



WCHA WEEKEND PREVIEW: OCT. 6-9, 2016

Series news and notes for the upcoming weekend of WCHA hockey

- 10 WCHA games this weekend can be viewed live (or archived) via WCHA.tv.
- The full WCHA weekly release can be found online at [here](#).

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

WCHA

No. 17 Michigan Tech (0-0-0-0, 0 pts. WCHA / 0-2-0) at No. 19 Minnesota State (season opener)
Verizon Wireless Center; Mankato, Minn. – Fri., Oct. 7 and Sat., Oct. 8 (both 7:07 p.m. CT)

[WATCH LIVE ON WCHA.TV](http://WCHA.TV)

- No. 17 Michigan Tech and No. 19 Minnesota State, defending WCHA regular season co-champions, open their respective league slates this weekend in Mankato.
- Minnesota State, which is 4-1-1 in games vs. the Huskies over the course of the last two years, leads the all-time series by a 32-17-7 margin. Michigan Tech, however, won the 2015-16 season series, 1-0-1 (series played Jan. 15-16 in Houghton).
- The Mavericks and Huskies played for the 2015 Broadmoor Trophy (with MSU winning, 5-2), then tied atop the 2015-16 WCHA regular season standings (seventh tie in league history).
- Tech opened its regular season last weekend by dropping a pair of games at No. 6 Minnesota Duluth, while Minnesota State defeated visiting Regina, 5-3 in an exhibition contest.
- MTU redshirt sophomore G **Devin Kero** got his first start between the pipes on Sunday. He stopped 27-of-31 shots on the night, including a pair of breakaways. Kero had 10 saves in relief on Saturday and stopped a UMD penalty shot.
- Huskies' senior F **Tyler Heinonen** scored his team-leading 32nd goal of his career on Sunday. He was third on last year's team with 15 goals.
- Minnesota State got two goals from junior F **Brad McClure**, along with single tallies from junior **Zeb Knutson**, senior **Jordan Nelson** and freshman **Marc Michaelis** in its exhibition win.
- The Mavericks are tied for third in the country with 100 wins since opening night of the 2012-13 season, and are fourth with 76 wins since realignment (2013-14).

No. 14/15 Bowling Green (season opener) at Bemidji State (season opener)
Sanford Center; Bemidji, Minn. – Fri., Oct. 7 and Sat., Oct. 8 (both 7:07 p.m. CT)

[WATCH LIVE ON WCHA.TV](http://WCHA.TV)

- No. 14/15 Bowling Green, the coaches' and media's preseason pick to win the WCHA, opens this weekend at Bemidji State.
- The teams met in a thrilling three-game WCHA quarterfinal series last spring, with Bowling Green winning the final two contests to advance to the Final Five.
- BGSU leads the all-time series, 8-4-1; however, Bemidji State holds a 3-2-1 edge at the Sanford Center.
- Bowling Green posted a 3-2 exhibition victory over Windsor last weekend, while this is the

Beavers' first game of any sort this season.

- The Falcons' No. 14 ranking in the USCHO.com poll marks just the second time in school history that Bowling Green has been ranked in the outlet's first poll of the year since it was initiated for the 1997-98 season.
- BGSU junior G **Chris Nell**, who led the WCHA overall in save percentage (.930) and was third in goals against average (1.91) last season (setting school records in both categories), stopped 93-of-99 shots against BSU in the WCHA playoffs.
- The Beavers are coming off a 2015-16 season in which they posted a 17-16-6 record to finish sixth in the WCHA standings and assemble its first winning record since recording a 23-10-4 record en route to a CHA regular season title and an at-large bid into the NCAA Tournament in 2009-10.
- BSU returns 64 percent of its point scoring and 61 percent of its goal scoring from a year ago, which includes its top two point getters in **Gerry Fitzgerald** (14-11—25) and **Brendan Harms** (8-17—25). In addition, junior G **Michael Bitzer** – the nation's active leader with 10 career shutouts – returns in net.

NONCONFERENCE

Alabama Huntsville (2-0-0-0, 6 pts. WCHA / 2-0-0) at Connecticut (season opener)

XL Center; Hartford, Conn. – Fri., Oct. 7 at 7:05 p.m. ET and Sat., Oct. 8 at 4:05 p.m. ET

- Alabama Huntsville will look to continue its hot start with a two-game series at Hockey East foe Connecticut.
- In its strongest start in the program's WCHA era, UAH swept No. 20 Ferris State this past weekend by scores of 2-1 and 4-3 in Big Rapids, Mich. The wins marked the team's first-ever sweep of a ranked program and the first series sweep to open conference play. The Chargers are now 2-0-0 for the first time since the 2001-02 campaign.
- Senior G **Matt Larose** garnered WCHA Defensive Player of the Week honors after posting 67 total saves, four goals allowed and an NCAA-leading .944 save percentage in two games at Ferris State.
- Junior F **Max McHugh** – who has led the UAH offense in points for the past two seasons – registered a goal in each game of the Chargers sweep of Ferris State to earn his first-ever WCHA Offensive Player of the Week award.
- The Chargers' penalty kill unit started the season successfully, as the squad held Ferris State to just one goal in 10 opportunities this past weekend.
- UAH is opening the season with three-straight road weekends, as the Chargers will visit Michigan Tech on Oct. 14-15.

