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## **MINNESOTA STATE NAMED 2015-16 WCHA PRESEASON FAVORITE BY LEAGUE COACHES AND MEDIA**

***Defending champs sit atop both polls;  
Alaska's Tyler Morley and Mavericks' Bryce Gervais split Player of the Year votes***

EDINA, Minn. – Sept. 21, 2015 – Minnesota State, the defending MacNaughton Cup and two-time reigning Broadmoor Cup champion, has been tabbed as the favorite to win the men's Western Collegiate Hockey Association (WCHA) 2015-16 regular season conference title in both the Mankato Free Press WCHA Coaches' and the Bemidji Pioneer WCHA Media preseason polls.

The same four schools – Minnesota State (first), Bowling Green (second / third), Michigan Tech (third / second) and Bemidji State (fourth) – finished 1-4 in both the coaches' and media polls, with the Falcons and Huskies flip-flopping in the two rankings.

Minnesota State, which has the most wins (79) of any Division I program over the last three seasons, garnered eight of 10 coaches' first-place votes and 12 of 29 in the media poll. Last season, the Mavericks won the first MacNaughton Cup in program history, finished the regular season atop the national PairWise rankings, advanced to its third straight NCAA tournament and posted the country's best overall winning percentage at .762 (29-8-3).

Bowling Green and Michigan Tech split the two remaining coaches' first-place votes, while the Falcons compiled 79 overall points to the Huskies' 78. MTU garnered nine media first-place votes after a 2014-15 campaign that saw the Huskies ascend to the top of the national polls, win 29 games and advance to its first NCAA tournament since 1981. Bowling Green, which logged eight media first-place votes, had the country's seventh-best winning percentage last year at .654 (23-11-5) and narrowly missed postseason play.

Bemidji State, the consensus preseason pick to earn the WCHA's final home-ice playoff spot, closed the 2014-15 season by going 13-7-5 over its last 25 games – a .620 winning mark that was among the top-15 in the country beginning Nov. 29.

Alaska, Ferris State, Northern Michigan and Alabama Huntsville occupied the same 4-8 spots in both polls, followed by Alaska Anchorage (ninth / tenth) and Lake Superior State (tenth / ninth).

A pair of senior forwards – Alaska's Tyler Morley (coaches) and Minnesota State's Bryce Gervais (media) split the Preseason Player of the Year votes. Morley finished second in the league scoring race last season with 33 points (14 goals, 19 assists) in conference play, while Gervais led the league with 27 goals overall and 20 in WCHA contests.

Ferris State freshman forward Corey Mackin, the Canadian Junior Hockey League’s most valuable player last season for his play with the Coquitlam Express (British Columbia Hockey League), earned the coaches’ nod as WCHA Preseason Rookie of the Year. Media analysts tabbed Bowling Green freshman Stephen Baylis as its Newcomer of the Year, after the forward took home Central Canada Hockey League MVP honors with the Carleton Place Canadians.

### 2015-16 Mankato Free Press WCHA Men’s Hockey Preseason Coaches’ Poll

Rk	Team (1 <sup>st</sup> place votes)	Points
1.	Minnesota State (8)	89
2.	Bowling Green (1)	79
3.	Michigan Tech (1)	78
4.	Bemidji State	61
5.	Alaska	55
6.	Ferris State	51
7.	Northern Michigan	49
8.	Alabama Huntsville	29
9.	Alaska Anchorage	27
10.	Lake Superior State	22

*Predicted order of finish. Based on a 9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1 scale. Coaches could not vote for their own teams.*

#### Preseason WCHA Player of the Year

Tyler Morley, Sr., F, Alaska (7 votes)

*Others receiving votes:* Bryce Gervais, Sr., F, Minnesota State (2); Alex Petan, Sr., F, Michigan Tech (1)

#### Preseason WCHA Rookie of the Year

Corey Mackin, Fr., F, Ferris State (6 votes)

*Others receiving votes:* Stephen Baylis, Fr., F, Bowling Green (2); Max Coatta, Fr., F, Minnesota State (1); Mitch Hults, Fr. F, Lake Superior State (1)

#### Preseason All-WCHA Team

##### Forwards

Tyler Morley, Sr., Alaska; Bryce Gervais, Sr., Minnesota State; Alex Petan, Sr., Michigan Tech

##### Defensemen

Shane Hanna, Jr., Michigan Tech; Casey Nelson, Jr., Minnesota State

##### Goaltender

Jamie Phillips, Sr., Michigan Tech

*Others receiving votes:* Forwards—Brandon Hawkins, So., Bowling Green. Defensemen—Mark Friedman, So., Bowling Green; Brock Maschmeyer, Jr., Northern Michigan. Goaltenders—Carmine Guerriero, Jr., Alabama Huntsville; Olivier Mantha, So., Alaska Anchorage; Mathias Dahlström, Jr., Northern Michigan; Michael Bitzer, So., Bemidji State.

