



# PRESS RELEASE

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## A HAPPY OFFSEASON FOR HOCKEY EAST

### *Former Terrier selected as Bruins' head coach*

There was plenty to talk about for Hockey East fans even after the final buzzer sounded on the 2002-03 season. The best news came in the recovery of Merrimack goaltender **Joe Exter**, who sustained a serious head injury as the result of a frightening collision during the Hockey East tournament. With his return to health serving as a pleasant backdrop, Hockey East was able to celebrate reaching the 1,000,000 plateau for the first time, drawing just over a million fans to 215 games throughout the region and country during the 2002-03 season.

Following one season as an assistant coach with the men's team at his alma mater, Northeastern, **Tom Mutch** was selected to lead the Boston College women's team. He brings nine years of coaching experience to the BC bench, including two as an assistant with the U.S. women's Olympic team that won the gold medal in 1998.

Boston College men's head coach Jerry York will be inducted into the Bowling Green Hall of Fame on September 12. York led his former team to the NCAA championship in 1984 and repeated the feat with BC in 2001.

In the NHL ranks, former Terrier **Mike Sullivan** became the first former Hockey East player to be named a head coach at hockey's highest level when the Bruins tabbed him as their No. 1 man for next season. However, Sullivan is just one of six NHL head coaches that played college hockey at one of Hockey East's nine member institutions. The other five played before Hockey East was founded in 1983.

New Jersey Devils **Brian Gionta** and **Jay Pandolfo** gave the Stanley Cup another BC-BU connection when they outlasted fellow former Hockey East players **Keith Carney**, **Paul Kariya** and **Jason Krog** of the Anaheim Mighty Ducks in the final series, four games to three. Kariya provided the most memorable moment of the playoffs when he battled back from a devastating hit by the Devils' Scott Stevens to score a critical goal in Game Six. But it was Gionta and Pandolfo that took home the big prize, the Stanley Cup. It was a first for Gionta, just two years removed from the 2001 NCAA championship. Pandolfo, who also won an NCAA title, in 1995, added Cup No. 2 to his expansive trophy case.

As always, Hockey East had a strong showing at the NHL Entry Draft. Five current and 13 incoming Hockey East players were chosen, headlined by first rounders **Brian Boyle** (26th overall) and **Patrick Eaves** (29th overall), both slated for the 2003-04 BC roster.

The USA Hockey Women's National Festival is currently taking place in Lake Placid, N.Y., and plenty of Hockey East talent is in attendance. A total of 13 players who played in Hockey East's inaugural women's season are taking part in the festival, eight of whom have been united on the Red Team, co-coached by Northeastern skipper **Joy Woog**. UConn's **Heather Linstad** is a co-coach on the White Team. The Blue Team, the women's Under-22 Select Team, will be competing in a three-game exhibition series against Canada on August 20-23 in Pierrefonds, Quebec. **Meredith Roth** and **Rush Zimmerman** of Providence College join UNH's **Kristen Thomas** on that squad.

In offseason league office news, **John Gallagher** was named the Supervisor of Officials for the women's league, taking over for Brendan Sheehy, who will stay on as the men's league supervisor. Gallagher had served for three years in the same capacity for the ECAC Division-I Men's League before accepting the position with Hockey East. The league also welcomed Superskills Hockey Program to the family, signing the development program on as a Hockey East partner.