No. 13/11 Minnesota (season opener) at Alaska Anchorage (season opener)

Fri., Oct. 7 at 7:07 p.m. AT

Alaska (season opener) at Alaska Anchorage

Sat., Oct. 8 at 7:07 p.m. AT

No. 13/11 Minnesota vs. Alaska

Sun., Oct. 7 at 4:07 p.m. AT

All games at Sullivan Arena (Anchorage, Alaska) and available on WCHA.TV

- Both Alaska Anchorage and Alaska will play Big Ten opponent, No. 13/11 Minnesota, this weekend in Anchorage. In addition to playing the Gophers, the Seawolves and Nanooks will meet Saturday in a rare nonconference matchup between WCHA teams.
- Minnesota leads the all-time series against UAA at 57-19-8. UAA last played the Gophers as members of the same conference, Jan. 11-12, 2013, while the Seawolves' last wins over Minnesota came March 11-12, 2011, when UAA advanced to the Final Five by upsetting the Gophers, 4-3, 2-0 in the WCHA First Round at Mariucci Arena.
- UAA and UAF met four times last season, with UAF going 3-0-1. The Nanooks are 5-4-1 in the last 10 meetings, while the last 11-straight contests have been decided by just one goal. The Seawolves lead the all-time series, 89-6-12 (50-22-7 in Anchorage).

- UAF will face Minnesota and former Nanooks coach Don Lucia for the first time since Oct. 14-15, 2005.
- UAA is unbeaten in its last 15 season openers at 12-0-3. The last season-opener loss came from Michigan State in 2000.
- UAA, which posted a 6-1 exhibition win over Simon Fraser last weekend, returns 18 letterwinners. The Seawolves added eight newcomers, while they will dress sophomore-redshirts **Jonah** and **Nathan Renouf** for the first time.
- UAF received goals from rookie forward **Kylar Hope** and sophomore forward **Chad Staley** en route to a 2-0 exhibition victory over Simon Fraser last weekend.
- Alaska returns 17 players from last season, with senior forward **Marcus Basara** as the top-returning point player. Basara ranked fourth on the Nanooks last season, posting eight goals and ten assists for 18 points.

Western Michigan (season opener) at/vs. No. 20 Ferris State (0-2-0-0, 0 pts. WCHA / 0-2-0)

Thurs., Oct. 6 at Ewingleben Ice Arena; Big Rapids, Mich. (7:07 p.m. ET)

Fri., Oct. 7 at Lawson Arena; Kalamazoo, Mich. (7:05 p.m. ET)

WATCH THURSDAY'S GAME LIVE ON WCHA.TV

- Prior to its Thursday night home game against Western Michigan, Ferris State will raise the banner commemorating its 2016 Broadmoor Trophy title as WCHA playoff champion. The Bulldogs will play at WMU Friday to complete the home-and-home.
- Ferris State sports a record of 51-75-14 in 140 all-time meetings with WMU. The Bulldogs are looking for their first win over Western Michigan since March 11, 2011 at Lawson Ice Arena, when the Bulldogs won game one of a best-of-three CCHA first round playoff series. FSU is also looking for their first win at Ewingleben Ice Arena over the Broncos since November 19, 2010. The Bulldogs and Broncos have only met twice since 2013.
- Ferris State opened the season with a pair of losses to visiting Alabama Huntsville last weekend at the Ewingleben Ice Arena.
- Redshirt freshman forward **Craig Pefley** impressed during the first two games of the 2016-17 season vs. Alabama Huntsville, assisting on three of Ferris State's four weekend goals. The St. Clair, Mich. native played in just one game last year due to injury and was given a medical redshirt.
- With schedule changes due to the new WCHA playoff format, Ferris State will play six total home games in October. This marks the most home games the Bulldogs will play in any one month during the 2016-17 regular season. Ferris State will play nine total contests over 29 days to open NCAA play, which is also the most they will play in any one month in the 2016-17 season.

Wisconsin (season opener) vs. Northern Michigan (season opener)

Resch Center; Green Bay, Wis. – Fri., Oct. 7 and Sat., Oct. 8 (both 7:07 p.m. CT)

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- Northern Michigan opens its 2016-17 campaign by hosting Wisconsin at the Resch Center in Green Bay, Wis.
- This is the fourth series Northern Michigan and Wisconsin will play in Green Bay as they also met at the Resch Center in 2006, 2012 and 2014. The Wildcats lead the Resch Center series, 4-1-1, winning the past four games by a combined 12-4 margin.
- Last season, Northern Michigan and Wisconsin battled to two-straight draws at the Kohl Center in Madison, Wis. Oct. 9-10. **Atte Tolvanen** made a combined 66 of 71 saves, including 41 in Saturday's game
- Northern Michigan rolled to a 10-1 victory over the University of Victoria Oct. 2 in its season-opening exhibition contest. Eight Wildcats had multi-point outings, led by **Robbie Payne**, who recorded five points (1g-4a). **Zach Diamantoni** (2), **Sami Salminen** (2), **Philip Beaulieu**, **Collin Peters**, **Casey Purpur** and **Filip Starzynski** also found the back of the net.
- Northern Michigan returns four of its top five point-producing forwards from 2015-16 in **Shine**

- (15g-15a), **Hanson** (3g-18a), **Payne** (12g-8a) and **Sooth** (6g-7a).
- An all-rookie team selection, **Tolvanen** ranked first in the WCHA, and 11th nationally, with a .929 save percentage last season. That save percentage was .001 away from tying 2005 Hobey Baker finalist Tuomas Tarkki's single-season school record. He also recorded a 2.46 GAA, which ranks 10th in school history.
 - The Wildcats went 12-11-5 in league action and claimed the fifth seed in the 2016 WCHA tournament. Their record and finish were their best since the 2009-10 campaign (CCHA).

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, will proudly mark its 65th season of men's competition in 2016-17. 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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