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WCHA ANNOUNCES 2018-19 COMPOSITE SCHEDULE

Highlights include 140-game quest for the MacNaughton Cup, nonconference tests and the third-consecutive on-campus WCHA Postseason Tournament

BLOOMINGTON, Minn. – May 9, 2018 – The annual 140-game quest for the historic MacNaughton Cup, an exciting nonconference schedule and the third installment of the league’s on-campus postseason tournament highlight the 2018-19 composite schedule for the Men’s League of the Western Collegiate Hockey Association (WCHA), as announced today by Association President and Men’s League Commissioner **Bill Robertson**.

The composite schedule for the WCHA’s 67th season of competition outlines game dates and opponents (league and nonconference) for 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 later.

“On behalf of the WCHA Men’s League and its member institutions, I am proud to announce our 2018-19 schedule,” said Robertson. “With the always-exciting MacNaughton Cup chase, a top-notch nonconference schedule and the unique thrill of our on-campus playoffs, we look forward to delivering a special experience for our teams and fans alike. We cannot wait to welcome everyone back to WCHA rinks next season!”

League Play

The 140-game chase for the coveted MacNaughton Cup will play out over 17 weekends, beginning with four WCHA sets the weekend of Oct. 26-27. There are six weekends that feature a full slate of five league series: Dec. 7-8, Jan. 3-5, Jan. 11-12, Jan. 25-26, Feb. 22-23 and when the 2018-19 regular season concludes March 1-2.

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 Minnesota State begins the quest for its fourth title in five seasons when it hosts Alaska on Oct. 26-27. Other sets that opening weekend of WCHA play feature Alabama Huntsville hosting Lake Superior State, Ferris State welcoming Alaska Anchorage and Bemidji State traveling to Northern Michigan.

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- Michigan Tech, which went 5-1 on the road to win the 2018 WCHA Postseason Tournament, returns to 2018 quarterfinal-round opponent Bemidji State on Jan. 18-19 and semifinal-round foe Minnesota State on Jan. 4-5. The Huskies are back at the Berry Events Center in Marquette for a championship game rematch with Northern Michigan on Dec. 7 and again March 2, parts of home-and-home sets between the Upper Peninsula rivals.
- In addition to their series Jan. 4-5 in Mankato, the Huskies and Mavericks – who have combined to win four of the last five WCHA postseason titles – meet Feb. 8-9 in Houghton.
- Northern Michigan and Bowling Green, which met in a thrilling, three-game 2018 WCHA semifinal-round series (won by the Wildcats), meet Nov. 2-3 in Ohio and Feb. 1-2 in Marquette.
- Alaska Anchorage and Alaska will play in the annual Alaska Airlines Governor’s Cup, facing off in a nonconference home-and-home series (Oct. 19-20), along with league sets Feb. 8-9 in Fairbanks and March 1-2 in Anchorage.
- The Cappel Cup, awarded each year to the winner of the Lake Superior State vs. Northern Michigan series, will be decided over a total of four games Nov. 23-24 in Sault Ste. Marie and Feb. 22-23 in Marquette.
- Longtime rivals from their Division II and College Hockey America days, Alabama Huntsville and Bemidji State will renew acquaintances for a single series Dec. 7-8 in Bemidji.
- The final weekend of the regular season, which annually factors in the outcome of multiple WCHA postseason races, features the Alaska (UAF at UAA) and UP rivalries (NMU at MTU, followed by MTU at NMU), along with Alabama Huntsville at Bowling Green, Ferris State at Lake Superior State and Bemidji State at Minnesota State.

Nonconference Schedule

WCHA member institutions have 63 scheduled regular season games against nonconference opponents (with two more possible depending on outcomes of the Great Lakes Invitational semifinals), all of which will be played before the second half of the league schedule begins the weekend of January 3-5. Twenty-five (25) nonconference games will be hosted at WCHA venues, 32 are true road contests and the remaining six (or eight) will be played at neutral sites.

Four league schools will carry the WCHA banner into a trio of holiday season tournaments. Michigan Tech will host Lake Superior State (along with Michigan and Michigan State) in the Great Lakes Invitational at Detroit’s Little Caesars Arena. Minnesota State will participate in the Desert Hockey Classic (hosted by Arizona State), while Alabama Huntsville will compete at the TD Bank Catamount Cup (hosted by Vermont). Dates and matchups for all three tournaments will be announced later.

As currently scheduled, the WCHA will face three Atlantic Hockey teams for a total of seven games, five Big Ten programs for 12 contests (including the GLI semifinals), a pair of ECAC foes (four games), two Hockey East teams (six games), seven NCHC opponents (24 games) and Arizona State (at least four contests). Totals will change depending on as yet-to-be announced tournament opponents and results.

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

- Alabama Huntsville – at Miami, at Colorado College (single game), at Denver (single game), vs. Arizona State, at TD Bank Catamount Cup (hosted by Vermont; matchups and other opponents TBA)
- Alaska Anchorage – vs. Colorado College, at North Dakota
- Alaska – at Arizona State, vs. St. Cloud State
- Bemidji State – vs./at North Dakota, vs. Merrimack, at St. Cloud State, at Air Force

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- Bowling Green – at Mercyhurst (single game), at/vs. Western Michigan, at/vs. Robert Morris, at/vs. Ohio State
- Ferris State – vs./at Western Michigan, vs. Mercyhurst, at/vs. Michigan State
- Lake Superior State – at Merrimack, vs. Michigan, Great Lakes Invitational (Michigan, Michigan State and Michigan Tech; semifinal matchups TBA)
- Michigan Tech – vs. Minnesota Duluth, at Wisconsin, at Clarkson, Great Lakes Invitational (Lake Superior State, Michigan and Michigan State; semifinal matchups TBA)
- Minnesota State – vs. Boston University, at North Dakota, at/vs. Minnesota, at Desert Hockey Classic (Arizona State, Clarkson, Minnesota Duluth; semifinal matchups and location TBA)
- Northern Michigan – at Michigan State, at St. Cloud State, vs. Cornell

Additionally, WCHA rivals Alaska Anchorage and Alaska will play a nonconference home-and-home series Oct. 19-20 (with the Friday contest in Anchorage and Saturday's in Fairbanks).

2019 WCHA Postseason Tournament

The last two seasons have produced epic WCHA Championship moments and vivid scenes of double-overtime winners and underdog triumphs – all before frenzied, capacity crowds in hometown rinks. Once again in 2019, the WCHA will bring the singular intensity and passion of playoff college hockey directly to its member institution fans with an eight-team, three-round tournament hosted on-campus by the highest remaining seeds.

The 2019 “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 8-10, followed by two (2) best-of-three semifinal-round series hosted by the highest remaining seeds the weekend of March 15-17. The 2019 “WCHA Championship” will be a single game, hosted by the highest remaining seed, Saturday, March 23.

The postseason tournament winner will receive an automatic bid to the 2019 NCAA Division I Men’s Ice Hockey Championship and the Jeff Sauer WCHA Championship Trophy, presented by [Anderson’s Pure Maple Syrup](#).

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, will proudly mark its 67th 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 Fairbanks (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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