friday, March 6 (7:37 p.m. ET) and Saturday, March 7 (7:07 p.m. ET) – WATCH LIVE ON WCHA.TV

- Ferris State, the third team alive in the race for home ice (albeit four points behind), visits a Lake Superior State squad that needs just one point to clinch a playoff berth. The Lakers hold a 66-49-13 lead in the all-time series.
- Headlining LSSU is freshman G **Gordon Defiel**. The rookie netminder continues to lead the NCAA in saves with 1,019 and is tied for fourth with four shutouts. Defiel's .946 save percentage since the Florida College Hockey Classic is second nationally over that two-month span.
- FSU senior G **CJ Motte** has also been solid in net, posting a .918 save percentage and has four shutouts, good for a tie of the lead in the WCHA.
- Junior F **Matt Robertson** heads the point leaderboard for the Bulldogs, registering six goals and 16 helpers for a point total of 22. His assists lead the team as well while sophomore F **Kyle Schempp's** nine goals place him atop the scoring column.
- FSU and LSSU have faced each other every season since 1977. Overall, the Lakers lead the all-time series by a 66-49-14 count, but Ferris State has posted a 8-1-1 mark in the last 10 matchups over the past three years.

Alabama Huntsville (7-18-1, 15 pts. / 8-22-4) at No. 13 Bowling Green (15-8-3, 33 pts. / 19-10-5)

BGSU Ice Arena; Bowling Green, Ohio

Friday, March 6 and Saturday, March 7 (7:07 p.m. ET both nights) – WATCH LIVE ON WCHA.TV

- Alabama Huntsville, which also needs just a single point to secure a playoff spot, visits No. 13 Bowling Green. The Falcons will be gunning for their first 20-win season since 1995-96.
- Each team holds a top-10 combined special teams squad, with the Chargers (57.6 percent) leading the pack and the Falcons (53.8 percent) holding the seventh spot. BGSU also boasts the nation's second best penalty-killing unit at .901.
- BGSU freshman F Brandon Hawkins leads his team with 24 points, placing him 18th nationally among his class. Another rookie, UAH freshman F **Max McHugh**, places only four spots behind in 22nd with 21 points and leads his team in the category.
- On defense, UAH sophomore **Brandon Carlson** ranks second nationally with 80 blocks. His classmate behind him, G **Carmine Guerriero**, ranks fourth in the WCHA and 18th in the nation with a save percentage of .926 and a 2.57 goals against average.

Alaska (12-12-2, 26 pts. / 17-13-2) at Alaska Anchorage (5-19-2, 12 pts. / 8-20-4)

Sullivan Arena; Anchorage, Alaska (Alaska Airlines Governor's Cup)

Friday, March 6 and Saturday, March 7 (7:07 p.m. AT both nights) – WATCH LIVE ON WCHA.TV

- Alaska Anchorage, which needs to sweep and get help to qualify for the playoffs, will look to duplicate its earlier success against the Nanooks (2-0-0) in the second round of the Alaska Airlines Governor's Cup.
- Leading UAA this season with 22 points and 15 helpers is junior F **Blake Tatchell**, while senior F **Scott Allen** leads the team with eight goals to add to his 16 points on the year. Another notable, sophomore F **Dylan Hubbs**, netted his third shorthanded goal of the season last weekend – good for a three-way tie at No. 1 in the nation.
- Junior D **Colton Parayko** has 24 points this season for the Nanooks, placing him third in the WCHA amongst defensemen while also being tied for the team lead with five power play goals.
- Each team had a player earn league recognition this week. For the Seawolves it was freshman F **Austin Azurdia** taking the WCHA Rookie of the Week award for his three-point night to keep his

team's playoff hopes alive. On the other side, Nanooks junior F **Tyler Morley** won WCHA Offense Player of the Week with his two game-tying goals and three assists the weekend prior. He also leads his team in goals (15), assists (22) and points (37).

- Overall, UAA leads the all-time series record at 86-57-11 and have a four-game winning streak against the Nanooks. These will be the 155th and 156th all-time meetings between the teams.

About the 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). For more information, visit wcha.com.

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