



WCHA WEEKEND PREVIEW: JAN. 30-FEB. 2, 2015

News and notes for the upcoming weekend of WCHA hockey

Opening Face-Off

- **A Look at the Polls:** The WCHA continues to be a fixture in the national rankings, with three teams in both the USCHO.com and *USA Today/USA Hockey Magazine* national rankings: No. 2 Minnesota, No. 3 Wisconsin and No. 6 Minnesota Duluth.
- **Three in the PairWise:** With four weeks remaining in the regular season, Minnesota (second), Wisconsin (third) and Minnesota Duluth (sixth) give the WCHA a trio of schools in the top eight of the latest PairWise rankings. North Dakota (11th), Ohio State (12th) and Bemidji State (14th) round out the WCHA representation.
- **Winning Hockey:** Showcasing the league's depth, the WCHA has an NCAA-best five of the nation's top 12 winning percentages: Minnesota (2nd at .907, 23-1-3), Wisconsin (5th at .788, 19-4-3) and Minnesota Duluth (t-6th at .712, 17-6-3), along with North Dakota (t-11th at .577, 14-10-2).
- **Streaking Along:** Several WCHA teams are riding extended hot stretches. Minnesota's 17-game unbeaten streak (16-0-1) is the second-longest active streak in the country. Minnesota Duluth has won five straight games and is 16-2-1 in its last 19 contests, while Wisconsin is 13-2-3 in its last 18 outings. North Dakota has won four straight, seven of its last eight games and is 10-3-1 since Nov. 21.
- **Nonconference Success:** The WCHA wrapped up its 2014-15 regular season nonconference schedule with an NCAA-best 35-11-2 (.750) mark. In fact, the WCHA is the only D-I league to own a winning nonconference record.
- **See you at the Rink:** Wisconsin (LaBahn Arena), Minnesota (Ridder Arena), Minnesota Duluth (AMSOIL Arena) and North Dakota (Ralph Engelstad Arena) rank 1-4 nationally in attendance.
- **Team Canada:** Seven players with WCHA ties are participating this week at Canada's National Women's Team training camp, including current student-athlete **Brigette Lacquette** (Minnesota Duluth), along with former league standouts **Sarah Davis** (Minnesota), **Jocelyne Larocque** (Minnesota Duluth), **Caroline Ouellette** (Minnesota Duluth), **Natalie Spooner** (Ohio State), **Kelly Terry** (Minnesota) and **Jessica Wong** (Minnesota Duluth). Additionally, UMD assistant coach Laura Schuler is serving in the same capacity for Team Canada.

The Week Ahead

- **Trio of WCHA Series:** Six WCHA schools compete against each other in full weekend series, while St. Cloud State visits Minnesota State in a rare Monday night, single-game matchup. No. 6 Minnesota Duluth hosts North Dakota in a matchup of streaking teams; No. 3 Wisconsin travels to Minnesota State; and, No. 2 Minnesota - with an eight-point lead in the standings - welcomes Ohio State to Ridder Arena.

For the full WCHA weekly release, visit:

<http://www.wcha.com/women/pres1415/201501/jan27wcv.php>.

WCHA

**North Dakota (10-8-2-1, 33 pts. / 14-10-2) at No. 6 Minnesota Duluth (12-6-2-2, 40 pts. / 17-6-3)
AMSOIL Arena (Duluth, Minn.)**

Friday, Jan. 30 and Saturday, Jan. 31 (6:07 p.m. CT both days)

