



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **BGSU'S BAYLIS, UAA'S HIEKKAVIRTA, AND LSSU'S MITENS AND VEILLETTE NAMED WCHA PLAYERS OF THE WEEK FOR GAMES OF OCT. 6-7, 2018**

BLOOMINGTON, Minn. – Oct. 8, 2018 – The college hockey season has just begun, and we have already seen a hat trick, a dramatic game-winning goal, some stellar goaltending and impressive debuts. Here are the first men's Western Collegiate Hockey Association (WCHA) Players of the Week for the 2018-19 campaign: Bowling Green State University senior **Stephen Baylis** (Forward), University of Alaska Anchorage junior **Tomi Hiekkavirta** (Defenseman) and a pair from Lake Superior State University – sophomore **Mareks Mitens** (Goaltender) and freshman forward **Pierre-Luc Veillette** (Rookie).

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

#### **Stephen Baylis, Sr., Bowling Green (Ottawa, Ontario)**

Baylis needed just one game to become the nation's top scorer on opening weekend, collecting the first men's D-I hat trick of the season and adding an assist in now-No. 20 Bowling Green's season-opening, 8-2 road win at Mercyhurst. The Falcons' captain set an impressive tone on opening night, assisting on Max Johnson's game-opening goal before turning a 3-0 BGSU lead into a 6-0 advantage with a natural hat trick. Baylis scored at 11:10 and 12:47 of the second period, and then again at 5:47 of the third, for his first career three-goal effort. The senior from Ottawa, Ontario now has three career WCHA weekly awards.

**Honorable Mention: Max Humitz, Jr., F, Lake Superior State** (scored a pair of goals, one being the lone goal of the game Sunday as the Lakers won, 1-0, to complete a road sweep at Merrimack).

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

#### **Tomi Hiekkavirta, Jr., Alaska Anchorage (Helsinki, Finland)**

Hiekkavirta capped a solid individual first weekend with the tie-breaking, game-winning goal with 9:18 remaining Sunday, capping Alaska Anchorage's third-period comeback in a 4-3 victory over Colorado College. The junior from Helsinki, Finland also assisted on the Seawolves' second goal, helping new head coach Matt Curley to his first NCAA Division I victory. Hiekkavirta, who posted a +2 rating despite Saturday's eight-goal loss, finished with three points (1g-2a) to lead WCHA defenseman and tie for second nationally. This is Hiekkavirta's first career WCHA weekly award.

**Honorable Mention: Jacob Nordqvist, Fr., Lake Superior State** (tied for the WCHA rookie lead with two points and two assists, with both coming in the Lakers' 5-4 win Saturday at Merrimack); **Alec Rauhauser, Jr., Bowling Green** (assisted on two of Stephen Baylis' three goals, added two blocked shots and a plus-2 rating in the now-No. 20 Falcons' season-opening, 8-2 win at Mercyhurst).

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

#### **Mareks Mitens, So., Lake Superior State (Ventspils, Latvia)**

One of only three goaltenders with a shutout on opening weekend, and the only to post a clean sheet on the road, Mitens was sensational in Lake Superior State's 1-0, sweep-clinching win Sunday at Merrimack. After not playing Saturday, the sophomore turned aside all 31 shots he faced in the series finale – including 25 after the Lakers scored the game's lone goal 37 seconds into the second period. In fact, Mitens protected the 1-0 lead despite LSSU being outshot 25-12 over the final 39:23. This is the first career WCHA weekly award for the Ventspils, Latvia native.

**Honorable Mention: Ryan Bednard, Jr., Bowling Green** (carried a shutout into the third period and posted 18 saves as the now-No. 20 Falcons rolled to an 8-2, opening night win at Mercyhurst).

### **WCHA Rookie of the Week**

#### **Pierre-Luc Veillette, F, Lake Superior State (Drummondville, Québec)**

Veillette tied for the WCHA rookie lead with two assists and points, collecting a pair of helpers in Lake Superior State's season-opening, 5-4 win at Merrimack. The freshman from Drummondville, Quebec proved to be a special-teams facilitator in his collegiate debut, teaming with fellow rookie Jacob Nordqvist to set up both of Diego Cuglietta's power-play goals. Both came at key times, as the first tied the game 2-2 just six seconds before the first intermission, while the second put the Lakers ahead, 3-2 at 3:58 of the second period.

**Honorable Mention: Tim Theocharidis, D, Bowling Green** (the first shot of his collegiate career proved memorable, as he scored the eventual game-winning goal as the now-No. 20 Falcons opened their season with an 8-2 win at Mercyhurst).

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

The Western Collegiate Hockey Association, among the most historic, tradition-rich and successful conferences in all of collegiate athletics, will proudly mark its 67<sup>th</sup> season of men's competition in 2018-19. 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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