Hockey Commissioners’ Association

For Immediate Release:
April 8, 2011

KYLE SCHMIDT OF MINNESOTA DULUTH IS THE DEREK HINES UNSUNG HERO AWARD WINNER

MADISON, Wis. — The Hockey Commissioners’ Association (HCA) today announced that University of Minnesota Duluth senior forward Kyle Schmidt is the recipient of the fifth annual Derek Hines Unsung Hero Award.

The award was established by the HCA in honor of former Army player Derek Hines, who was a “consummate team player and team builder.” Hines played at Army from 1999-2003 and was a four-year letterwinner as well as a co-captain his senior season. He was killed in the line of duty in Afghanistan in September 2006.

“Although I never knew Derek or ever saw him compete, he sounds like the kind of player I have always strived to be,” Schmidt said. “It is a tremendous privilege for me to be selected for an award named in his honor. Over the past four years, I have been blessed in so many ways while being part of one of the best hockey programs in the country. Receiving the Derek Hines Award certainly is at the top of that list of blessings.”

The senior forward is enjoying his most productive season as a Bulldog in 2010-11. He has established career highs for assists (11), power-play goals (three) and total points (20), despite being sidelined seven games around midseason, while nursing an injured hand. Schmidt also netted the game-winning goal in the Bulldogs’ opening game of the NCAA Tournament, paving the way for UMD to earn a spot in the 2011 NCAA Men’s Frozen Four after knocking off top-seeded Yale to capture the East Regional.

“Kyle’s been a great representative of our program both off and on the ice,” UMD head coach Scott Sandelin said. “To me, he’s the consummate student-athlete, someone who has an undeniable commitment to hockey, academics and the community. I have enjoyed working with Kyle during his time at UMD and am thrilled to see him being recognized with this award.”

Schmidt, a statistics and actuarial science major, owns a 3.70 overall GPA and is one of only two Bulldogs to be a three-time WCHA Scholar-Athlete Award winner. He has qualified for the School of Science and Engineering dean’s list three times and has earned a spot on the UMD Athletic Academic Support Center Scholar List for maintaining the highest cumulative grade-point average of any Bulldog as both a freshman and sophomore. Schmidt has also made the WCHA All-Academic Team on three occasions, and has been a member of the UMD Actuary Club and a tutor at the UMD Tutoring Center since arriving on campus.

For his efforts in the community and on the ice, Schmidt was selected by fans in an online voting contest as the winner of the Stauber Brothers Minnesota Duluth Fan Favorite Award this season. The first three recipients of the award went on to play in the National Hockey League, while last year’s winner, Jack Connolly, is an All-American.

Each of the five NCAA Division I hockey conferences submitted a nominee for the award that goes to the student-athlete who personifies Hines’ spirit and relentless commitment. The winner was chosen by sports information directors from the five conferences.

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Derek Hines Unsung Hero Award Winner
Kyle Schmidt, SR, F, Minnesota Duluth, WCHA

Honorable Mention
Chris Barton, SR, F, Merrimack, HEA
John Kennedy, SR, D, RPI, ECAC
Bryant Molle, SR, D, Alaska, CCHA
David Ross, SR, F, Niagara, AHA

Past Winners
2010 — Jordan Pietrus, F, Brown, ECAC
2009 — Mike Phillipich, F, Air Force, AHA
2008 — Chase Podsiad, D, Army, AHA
2007 — Dan Shribman, F, Dartmouth, ECAC

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