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WCHA Women's Teams

Bemidji State University
University of Minnesota
University of Minnesota Duluth
Minnesota State University
University of North Dakota
Ohio State University
St. Cloud State University
University of Wisconsin

Home of a Record 14 Consecutive National Championship Teams

2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013

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16 Current and Former WCHA Players to Go for Gold in 2014 Olympic Winter Games Team USA Roster Features 11 Former WCHA Players While Team Canada has Five; 34 Current and Former League Players Competed in Sochi, Russia

MADISON, Wis. – The women's Western Collegiate Hockey Association will have 16 current and former players fighting for the gold medal Thursday (Feb. 20) when Team Canada faces Team USA in the championship game of the women's ice hockey competition in the 2014 Olympic Winter Games in Sochi, Russia. The game will be televised live at 11 am CT on NBC.

Three WCHA teams – Minnesota, Wisconsin and North Dakota – have players on the USA Roster. The roster for the United States team includes 11 current and former players from the WCHA. All 21 members of the squad have college ties and every player has competed in an IIHF Women's World Championship, including 18 who captured a gold medal last April to propel the United States to the No. 1 ranking in the world.

Three WCHA teams – Minnesota Duluth, Wisconsin and Ohio State – have former players on Team Canada, the defending Olympic champion. They are forward Natalie Spooner of Ohio State, defenseman Meghan Mikkelsen of Wisconsin, Jocelyne Larocque of Minnesota Duluth and former UMD forwards Haley Irwin and Caroline Ouellette, the Canadian captain.

Overall there were 34 current and former WCHA players who competed in the Winter Olympics in Sochi, including Minnesota Duluth with 11 players, Minnesota with seven, North Dakota with six, Wisconsin with five, Ohio State with three and Minnesota State with two. There are five current and former WCHA players who will compete in the bronze medal game between Sweden and Switzerland Thursday at 6 am CT. That game will be televised by NBC Sports Network.

Five current and former Gophers are on Team USA – Megan Bozek, Amanda Kessel, Gigi Marvin, Anne Schleper and Lee Stecklein. Marvin is the lone Olympic veteran among the Gopher representatives. The other Gophers Olympians all were a part of the unbeaten team which won the NCAA championship last season. Marvin is one of 11 USA athletes with Olympic experience, and Stecklein is the youngest player on the roster. Kessel and Stecklein have college eligibilities remaining.

Four former Badgers are on the U.S. Olympic squad. They are forwards Brianna Decker, Meghan Duggan, who has been named team captain, and Hilary Knight, along with goaltender Jessie Vetter. It marks the second Olympic Games for Duggan, Knight and Vetter as the trio played for UW head coach Mark Johnson in the 2010 Olympics, while Decker will make her Olympic debut. Decker, Duggan and Vetter all took home the Patty Kazmaier Memorial Award, given to the nation's top player, at some point during their Wisconsin careers, while Knight is the all-time leading scorer in school history. Vetter and Duggan each won three national championships while at Wisconsin, while Knight was a part of two national championship teams and Decker was a member of the 2011 national championship squad.

Former North Dakota players Monique and Jocelyne Lamoureux are also on Team USA. It is the second Olympic Winter Games for the Lamoureux twins, who played in their first Olympics winning silver with the U.S. in 2010 in Vancouver.

Along with the Lamoureuxs, UND also had three current players that played in the 2014 Games. Forwards Michelle Karvinen and Susanna Tapani were key members of Team Finland, while defenseman Tanja Eisenschmid played for Germany. Former UND defenseman Susanne Fellner also played for Team Germany.



Minnesota had seven players in Sochi, the five on Team USA and Finnish teammates goalie Noora Rätty, an all-American collegian last season, and defenseman Mira Jalouso. Wisconsin has five players – the USA quartet will be playing against Mikkelsen, who won two national titles while at Wisconsin and was named the 2007 WCHA Defensive Player of the Year.

Minnesota Duluth had 11 current and former players on six teams in Sochi. Irwin, Larocque and Ouellette have been stalwarts for Team Canada, although Irwin missed some games with an injury. Both forwards, Irwin and Ouellette, played on Team Canada's gold medalists in 2010 in Vancouver. Ouellette is a three-time gold medalist for Canada (2010, 2006, 2002), while Larocque, an all-American defenseman, was one of the last players cut from the 2010 Canada Olympic squad after she was centralized for the first part of the 2009-10 NCAA season. After returning to UMD in January, she helped lead the Bulldogs to their fifth NCAA title that March.

Current Bulldog freshman defenseman Lara Stalder will play for a bronze medal with Team Switzerland Thursday against UMD alums defenseman Jenni Asserholt, goaltender Kim Martin Hansson and forward Pernilla Winberg who are all skating with Team Sweden. Ex-Bulldogs Alexandra Vafina and Iya Gavrilova played for the host team Russia, current Minnesota Duluth blueliner Tea Villila skated for Team Finland and former Bulldog goalie Jennifer Harss was on Germany's Olympic squad.

In addition to Spooner, Ohio State had two others alums in Sochi – forwards Minttu Tuominen and Emma Terho (Laaksonen) who played on Team Finland.

Minnesota State has two alums at the Games. Nina Tikkinen played for the Finnish team and fellow alum Emilia Andersson is on the Swedish team which is still hoping for a bronze medal.