



WCHA WEEKEND PREVIEW: FEB. 6-7, 2015

News and notes for the upcoming weekend of WCHA hockey

Opening Face-Off

- **Top-Ranked Mavericks Lead WCHA Top-10 Presence:** Entering the penultimate month of the 2014-15 season, the WCHA has three teams in the top 10 of both opinion polls and the PairWise rankings. Minnesota State leads all three ledgers; maintain its No. 1 ranking in the PairWise, while climbing back into the top spot of both the USCHO.com and *USA Today/USA Hockey Magazine* polls. Michigan Tech is No. 5 in the polls and No. 7 in the PairWise, while Bowling Green is No. 8/9 in the polls but No. 6 in the PairWise.
- **Winning Hockey:** The Mavericks and Huskies are the first two teams in D-I to reach the 20-win plateau this season, while MSU, MTU and BGSU give the WCHA an NCAA-best three of the nation's top 10 winning percentages. Minnesota State's .796 mark (21-5-1) leads the country, Michigan Tech is fifth at .732 (20-7-1) and Bowling Green is tied for seventh at .683 (15-6-5).
- **Bemidji Rising:** Beginning Nov. 29, Bemidji State has the nation's 10th-best winning percentage at .692 (7-2-4), including a 5-0-2 home mark. The Beavers are currently on a four-game unbeaten streak - all against top-10 opponents. BSU boasts four victories overall against top-10 teams, including a season-opening win at No. 2 North Dakota.
- **Nonconference Success:** Entering this weekend's final two regular season out-of-league games, the WCHA has the nation's third-best nonconference winning percentage at .523 (30-27-9). The 28 victories surpass the league's entire 2013-14 output (26-46-12, .381) and includes a 15-10-2 mark (.593) against ranked nonconference opponents.

The Week Ahead

- **Winter Carnival in Houghton:** No. 5 Michigan Tech hosts streaking Bemidji State in the Winter Carnival. The two teams will play for the MacInnes Cup, awarded to the series' total goal winner.
- **First of Two in Ohio:** No. 8/9 Bowling Green and Ferris State will face each other in the next two weekends, beginning this Friday and Saturday in Ohio. The schools will meet Feb. 13-14 in Grand Rapids, Mich.
- **Mavs Continue Homestand:** No. 1 Minnesota State wraps up a two-week homestand by hosting Alaska Anchorage.
- **Lakers Travel to Alaska:** Lake Superior State, which is 4-3-1 in its last seven games, will look to continue its impressive stretch this weekend against the Nanooks in Fairbanks.
- **Final Nonconference Test:** Northern Michigan travels to No. 7 Minnesota Duluth for the WCHA's final two nonconference games of the regular season.

WCHA.tv

- All eight WCHA games this weekend, spanning four series, can be viewed live via [WCHA.tv](http://wcha.tv)

Weekly Release and Plays of the Week

- For the full WCHA weekly release, visit: <http://wcha.com/men/pres1415/201502/feb3wcm.pdf>
- Watch the WCHA Plays of the Week at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Y8x8K1SiEw>

WCHA

Alaska Anchorage (4-12-2, 10 pts. / 7-13-4) at No. 1 Minnesota State (17-2-1, 35 pts. / 21-5-1)

Verizon Wireless Center; Mankato, Minn.

Friday, Feb. 6 and Saturday, Feb. 7 (7:07 p.m. CT both nights) – [WATCH LIVE ON WCHA.TV](#)

- No. 1 Minnesota State, the nation's top-ranked team in the opinion polls and PairWise rankings, wraps up a two-week homestand by hosting Alaska Anchorage. The nation's first 20-win team, MSU is 16-2-1 in its last 19 contests.
- The Mavs own a 40-24-9 lead in the all-time series.
- UAA senior F **Scott Allen** leads the Seawolves with eight goals and 15 points. In net, freshman G **Olivier Mantha** holds a .922 save percentage and is on pace to eclipse the Seawolves' single-season record of .921.
- On the opposite end, junior F **Bryce Gervais** leads the Mavericks with 18 goals, which puts him in a tie for third in the nation as well as atop the WCHA.
- Senior D **Zach Palmquist**, who has played in a school-record 147 consecutive games, is the reigning WCHA Defensive Player of the Week after a three-point weekend.
- MSU leads the nation in wins (21), winning percentage (.796), power play goals (31), goal margin (+46), shot margin (+321), fewest shots on goal allowed per game (21.4) and shots on goal margin per game (+11.9).

Bemidji State (6-8-4, 16 pts. / 10-12-4) at No. 5 Michigan Tech (15-4-1, 31 pts. / 20-7-1)

John J. MacInnes Student Ice Arena; Houghton, Mich.

