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MINNESOTA'S BRANDT AND PANNEK, AND BEMIDJI STATE'S BILIC NAMED WCHA PLAYERS OF THE WEEK FOR GAMES OF DEC. 5-7, 2014

EDINA, Minn. – Dec. 9, 2014 – A pair of career-high and record-setting efforts, and the continued hot streak of a freshman forward, highlight the Western Collegiate Hockey Association (WCHA) women's Players of the Week for games of Dec. 5-7, 2014. The honorees are: Minnesota junior forward **Hannah Brandt** (Offensive Player of the Week), Bemidji State junior defenseman **Ivana Bilic** (Defensive Player of the Week), and Minnesota freshman forward **Kelly Pannek** (Rookie of the Week).

WCHA Offensive Player of the Week

Hannah Brandt, Jr., F, Minnesota (Vadnais Heights, Minn.)

Brandt led Minnesota and matched a career-high with a nine-point weekend (2g, 7a) as the Gophers swept St. Cloud State. During Friday's 12-0 win, Brandt tied a Gopher record with seven points, while her six assists set a new program standard and matched the all-time WCHA record (seventh player, eighth occurrence). On Saturday, she won all 10 face-offs she took, scored a goal and added an assist in a 7-0 triumph. Brandt finished the weekend with a +7 rating and a .871 face-off percentage (27-of-31). The junior from Vadnais Heights, Minn. leads the WCHA with 16 goals, 21 assists and 37 total points, while ranking among national leaders for points (second), points per game (third), goals (tied for second), goals per game (third), assists (second) and assists per game (fourth).

Also nominated: Ashleigh Brykaliuk, So., F, Minnesota Duluth; Kaitlyn Tougas, Jr., F, Bemidji State

WCHA Player of the Week

Ivana Bilic, Jr., D, Bemidji State (Coquitlam, British Columbia)

Bilic registered five points on a goal and four assists in the Beavers' sweep of Minnesota State. She notched a career-high four points in Friday's victory with a goal and three helpers, posting the second-best single-game point performance by a defenseman in BSU history. The junior from Coquitlam, British Columbia also paced the team with nine blocked shots as the Beavers limited MSU to four goals over the weekend. Bilic ranks second nationally with 49 blocked shots and is tied for eighth in scoring by a defenseman with 13 points (3g, 10a).

Also nominated: Ann-Renée Desbiens, So., G, Wisconsin; Milica McMillen, Jr., D, Minnesota

WCHA Rookie of the Week

Kelly Pannek, F, Minnesota (Plymouth, Minnesota)

Pannek recorded a career-best six assists – including helpers on both game-winners – in Minnesota’s sweep of St. Cloud State. The freshman from Plymouth, Minn. established a career standard with four assists in Friday’s 12-0 win, while adding two more during Saturday’s triumph. She finished the weekend with a +4 rating, won 16 of 23 face-offs (.696) and was on the ice for seven of Minnesota’s goals.

Pannek, currently on a five-game point streak, is tied for second in the nation among freshmen with 20 points overall. She is also tied for third among rookies with 1.04 points per game and fourth with 0.84 assists per contest.

Also nominated: Hannah Davidson, F, Minnesota State; Alexis Joyce, D, Bemidji State; Baylee Wellhausen, F, Wisconsin

About Western Collegiate Hockey Association (WCHA)

The women’s Western Collegiate Hockey Association has won a record 14 national championships in 15 years since its inception in 1999, while producing six Patty Kazmaier Award winners, 70 All-Americans and numerous Olympic and international team members. The eight-team Division 1 conference consists of: Bemidji State University (Beavers), the University of Minnesota (Golden Gophers), the University of Minnesota Duluth (Bulldogs), Minnesota State University (Mavericks), the University of North Dakota, Ohio State University (Buckeyes), St. Cloud State University (Huskies) and the University of Wisconsin (Badgers).

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