



Weekend Preview

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IT'S HOCKEY EAST VS. WCHA AGAIN North Dakota series at UNH highlights weekend action

Two frequent Frozen Four participants go head-to-head this weekend, while two 2006 NCAA tournament hopefuls also trade blows as the rivalry between Hockey East and the WCHA writes another early season chapter.

In nine of the past 10 seasons, the Frozen Four has included one of either UNH or North Dakota. Amazingly, they haven't been to the same Frozen Four in that span, alternating appearance years. And despite both appearing in the Frozen Four in 1979 and 1982, and boasting a combined 79 NCAA tournament games, these two have never met in the postseason.

They've met 11 times in the regular season, however, and North Dakota holds a commanding 8-2-1 series edge, bolstered mostly by seven straight wins during the WCHA-Hockey East crossover years of 1984 to 1989. The last two meetings, in 1999 and

2000, produced a win and a tie for the Wildcats. North Dakota already has two wins vs. Hockey East under its belt this season, sweeping a home series vs. Northeastern last weekend. But Hockey East evened the equation when Maine took out second-ranked Denver on back-to-back nights.

Vermont's title in the Nye Frontier Classic, wins over Michigan Tech and Alaska-Anchorage, gives Hockey East the early advantage in the interconference rivalry. Minnesota Duluth will look to strike back against the Catamounts with two games in Burlington this weekend. Frozen Four participants in 2004, the Bulldogs dropped to below .500 last year and missed the NCAA tournament. Vermont barely missed its own opportunity but is focusing on cashing in in its first season as a member of Hockey East.

Non-conference play will be the order of the day for the second weekend in a row, as BU, Maine, UMass and Merrimack all host teams with outside affiliations. But Hockey East play always takes precedence, and a home-and-home series between Providence and UMass Lowell takes center stage this weekend. A hotly contested three-game series last year yielded overtime wins for each club with the rubber match a 2-0 shutout victory for the River Hawks in mid-February.

Also on the league register is a visit for

Boston College to Northeastern, renewing the Beanpot rivalry. The Huskies have had some trouble containing the Eagles in recent seasons, having been outscored 91-42 over their last 21 meetings, an 18-2-1 run for Boston College. But the Huskies have shown ways to make this interesting, as evidenced by their last win, a 3-0 blanking in early January 2004. The victory was the first Hockey East win of the year for NU, which started 0-7-1 in league play, and abruptly halted a 10-0-2 undefeated streak for BC.

In alumni news, former UNH sniper Colin Hemingway made his NHL debut last night, helping the St. Louis Blues topple Anaheim, 3-2. A week ago, 2004-05 Hockey East Player of the Year Patrick Eaves debuted with the Ottawa Senators, playing on a line with well-known NHLers Daniel Alfredsson and Bryan Smolinski.

RANKINGS

Team	USAT	USCHO
Maine	5	5
Boston College	7	6
Boston University	11	12
New Hampshire	12	11
Vermont	14	15
UMass Lowell	–	ORV
Massachusetts	–	ORV

ORV – others receiving votes

WEEKEND SCHEDULE

Friday, October 21

UMass Lowell at Providence *
 Connecticut at Merrimack
 Rensselaer at Boston University
 Alabama-Huntsville at Maine (WABI)
 Holy Cross at Massachusetts #
 Minnesota Duluth at Vermont (Adelphia)
 North Dakota at UNH (CSTV - 8pm)

Saturday, October 22

Providence at UMass Lowell *
 Boston College at Northeastern *
 Connecticut at Merrimack
 Alabama-Huntsville at Maine
 Minnesota Duluth at Vermont #
 North Dakota at UNH (NHPTV)

* Hockey East game

Commissioners Cup series

Games start at 7pm unless indicated.

All game times are Eastern Time.

HOCKEY EAST STANDINGS

Team	GP	W	L	T	Pts	Overall	Offense	Defense
Boston University	1	1	0	0	2	1-0-0	3.00 GPG	1.00 GAPG
Boston College	0	0	0	0	0	1-1-0	5.50 GPG	4.50 GAPG
Maine	0	0	0	0	0	3-1-0	3.50 GPG	1.75 GAPG
Massachusetts	0	0	0	0	0	1-1-0	2.50 GPG	2.00 GAPG
Merrimack	0	0	0	0	0	1-1-0	2.50 GPG	5.50 GAPG
New Hampshire	0	0	0	0	0	1-1-0	3.50 GPG	3.50 GAPG
Northeastern	0	0	0	0	0	0-2-0	0.50 GPG	4.00 GAPG
Providence	0	0	0	0	0	0-2-0	2.50 GPG	5.00 GAPG
Vermont	0	0	0	0	0	2-0-0	3.00 GPG	1.50 GAPG
UMass Lowell	1	0	1	0	0	1-2-0	2.67 GPG	4.00 GAPG