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WCHA LANDS 35 PLAYERS IN 2017 NHL DEVELOPMENT CAMPS

Players representing all 10 league schools attend 20 NHL camps

EDINA, Minn. – July 13, 2017 – Marking the next step in their potential professional journeys, 35 players with ties to men’s Western Collegiate Hockey Association (WCHA) programs – including 25 slated to skate in the league this upcoming season – were invited to participate in 2017 National Hockey League (NHL) Development Camps. The group, which represents all 10 league institutions, is involved in camps for 20 NHL clubs.

The 25 players expected to be on 2017-18 WCHA rosters feature 14 underclassmen (seven incoming freshmen and seven sophomores), along with six juniors and five seniors. That group also includes seven NHL draft picks, along with 18 free-agent invitees.

The 2016-17 WCHA alumni to earn invitations, either as draftees or free-agent signings, included league Player of the Year **Michael Bitzer** (Bemidji State / Los Angeles Kings) and Rookie of the Year **Marc Michaelis** (Minnesota State / Minnesota Wild); All-WCHA First Team performers **Gerald Mayhew** (Ferris State / Minnesota) and **Matt Roy** (Michigan Tech / Los Angeles); All-WCHA Second Team selections **C.J. Franklin** (Minnesota State / Winnipeg Jets), **Mitch Hults** (Lake Superior State / Anaheim Ducks), **Shane Hanna** (Michigan Tech / Dallas Stars), **Sean Walker** (Bowling Green / Los Angeles) and **Atte Tolvanen** (Northern Michigan / Nashville Predators); All-WCHA Third Team honorees **Dominik Shine** (Northern Michigan / Detroit Red Wings) and **Mark Friedman** (Bowling Green / Philadelphia Flyers); and, WCHA All-Rookie Team members **Alec Rauhauser** (Bowling Green / Toronto Maple Leafs), **Mitch Reinke** (Michigan Tech / Calgary Flames), **Zach Whitecloud** (Bemidji State / Los Angeles) and **Angus Redmond** (Michigan Tech / Anaheim).

Each of the seven WCHA players who signed NHL contracts following the 2016-17 college season appeared in their respective club’s Development Camp: **Kris Bindulis** (Lake Superior State / Washington Capitals), **Friedman**, **Hults**, **Mason Mitchell** (Alaska Anchorage / Washington), **Chris Nell** (Bowling Green / New York Rangers), **Redmond** and **Roy**. Also invited to camps were Alabama Huntsville’s **Brennan Saulnier** (Montréal Canadiens), along with Alaska blue-liners **Zach Frye** (San Jose Sharks) and **Nikolas Koberstein** (Montréal).

Calgary, Los Angeles and Washington all brought three WCHA-affiliated players to Development Camp. The Stanley Cup champion Pittsburgh Penguins brought 2013 draftee **Dane Birks**, a Michigan Tech junior-to-be, to camp. **Tolvanen**, who set a WCHA Men’s League record (second in NCAA Division I men’s history) with a 339:05 scoreless streak during his sophomore season with Northern Michigan, joined 2016 draftee **Adam Smith** (Bowling Green) with the Western Conference champ Nashville Predators.

The expansion Vegas Golden Knights invited incoming freshmen **Brendan Harris** (Bemidji State) and **Justin Wells** (Bowling Green).

Defending Broadmoor Trophy champion Michigan Tech (eight players) and its WCHA title game opponent, Bowling Green (seven) led the league, followed by Minnesota State with five and Lake Superior State with four. MacNaughton Cup champion Bemidji State had three players in NHL Development Camps, all of whom are expected to wear a Beavers sweater in 2017-18.

WCHA-affiliated players at 2017 NHL Development Camps

Player, Pos.	School	NHL Development Camp	Status (2017-18 Class)
Brennan Saulnier, F	Alabama Huntsville	Montréal Canadiens	Free Agent (Sr.)
Mason Mitchell, F	Alaska Anchorage	Washington Capitals	Signed (Alumnus)
Zach Frye, D	Alaska	San Jose Sharks	Free Agent (Sr.)
Nikolas Koberstein, D	Alaska	Montréal Canadiens	Draft (Jr.)
Michael Bitzer, G	Bemidji State	Los Angeles Kings	Free Agent (Sr.)
Brendan Harris, F	Bemidji State	Vegas Golden Knights	Free Agent (Fr.)
Zach Whitecloud, D	Bemidji State	Los Angeles Kings	Free Agent (So.)
Ryan Bednard, G	Bowling Green	Florida Panthers	Draft (So.)
Mark Friedman, D	Bowling Green	Philadelphia Flyers	Signed (Alumnus)
Chris Nell, G	Bowling Green	New York Rangers	Signed (Alumnus)
Alec Rauhauser, D	Bowling Green	Toronto Maple Leafs	Free Agent (So.)
Adam Smith, D	Bowling Green	Nashville Predators	Draft (Jr.)
Sean Walker, D	Bowling Green	Los Angeles Kings	Signed (Alumnus)
Justin Wells, D	Bowling Green	Vegas Golden Knights	Free Agent (Fr.)
Cameron Clarke, D	Ferris State	Boston Bruins	Draft (So.)
Gerald Mayhew, F	Ferris State	Minnesota Wild	Signed (Alumnus)
Tyler Anderson, D	Lake Superior State	Washington Capitals	Free Agent (Fr.)
Kris Bindulis, D	Lake Superior State	Washington Capitals	Signed (Alumnus)
Mitch Hulst, F	Lake Superior State	Anaheim Ducks	Signed (Alumnus)
Mareks Mitens, G	Lake Superior State	New York Islanders	Free Agent (Fr.)
Mark Auk, D	Michigan Tech	Edmonton Oilers	Free Agent (Sr.)
Dane Birks, D	Michigan Tech	Pittsburgh Penguins	Draft (Jr.)
Shane Hanna, D	Michigan Tech	Dallas Stars	Signed (Alumnus)
Jake Jackson, F	Michigan Tech	San Jose Sharks	Draft (Jr.)
Jake Lucchini, F	Michigan Tech	Edmonton Oilers	Free Agent (Jr.)
Angus Redmond, G	Michigan Tech	Anaheim Ducks	Signed (Alumnus)
Mitch Reinke, D	Michigan Tech	Calgary Flames	Free Agent (So.)
Alex Smith, F	Michigan Tech	Calgary Flames	Free Agent (So.)
Walker Duehr, F	Minnesota State	New York Rangers	Free Agent (Fr.)
C.J. Franklin, F	Minnesota State	Winnipeg Jets	Draft (Sr.)
Connor Mackey, D	Minnesota State	Calgary Flames	Free Agent (Fr.)
Marc Michaelis, F	Minnesota State	Minnesota Wild	Free Agent (So.)
Jared Spooner, F	Minnesota State	Winnipeg Jets	Free Agent (Fr.)
Dominik Shine, F	Northern Michigan	Detroit Red Wings	Signed (Alumnus)
Atte Tolvanen, G	Northern Michigan	Nashville Predators	Free Agent (Jr.)

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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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