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WCHA ANNOUNCES 2017-18 COMPOSITE SCHEDULE

Highlights include 140-game quest for the MacNaughton Cup, nonconference tests and return of highly-successful, on-campus 'Battle for the Broadmoor'

EDINA, Minn. – May 4, 2017 – The annual 140-game quest for the MacNaughton Cup, an exciting nonconference schedule that includes four in-season tournaments and the second installment of the league's on-campus, "Battle for the Broadmoor" postseason tournament highlight the 2017-18 composite schedule for the men's Western Collegiate Hockey Association (WCHA), as announced today by league President and Men's Commissioner **Bill Robertson**.

The announced composite schedule for the WCHA's 66th season of competition outlines game dates and opponents (both conference and nonconference) for each of the league's 10 member institutions. Game times, which will follow the :07 and :37 format for league games and nonconference home contests, will be finalized at a later date.

"On behalf of the WCHA Men's League and its member institutions, I am proud to announce our 2017-18 schedule," said Robertson. "WCHA hockey is a special experience for our teams and fans alike. As we saw with another thrilling regular season chase in 2016-17, and especially throughout the on-campus tournament, our league delivers an exciting product – one with exceptional student-athletes and programs, both on and off the ice.

"We are also excited for a top-notch nonconference schedule, including four tournaments and home games with marquee teams from Atlantic Hockey, the Big Ten and the NCHC, along with Arizona State.

"Our member institutions, along with the WCHA Conference Office, cannot wait for the puck to drop on what promises to be a wonderful season, from opening night through the 'Battle for the Broadmoor.'"

Nonconference Schedule

WCHA member institutions have 58 scheduled games against nonconference opponents, while the league can play up to 62 such regular season contests based on results of various tournaments. Twenty-two nonconference games will be hosted at WCHA venues, 27 are true road contests and the remainder will be at neutral sites.

Four league schools will carry the WCHA banner into a quartet of in-season tournaments. Michigan Tech will participate in the Icebreaker Tournament hosted by Minnesota Duluth (Oct. 6-7), before hosting Bowling Green (along with Michigan and Michigan State) in the first Great Lakes Invitational to be held at the new Little Caesars Arena in Detroit, Mich. (dates to-be-announced). Northern Michigan will join

MTU at the Ice Vegas Invitational on Jan. 5-6, where the WCHA rivals will compete against Arizona State and Boston College. Finally, Lake Superior State will play in the Three Rivers Classic in Pittsburgh, Penn. (dates and opponents to-be-announced).

As currently scheduled, the WCHA will face two Atlantic Hockey teams for a total of six games, four Big Ten programs (14 contests, including the GII semifinals), a pair of ECAC Hockey foes (three games, including the Icebreaker semifinal), two Hockey East teams (three games, including the Ice Vegas semifinal), the entire eight-team NCHC for 24 contests and Arizona State in five games (including the Ice Vegas semifinal).

A full breakdown of nonconference opponents and tournaments, by institution:

- Alabama Huntsville – at Notre Dame, vs. Arizona State
- Alaska Anchorage – vs. North Dakota, at Colorado College
- Alaska – vs. Air Force, at St. Cloud State
- Bemidji State – vs./at Minnesota Duluth, vs. Air Force, at Princeton, vs./at North Dakota
- Bowling Green – at/vs. Western Michigan, vs./at Michigan State, vs. Miami, Great Lakes Invitational (Michigan, Michigan State and Michigan Tech)
- Ferris State – at/vs. Western Michigan, at Mercyhurst, at Michigan, at/vs. Michigan State
- Lake Superior State – at Denver, at Michigan State, Three Rivers Classic (opponents TBA)
- Michigan Tech – Icebreaker Tournament (Minnesota, Minnesota Duluth and Union), Great Lakes Invitational (Bowling Green, Michigan and Michigan State), Ice Vegas Invitational (Arizona State, Boston College and Northern Michigan), vs. Arizona State
- Minnesota State – vs./at St. Cloud State, at Boston University, at/vs. Minnesota Duluth
- Northern Michigan – vs. Wisconsin (in Green Bay), at Omaha, Ice Vegas Invitational (Arizona State, Boston College and Michigan Tech)

Additionally, a pair of WCHA rivalry groups will play a nonconference home-and-home series: Alaska Anchorage vs. Alaska (Oct. 20-21) and Lake Superior State vs. Northern Michigan (Oct. 6-7).