- Two streaking teams meet when North Dakota visits No. 6 Minnesota Duluth for a key two-game series. UND has four straight games, seven of its last eight outings and is 10-3-1 since Nov. 21. UMD is on a five-game winning streak (fifth-longest in the nation) and is 16-2-1 in its last 19 contests.
- The teams split a pair of one-goal contests in Grand Forks, Oct. 17 and 18. North Dakota won 2-1 in overtime the first night, before the Bulldogs rallied for a 1-0, Saturday triumph.
- Five of the last 10 games between UMD and UND have gone into OT, with UND scoring a pair of OT goals and the other three games ending in ties (UMD winning two shootouts).
- North Dakota scored nine goals last weekend in a sweep of Bemidji State, with 14 different skaters recorded a point. Additionally, junior goaltender **Shelby Amsley-Benzie** became the program's all-time-wins leader after picking up her 43rd career victory Sunday.
- UMD senior F **Zoe Hickel** owns a seven-game scoring streak (4g-6a-10pts), helping the Bulldogs to the nation's ninth-ranked scoring offense (3.15gpg).
- Bulldogs junior G **Kayla Black** has set a school single-season record with eight shutouts (tied for second-most in the NCAA).

**No. 3 Wisconsin (14-4-2-0, 44 pts. / 19-4-3) at Minnesota State (0-17-1-0, 1 pt. / 2-21-1)
All Seasons Arena; Mankato, Minn.**

Friday, Jan. 30 at 7:07 p.m. CT; Saturday, Jan. 31 at 3:07 p.m. CT

- No. 3 Wisconsin, which trails first-place Minnesota by eight points and holds a four-point lead over third-place UMD, travels to Minnesota State for a weekend series.
- UW leads the all-time series with Minnesota State, 64-2-3. The Badgers swept their earlier series, Nov. 13-14 in Madison.
- UW ranks fifth nationally in scoring offense, scoring an average of 3.50 goals per game. On the other side of the ice, the Badgers' rank fourth defensively by holding opponents to an average of 1.19 goals per game.
- Badgers' freshman F **Annie Pankowski**, who netted her second career hat trick last Sunday, is tied for second among all NCAA rookies with 1.12 points per game.
- Minnesota State's **Nicole Schammel** is tied for fourth among WCHA freshmen with nine assists and 13 points.

**Ohio State (9-9-2-1, 30 pts. / 14-10-2) at No. 2 Minnesota (16-1-3-1, 52 pts. / 23-1-3)
Ridder Arena (Minneapolis, Minn.)**

Friday, Jan. 30 at 7:07 p.m. CT; Saturday, Jan. 31 at 2:07 p.m. CT

- Idle last week, Ohio State returns to action with a visit to Ridder Arena to face No. 2 Minnesota.
- The Gophers lead the all-time series, 60-8-2, including a road sweep in November.
- With just two more points, OSU captain **Sara Schmitt** will pass Shannon Reilly for the sixth most ever by a Buckeye defenseman. Schmitt has 15 points this season (4g-11a) and 76 for her career (14g-62a).
- The Buckeyes are 8-1-0 when leading after the first period and 12-1-1 when ahead after two.
- Thirteen Gophers are in double-figures for scoring, led by junior F **Hannah Brandt** (23g-33a-56pts), sophomore F **Dani Cameranesi** (17g-30a-47pts) and freshman F **Kelly Pannek** (10g-24a-34pts). All 18 Minnesota skaters have at least one point, including 16 goal scorers.
- Junior G **Amanda Leveille** leads the WCHA and is third nationally with a 1.15 goals against average. Her .946 save percentage is also third nationally (second WCHA).

St. Cloud State (3-16-1-1, 11 pts. / 6-20-1) at Minnesota State (0-17-1-0, 1 pt. / 2-21-1)

All Seasons Arena; Mankato, Minn.

Monday, Feb. 2 at 7:07 p.m. CT

- Minnesota State will play for the third time in four nights when it welcomes St. Cloud State to the All Seasons Arena for a rare Monday night game. The teams will meet in St. Cloud on Monday, Feb. 16.
- SCSU owns a slight 30-29-8 edge in the all-time series. The Huskies won 5-1 in Mankato back on Oct. 18, and won in a shootout the next day following a 1-1 tie in St. Cloud.
- Junior F **Molly Illikainen** continues to lead the Huskies with nine goals and 14 points.

IDLE

- Bemidji State (9-12-1-1, 29 pts. / 14-13-1)

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 I 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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