



# PRESS RELEASE



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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**MICHIGAN TECH'S COLIN SWOYER AND BLAKE PIETILA,  
BOWLING GREEN'S CONNOR FORD AND BEMIDJI STATE'S LUKAS SILLINGER  
EARN WCHA PLAYER OF THE WEEK HONORS PRESENTED BY ANDERSON'S PURE MAPLE SYRUP**  
*Quartet garners league recognition for games of Feb. 23-27*

**BLOOMINGTON, Minn. – March 1, 2021** – The Men's League of the Western Collegiate Hockey Association is proud to recognize four student-athletes as its Players of the Week, presented by Anderson's Pure Maple Syrup, for the games of Feb. 23-27. Michigan Tech junior **Colin Swoyer** (Defenseman) and sophomore **Blake Pietila** (Goaltender), Bowling Green senior **Connor Ford** (Forward) and Bemidji State freshman forward **Lukas Sillinger** (Rookie) took home this week's honors.

### **WCHA Forward of the Week**

#### **Connor Ford, Sr., Bowling Green (Pittsburgh, Pa.)**

Bowling Green senior forward **Connor Ford** logged two goals in each of the Falcons' two wins over Alabama Huntsville this weekend, accounting for four of the team's nine scores in the series. The Pittsburgh, Pa., native began the series on Wednesday with two goals, including the game-winner. In Sunday's second game, Ford scored the game-tying goal for the Falcons, coming on the power play, before also scoring an empty-netter late in the third period for a four-goal series. This is Ford's third career WCHA weekly honor and his second this season.

*Honorable Mention: **Julian Napravnik, Jr., Minnesota State:*** Tallied team-high three points on a goal and two assists in WCHA series vs. Bemidji State. He scored the game-winning goal in overtime in Thursday's 4-3 win over the Beavers. The goal gives him a team best four game winners for the season and 10 for his three-year Minnesota State career.

### **WCHA Defenseman of the Week**

#### **Colin Swoyer, Jr. Michigan Tech (Hinsdale, Ill.)**

**1 G, 2 A, 3 Pts, 1 PPG, 11 SOG, 9 Blocks**

Michigan Tech's **Colin Swoyer** tied for the WCHA defensemen lead with three points last week. All three points came in the Huskies' sweep of Northern Michigan. Swoyer scored Tech's second goal on the power play Saturday and assisted on the first goal that was also on the power play. The Hinsdale, Ill., native led all WCHA blueliners with 11 shots on goal and was second with nine blocked shots. He was also part of a Tech penalty kill that was 9-for-10 over the week. He ranks second amongst WCHA defenseman with 16 points this season. This is Swoyer's fourth WCHA Defenseman of the Week honor this season.

*Honorable Mention: **Tim Theocharidis, Jr., Bowling Green:*** Tallied a goal and an assist in Bowling Green's come-from-behind win at Alabama Huntsville on Sunday. **Elias Rosén, So., Bemidji State:** Tied for the team lead in scoring with three points on a goal and two assists as the Beavers split a WCHA series with then-No. 3/3 Minnesota State.

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### **WCHA Goaltender of the Week**

#### **Blake Pietila, So., Michigan Tech [Howell, Mich.]**

Michigan Tech's **Blake Pietila** led WCHA goaltenders with three wins and 88 saves last week. The Howell, Mich., native ranked second in the WCHA with a .957 save percentage and 1.32 goals-against average. He stopped 33 shots Tuesday against No. 18/RV Lake Superior State, 28 at home against Northern Michigan on Friday and 27 against the Wildcats in Marquette the following night. The Richter Award finalist leads the WCHA this season with a .939 save percentage and is second with a 1.65 goals-against average. His 14 wins rank fifth nationally. This is Pietila's third WCHA Goaltender of the Week honor this season.

*Honorable Mention:* **Eric Dop, Sr., Bowling Green:** Held Alabama Huntsville scoreless in 87 minutes of play over two contests last week, shutting out the Chargers for 57:09 of Wednesday's contest before giving up the net so senior **Brett Rich** could make his first collegiate appearance on Senior Day at BGSU. Dop came off the bench midway through the contest on Sunday and blanked UAH as the Falcons rallied for the win.

### **Rookie of the Week**

#### **Lukas Sillinger, Fr., F, Bemidji State [Regina, Sask.]**

Bemidji State's **Lukas Sillinger** shared the scoring lead among WCHA freshman last week. In two games he posted a goal and an assist as Bemidji State split a WCHA series with then-No. 3/3 Minnesota State. Both of Regina, Sask., native's points came in BSU's 4-3 overtime victory Saturday. His goal came on the power play early in the second period, while his assist came on BSU's game-winning goal 2:27 into the 3-on-3 frame. Sillinger leads all BSU rookies in scoring with 11 points (5g-6a), is tied for third on the team in goals scored and ranks fourth among all league rookies in scoring. This is first WCHA weekly honor.

*Honorable Mention:* **Anton Malmstrom, Fr., D, Bowling Green:** Scored his first collegiate goal in the Falcons' victory over Alabama Huntsville on Wednesday. **Luke Farthing, Fr., F, Ferris State:** Registered his first collegiate goal and opened the game's scoring for the Bulldogs in Friday's game against Lake Superior State. **Benito Posa, Fr., F, Lake Superior State:** led all WCHA rookies in goals this week with two and was tied for second among his conference peers in points with two. **Brett Thorne, Fr., D, Michigan Tech:** Tied for the WCHA defensemen lead with three points last week, tallying one in each of Tech's contests.

### **About Anderson's Pure Maple Syrup**

Anderson's Maple Syrup Inc. is proud to continue its 90-year tradition of producing, processing, and packaging consistently high-quality pure maple syrup, organic pure maple syrup, and other maple products. For more information, visit [Anderson's Pure Maple Syrup](http://Anderson's Pure Maple Syrup).

### **About the Western Collegiate Hockey Association Men's League**

The Western Collegiate Hockey Association, among the most historic, tradition-rich and successful conferences in all of collegiate athletics, is marking its 69<sup>th</sup> season of men's competition in 2020-21. The 10-team NCAA Division I 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](http://wcha.com).

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