League Play

The 140-game chase for the coveted and historic MacNaughton Cup will play out over 19 weekends, beginning Oct. 13-14 when Ferris State hosts Northern Michigan and Lake Superior State welcomes Michigan Tech. There are only four weekends with a full slate of five WCHA series: Nov. 10-11, Dec. 8-9, Feb. 2-3 and when the 2017-18 regular season concludes Feb. 23-24.

Each member institution will play a total of 28 WCHA games (14 at home and 14 on the road). Teams play five other league members four times each and four others two times each.

Among the highlights:

- Defending MacNaughton Cup champion Bemidji State, which led wire-to-wire in 2016-17 (save for the season-opening weekend in which the Beavers did not play), opens its league slate at home Oct. 27-28 vs. Ferris State.
- Michigan Tech welcomes Bowling Green back to the MacInnes Student Ice Arena, site of their epic, double-overtime contest in the 2017 WCHA Championship, for a two-game series Nov. 3-4.
- Minnesota State and Michigan Tech, who have combined to win three of the last four league postseason titles (while sharing the 2015-16 regular season championship), meet for their lone 2017-18 regular season series Oct. 27-28 in Mankato. The Huskies ended the Mavericks' 2016-17 season with a three-game, semifinal-round victory in the WCHA Playoffs.
- Bowling Green, the lone team to win a 2017 WCHA playoff road series when it upset Bemidji State in the semifinals, hosts the Beavers on Dec. 1-2.

- 2017 WCHA quarterfinal round rematches occur between Bemidji State and Northern Michigan (Dec. 8-9 at BSU), Michigan Tech and Lake Superior State (Oct. 13-14 at LSSU and Dec. 15-16 at MTU), Minnesota State and Alaska (Jan. 12-13 at UAF), and Bowling Green and Ferris State (Jan. 6-7 at FSU).
- Alaska Anchorage and Alaska will play in the annual Alaska Airlines Governor’s Cup, facing off in a nonconference home-and-home series (Oct. 20-21), along with league sets Dec. 8-9 in Anchorage and Feb. 23-24 in Fairbanks.
- The Cappel Cup, awarded each year to either Lake Superior State or Northern Michigan, will be decided over a season-opening nonconference series (Oct. 6-7) and a two-game set in Marquette on Jan. 19-20.
- Longtime rivals from their Division II and College Hockey America days, Alabama Huntsville and Bemidji State will renew acquaintances Dec. 29-30 in Bemidji and Jan. 26-27 in Huntsville.
- The Michigan Tech-Northern Michigan series again features a pair of home-and-home sets, with the first coming Nov. 10-11 and the second on the regular season’s final weekend (Feb. 23-24).
- Minnesota intrastate rivals Bemidji State and Minnesota State face off Nov. 10-11 in Bemidji and to wrap up the regular season Feb. 23-24 in Mankato.

2018 WCHA Postseason

Following the tremendous success of the 2017 WCHA tournament, the 2018 “Battle for the Broadmoor” will once again take place on campus. Bringing the singular intensity and passion of playoff college hockey directly to its member institution fans, the WCHA postseason tournament will follow the same eight-team, three-round format, hosted by the highest remaining seeds.

The 2018 “WCHA Playoffs” will consist of four (4) best-of-three, quarterfinal round series hosted by the league’s top four regular-season finishers the weekend of March 2-4, followed by two (2) best-of-three semifinal round series hosted by the highest remaining seeds the weekend of March 9-11. The 2018 “WCHA Championship” will be a single game, hosted by the highest remaining seed, Saturday, March 17.

About the 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 completed its 65th season of men’s competition in 2016-17. 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.

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