Friday, Feb. 6 (7:07 p.m. ET) and Saturday, Feb. 7 (5:07 p.m. ET) – [WATCH LIVE ON WCHA.TV](#)

- No. 5 Michigan Tech hosts streaking Bemidji State in the Winter Carnival. The two teams will play for the MacInnes Cup, awarded to the series' total goal winner.
- Bemidji State is unbeaten in four straight games (3-0-1), all against top-10 opponents. The Beavers are also 7-2-4 (.692) since Nov. 29.
- The Huskies are in the top 10 nationally for scoring offense (6th at 3.57gpg), scoring defense (5th at 2.04gpg), power-play efficiency (22.6 pct.), wins (2nd with 20), winning percentage (5th at .732) and scoring margin (2nd at +1.64).
- Junior F **Alex Petan**, who is second nationally with seven game-winning goals this season, has 96 career points. Senior co-captains F **Tanner Kero** and **Blake Pietila** reached the 100-point mark for their careers last weekend.
- A pair of freshmen have been playing their best hockey recently for the Beavers. F **Gerry Fitzgerald** leads the team with three game-winners and G **Michael Bitzer** is 6-2-2 with a 1.29 GAA, .943 save percentage and NCAA-best three shutouts since Dec. 12.
- MTU leads 7-5-4 in a series that got its start Jan. 12, 2007.

Ferris State (8-10-0, 16 pts. / 11-15-1) at No. 8/9 Bowling Green (11-4-3, 25 pts. / 15-6-5)

BGSU Ice Arena; Bowling Green, Ohio

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- No. 8/9 Bowling Green and Ferris State start the first of two back-to-back weekend series, facing off this Friday and Saturday in Ohio. The Bulldogs own a slight 56-55-21 all-time edge.
- The Falcons boast the nation's best penalty kill unit at 93.3 percent (97-for-104) and are 13th nationally in scoring offense (3.08gpg).
- Freshman D **Mark Friedman** has totaled one goal and 10 assists for the Orange and Brown since Dec. 6 – the best point production by any Falcon over that span.
- FSU senior G **CJ Motte** is four wins away from matching school-record holder Mike Brown's all-time mark of 63 victories. He has been nationally commended for his performance, earning candidacy for both the 2015 Hobey Baker award and the Senior CLASS Award, which recognizes excellence on and off the ice.
- Junior F **Matt Robertson** leads the Bulldogs in both points (22) and assists (16). The upperclassman sits at a team-best +9 rating.

Lake Superior State (6-14-0, 12 pts. / 7-20-1) at Alaska (7-12-1, 15 pts. / 12-13-1)

Carlson Center; Fairbanks, Alaska

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- Lake Superior State, which is 4-3-1 in its last seven games, will look to continue its impressive stretch this weekend against Alaska in Fairbanks.
- Leading the Lakers' recent surge, freshman G **Gordon Defiel** has a 1.86 GAA and .949 save percentage (7th nationally) since Dec. 28. Overall this season, the rookie leads all NCAA netminders in saves (826) and shots faced (906).
- Nanooks' junior F **Tyler Morley** leads the Nanooks with 18 assists and 27 points, which also puts him fourth in the WCHA. His 10 power-play assists rank him tied for third in the WCHA.
- The last time the two teams met, UAF took the first game with a wild 7-5 victory, only to see LSSU come back with a 3-2 overtime win the next night. Overall, the Lakers hold a 32-19-6 series lead over the Nanooks.

NON-CONFERENCE

**Northern Michigan (8-8-4, 20 pts. / 11-9-6) at No. 7 Minnesota Duluth (9-6-1, 28 pts. NCHC / 15-10-1)
AMSOIL Arena; Duluth, Minn.**

Friday, Feb. 6 and Saturday, Feb. 7 (7:07 p.m. CT both nights)

- Northern Michigan travels to No. 7 Minnesota Duluth for the WCHA's final two nonconference games of the regular season. So far this season, the Wildcats are 2-1-1 in non-WCHA matchups.
- Junior F **Darren Nowick** and sophomore F **Dominik Shine** lead the Wildcats with 18 points each, both having scored seven goals with 11 assists.
- Sophomore D **Brock Maschmeyer** leads NMU with eight goals so far this season, including a pair of game-winning tallies (2).
- Freshman D **Zach Urban**, who joined the team at the semester's opening, has posted a +6 rating and four points (1g, 3a) in his first nine games.
- Northern Michigan is an even 33-33-4 all-time against Minnesota Duluth, with their last meeting coming in 2010 .

IDLE

- Alabama Huntsville (6-14-0, 12 pts. / 7-18-3)

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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