



WCHA WEEKEND PREVIEW: JAN. 8-10, 2015

News and notes for the upcoming weekend of WCHA hockey

- The WCHA has three ranked teams, **including a pair of top-10 entries**, in the first USCHO.com and *USA Today/USA Hockey Magazine* polls of 2015:
 - Minnesota State and Michigan Tech are Nos. 4 and 8, respectively, in both polls, while Bowling Green is No. 11 and No. 14.
- In the PairWise, Minnesota State is second, Bowling Green is fifth and Michigan Tech is 13th.
- Finally, that trio gives the **WCHA three of the top-five winning percentages** in the country:
 - No. 3 Minnesota State (.763, 14-4-1)
 - No. 4 Michigan Tech (.750, 15-5-0) and Bowling Green (.750, 12-3-3).
- The WCHA has **surpassed its entire 2013-14 nonconference victory output**, going 28-26-8.
 - The league's .516 nonconference winning percentage is third best among all conferences, and includes a 13-10-2 mark (.560) against ranked opponents.
- Several WCHA teams are riding extended hot stretches.
 - **Bowling Green is 5-0-2 since Nov. 15 to tie for the nation's longest unbeaten streak.**
 - Bemidji State is unbeaten in its last five games (2-0-3), while Alaska has won four straight contests and is 7-3-0 in its last 10 outings (all in WCHA play).
 - Minnesota State has gone 9-1-1 since Nov. 7.
- **For just the second time this season, all 10 WCHA teams will be involved in league series**, including a pair of longtime rivalries.
 - No. 8 Michigan Tech and Northern Michigan play a home-and-home set, renewing a rivalry that began in 1979.
 - Alabama Huntsville and Bemidji State, a rivalry that extends over two divisions, two conferences and four D-II national championship games, gets its next chapter this weekend at the Sanford Center.
 - Ferris State and Alaska Anchorage get the weekend started with a Thursday-Friday series.
 - Lake Superior State, idle since winning the Florida College Classic, opens the WCHA portion of its 2015 schedule at No. 4 Minnesota State.
 - No. 11/14 Bowling Green hosts Alaska in a matchup of two streaking teams.
- **All 10 WCHA games, spanning all five series, can be viewed live via WCHA.tv.**

-Series previews begin on the next page-

All rankings listed by USCHO.com poll first, followed by *USA Today/USA Hockey Magazine* poll

WCHA

No. 8 Michigan Tech (10-2-0, 20 pts. / 15-5-0) vs. Northern Michigan (5-6-3, 13 pts. / 8-6-4)

Friday, Jan. 9 at Berry Events Center; Marquette, Mich. (7:07 p.m. ET)

Saturday, Jan. 10 at MacInnes Student Ice Arena; Houghton, Mich. (7:37 p.m. ET)

WATCH BOTH GAMES LIVE ON WCHA.TV

- In one of the WCHA's two rivalry week series, No. 8 Michigan Tech and Northern Michigan renew hostilities with a home-and-home set.
- The in-state archrivals, who have waged league contests as part of both the WCHA and CCHA, are an even 33-33-2 in conference games. NMU leads the overall series, 67-52-13, but Tech won three of four contests last year.
- Michigan Tech leads the nation with 15 victories, while ranking tied for fourth for winning percentage (.750), third in scoring defense (1.70 goals allowed per game), third in scoring margin (+1.50) and sixth in penalty kill (89.0 percent).
- Tech senior F **Tanner Kero**, the WCHA's points leader with 24 (8g, 16a), and junior **G Jamie Phillips**, who ranks fifth nationally for both GAA (1.67) and save percentage (.939) are both among the 59 Hobey Baker Award candidates on the initial [fan ballot](#).
- NMU is looking to snap a six-game winless streak, although the Wildcats earned a valuable league point last weekend against Minnesota State.
- Sophomore F **Dominik Shine** leads NMU with 13 points (4g, 9a), while fellow sophomore **Brock Maschmeyer** is the team leader with five goals.

Alabama Huntsville (4-10-0, 8 pts. / 5-14-3) at Bemidji State (3-6-3, 9 pts. / 5-10-3)

Sanford Center; Bemidji, Minn.

Friday, Jan. 9 (7:37 p.m. CT) and Saturday, Jan. 10 (7:07 p.m. CT) – [WATCH LIVE ON WCHA.TV](#)

- The other rivalry series pits Alabama Huntsville against Bemidji State. The two teams, separated by just one point in the WCHA standings, have played 74 times in a storied history that dates back over two conferences and two divisions.
- BSU leads the overall series, 41-29-4. Before becoming charter members of College Hockey America, the schools met four times for the NCAA D-II national championship, with the Beavers (1994 and 1997) and Chargers (1996 and 1998) each winning twice.
- Although BSU hasn't skated since Dec., the Beavers are unbeaten in their last five games (2-0-3) and looking for their first six-game run since an eight-gamer to open the 2009-10 season (7-0-1). UAH is coming off its first-ever WCHA sweep and is 2-0-1 in its last three contests.
- UAH sophomore G **Carmine Guerriero** (58 saves last weekend) is now ninth nationally with a .934 save percentage. Freshman F **MaxMcHugh** leads all WCHA rookies with 15 points (7g, 8a).
- BSU sophomore F **Nate Arentz** has 10 points (6g, 4a) in home games this year, helping the Beavers to a 4-4-1 mark at Sanford Center (3-2-1 in WCHA play).