## 2015-16 Bemidji Pioneer WCHA Men's Hockey Preseason Media Poll

Rk	Team (1 <sup>st</sup> place votes)	Points
1.	Minnesota State (12)	265
2.	Michigan Tech (9)	263
3.	Bowling Green (8)	250
4.	Bemidji State	184
5.	Alaska	164
6.	Ferris State	142
7.	Northern Michigan	138
8.	Alabama Huntsville	88
9.	Lake Superior State	54
10.	Alaska Anchorage	47

*Predicted order of finish. Based on a 10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1 scale.*

### Preseason WCHA Player of the Year

Bryce Gervais, Sr., F, Minnesota State (9 votes)

*Others receiving votes:* Alex Petan, Sr., F, Michigan Tech (8 votes); Tyler Morley, Sr., F, Alaska (7); Jamie Phillips, Sr., G, Michigan Tech (1); Carmine Guerriero, Jr., G, Alabama-Huntsville (1); Brad McClure, So., F, Minnesota State (1).

### Preseason WCHA Rookie of the Year

Stephen Baylis, Fr., F, Bowling Green (5 votes)

*Others receiving votes:* Corey Mackin, Fr., F, Ferris State (4); Jake Jackson, Fr., F, Michigan Tech (2); Troy Loggins, Fr., F, Northern Michigan (2); Brett Boeing, Fr., F, Michigan Tech (1); Dillon Eichstadt, Fr., D, Bemidji State (1); Owen Headrick, Fr., D, Lake Superior State (1); Jetlan Houcher, Fr., F, Alabama-Huntsville (1); Nikolas Koberstein, Fr., D, Alaska (1); Jake Lucchini, Fr., F, Michigan Tech (1); Chandler Madry, Fr., F, Minnesota State (1); Jimmy Mullin, Sr. (Transfer), F, Minnesota State (1); Anthony Nellis, Fr., F, Lake Superior State (1); Chad Staley, Fr., F, Alaska (1).

### Preseason All-WCHA Team

#### Forwards

Alex Petan, Sr., Michigan Tech; Bryce Gervais, Sr., Minnesota State; Tyler Morley, Sr., Alaska

#### Defensemen

Casey Nelson, Jr., Minnesota State; Shane Hanna, Jr., Michigan Tech

#### Goaltender

Jamie Phillips, Sr., Michigan Tech

*Others receiving votes:* Forwards—Marcus Basara, Jr., Alaska; Teddy Blueger, Sr., Minnesota State; CJ Franklin, So., Minnesota State; Malcolm Gould, Sr., Michigan Tech; Brendan Harms, Jr., Bemidji State; Brandon Hawkins, So., Bowling Green; Brad McClure, So., Minnesota State; Max McHugh, So., Alabama Huntsville; Matt Robertson, Sr. Ferris State; Blake Tatchell, Sr., Alaska Anchorage. Defensemen—Mark Friedman, So., Bowling Green; Brock Maschmeyer, Jr., Northern Michigan; Matt Roy, So., Michigan Tech; Sean Walker, Jr., Bowling Green; Cliff Watson, Jr., Michigan Tech. Goaltenders— Michael Bitzer, So., Bemidji State; Carmine Guerriero, Jr., Alabama-Huntsville; Mathias Dahlström, Jr., Northern Michigan.

## **Participants**

Justin Bradford, Penalty Box Radio (102.5 FM Nashville); Michael Caples, Michigan Hockey Magazine; Bruce Cech, Alaska radio play-by-play; Brad Coccimiglio, SooToday.com; Dave Danis, Northern Michigan radio play-by-play; Chris Dilks, SB Nation College Hockey; Erik Drygas, Alaska radio color commentary; Drew Evans, BGSUHockey.com; Shane Frederick, Mankato Free Press; Patten Fuqua Penalty Box Radio (102.5 FM Nashville); Kevin Gordon, BGSUHockey.com; Jack Hittinger, The Bemidji Pioneer; Daver Karnosky, Houghton Daily Mining Gazette; Kevin Kurtt, Let's Play Hockey Magazine; Geof Morris, UAHHockey.com; Michael Napier, UAHHockey.com; Tim O'Donnell, Fairbanks Daily News Miner; Justin Prince, Lakeland Public TV sports director; Rob Roos, Sault Ste. Marie Evening News; Jared Shafran, Ferris State radio play-by-play; George Sipple, Detroit Free Press; Ryan Steig, Marquette Daily Mining Journal; Mike Sullivan, Minnesota State radio play-by-play; Scott Theisen, WAFF-TV Huntsville; David Tuttle, Alaska-Anchorage radio play-by-play; John Wagner, Toledo Blade; Scott Williams, Lakeland Sports & KBUN Bemidji; Ryan Zuke, Big Rapids Pioneer.

### ***About Mankato Free Press WCHA Men's Hockey Preseason Coaches' Poll***

The 2015-16 *Mankato Free Press* WCHA Men's Hockey Preseason Coaches' Poll was conducted by Shane Frederick, staff writer, The Free Press Media. ([www.mankatofreepress.com](http://www.mankatofreepress.com); [www.mankatofreepresshockey.blogspot.com](http://www.mankatofreepresshockey.blogspot.com); Twitter/@puckato)

### ***About Bemidji Pioneer WCHA Men's Hockey Preseason Media Poll***

The 2015-16 *Bemidji Pioneer* WCHA Men's Hockey Preseason Media Poll was conducted by Jack Hittinger, staff writer. ([www.bemidjipioneer.com](http://www.bemidjipioneer.com); [www.bemidjipioneer.com/users/jhitt](http://www.bemidjipioneer.com/users/jhitt); Twitter/@jackhitts)

### ***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 64<sup>th</sup> season of men's competition in 2015-16. 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](http://wcha.com).

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