Ferris State (6-6-0, 12 pts. / 9-11-1) at Alaska Anchorage (2-8-2, 6 pts. / 5-9-4)

Sullivan Arena; Fairbanks, Alaska

Thursday, Jan. 8 and Friday, Jan. 9 (7:07 p.m. AT both nights) – [WATCH LIVE ON WCHA.TV](#)

- Ferris State and Alaska Anchorage kick off the WCHA weekend with a Thursday-Friday series.
- FSU leads the all-time series 6-1-1, including a November sweep in Big Rapids (10-2 and 4-0). UAA's only win came in the first meeting, way back on Dec. 19, 1986.
- The Bulldogs, who have essentially been on a 15-day road trip between the Great Lakes Invitational and its two-week Alaska stay, are looking to snap a four-game losing skid.
- FSU senior G **CJ Motte**, who was a Top Ten Hobey Baker finalist a year ago, is one of 59 nominees on the initial [fan ballot](#) for the 2015 award. Motte is tied for the NCAA lead with four shutouts, while he is also among the national leaders for GAA and save percentage.
- UAA freshman G **Olivier Mantha** has a .924 save percentage, on track to top the school's all-time record (.921, set in 2003-04 by Chris King). Fellow rookie **Jared D'Amico** made 25 saves last weekend in his collegiate debut.

**Lake Superior State (3-11-0, 6 pts. / 4-17-1) at No. 4 Minnesota State (11-2-1, 23 pts. / 14-4-1)
Verizon Wireless Center; Mankato, Minn.**

Friday, Jan. 9 and Saturday, Jan. 10 (7:07 p.m. CT both nights) – WATCH LIVE ON [WCHA.TV](#)

- Lake Superior State opens its 2015 WCHA schedule with a series at No. 4 Minnesota State – the Lakers’ first ever trip to Mankato.
- The Lakers were idle last week after winning the Florida College Classic on Dec. 28 and 29, with a shootout victory over Cornell and a championship game triumph over Notre Dame.
- Minnesota State leads the all-time, two-year series, 4-0-0. The Mavericks have swept a pair of series in Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., including in November (7-0 and 3-0).
- LSSU freshman G **Gordon Defiel** – who earned the Shawn Walsh Memorial Trophy as MVP of the Florida College Classic – leads the nation with 615 saves and is fifth with 1145:13 minutes in net.
- MSU sophomore D **Casey Nelson**, who is riding an eight-game point streak (3g, 8a, 11pts) is tied for third nationally among blueliners with 18 points (5g, 13a) overall.
- Junior F **Bryce Gervais** (fourth in the WCHA with 18 points) and senior stalwarts **Matt Leitner** (third in the league in scoring) and **Jean-Paul Lafontaine** (NCAA’s active leader in power-play goals) are all on the initial Hobey Baker Award [fan ballot](#).

**Alaska (7-7-0, 14 pts. / 12-8-0) at No. 11/14 Bowling Green (8-1-1, 17 pts. / 12-3-3)
BGSU Ice Arena; Bowling Green, Ohio**

Friday, Jan. 9 and Saturday, Jan. 10 (7:07 p.m. ET both nights) – WATCH LIVE ON [WCHA.TV](#)

- No. 11/14 Bowling Green hosts Alaska in a matchup of two of the nation’s hottest teams.
- The Falcons are 5-0-2 since Nov. 15 to tie for the nation’s longest current active winning streak, while their 12-3-3 overall record is their best since 1995-96. The Nanooks are on a four-game winning streak and are 7-3-0 in their last 10 contests.
- Alaska holds a slim 26-25-6 lead in the all-time series. Bowling Green is unbeaten in the last five meetings (3-0-2), including a November sweep in Fairbanks by identical 3-2 scores.
- UAF junior forward **Tyler Morley**, who is second in the WCHA with 20 points (6g, 14a) is among the 59 candidates on the initial Hobey Baker Award [fan ballot](#).
- Nanooks’ sophomore G **Davis Jones** is tied for the NCAA lead with four shutouts.
- BGSU’s penalty kill unit ranks second nationally at 93 percent (66-for-71), while the Falcons have killed off 15-of-15 over the last three games.
- Falcons’ freshman G **Chris Nell**, who has now logged enough minutes to qualify, ranks third nationally with a .945 save percentage and fourth with a 1.65 GAA over his first six starts (5-0-1).

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, proudly marks its 63rd season of men’s competition in 2014-15. Covering five time zones and more than 4,200 miles, 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).

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