



# **HOCKEY EAST COACHES MEDIA TELECONFERENCE TRANSCRIPTS NOVEMBER 11, 2008**

**HEAD COACH JERRY YORK- BOSTON COLLEGE  
HEAD COACH JACK PARKER- BOSTON UNIVERSITY  
HEAD COACH TIM WHITEHEAD- MAINE  
HEAD COACH DON CAHOON- MASSACHUSETTS  
HEAD COACH BLAISE MacDONALD- UMASS-LOWELL  
HEAD COACH MARK DENNEHY- MERRIMACK  
HEAD COACH DICK UMILE- NEW HAMPSHIRE  
HEAD COACH GREG CRONIN- NORTHEASTERN  
HEAD COACH TIM ARMY- PROVIDENCE COLLEGE  
HEAD COACH KEVIN SNEDDON- VERMONT**



## **HOCKEY EAST COACHES MEDIA TELECONFERENCE (NOV. 11, 2008)**

### **BOSTON COLLEGE HEAD COACH JERRY YORK QUOTES**

#### ***On the difficulty within Hockey East:***

“I thought Northeastern was very good when we played them at Matthews Arena. Vermont is a difficult team. I think both Northeastern and Vermont have a chance to compete for our league championship ... Merrimack is probably the most improved team of the Hockey East opponents that we’ve played. We were very fortunate to get out of last weekend with them, especially up at Merrimack, where we go again this Friday. Then there are the usual suspects. New Hampshire will surely be an outstanding team. BU looks like they’re playing at the top of their game. It’s not untypical of Hockey East, but there are probably more teams in the top 10 than we’ve had recently.”

#### ***On BC’s special teams:***

“Special teams kind of run hot and cold. It’s hard to maintain great penalty-killing or a great power play for a long time. We weren’t real crisp in our entries. We had a lot of teams icing the puck against us. We’ve had a lot of shots blocked. We’ve got to move pucks quicker and get something on the goaltender. The two (power play) goals that were scored against us were shot-rebound scores – one by Notre Dame and one by Maine. I think entry into the zone and more crispness on our passing to open up a shot and shooting the thing when you get a chance to are key for us. We’re passing up some good chances. That’s what jumps at me. It’s very disappointing for our whole offense and particularly our offense this weekend.”

#### ***On the weekend coming up, one in which you conclude your regular-season series with Merrimack and you open your series with traditional-rival UNH on Saturday:***

“Merrimack is much improved. They’re conservative defensively and make it hard to get to the net. They’re bigger and I think they’re stronger this year. They got great play from Joe Cannata last week against us and Andy Braithwaite is coming off a nice upset of UMass, so I think Mark (Dennehy) has two strong goaltenders.

“New Hampshire we haven’t had the chance to play yet this year, but I’ve watched them on tape a few times. I actually watched the Minnesota (vs. UNH) overtime game and they get up and down the rink very well. They look like they’re pretty solid in goal again ... they look like they’re another team that’s going to compete for a championship.”

#### ***On having a bullseye on your jersey because the team is coming off a national title:***

“I think that last year is last year and the rivalries within our league and the national scope have been pretty similar over the last decade or so. Teams compete hard. I think for BC, when it comes into the house, I don’t think many teams are thinking that it’s going to be easy. So, they’re ready play and they’re ready to play hard so we’re getting great efforts from other clubs. There is nothing wrong with that. It forces us to match the intensity level or surpass it. If we don’t do that, whether it’s Merrimack or New Hampshire or UMass like we have next weekend, I expect those teams to play very well against us. I think that’s the only way to go into these types of games.”

## **HOCKEY EAST COACHES MEDIA TELECONFERENCE (NOV. 11, 2008)**

### **BOSTON UNIVERSITY HEAD COACH JACK PARKER QUOTES**

#### ***General Comments on the season so far:***

“I think we’ve played well up to this point, obviously. We’re 6-1 and we’ve beat some pretty good teams. Up until our last game, I thought we’ve were playing very, very thorough. I don’t think we played very thorough against UMass Lowell and I don’t think that they did either – it wasn’t a very well-played game. I thought we took a little dip and we were fortunate to win that game. Whoever won that game didn’t deserve it, I think, the way the game played out. As it turned out, we got the ‘W’. I hope we can get that mistake-ridden type of game out of our system and get back to thorough hockey again.”

#### ***On the strength of Hockey East this year from top to bottom:***

“It doesn’t matter if you’re rated down in the pack a little bit in this league because anybody can beat anybody. I think what separates this league – for a long, long time – from every other league is the fact is that it’s so strong from top to bottom. What makes it different this year is that everybody is strong compared to the other leagues. We’re in a situation where people ask me “do you like your team?” and I tell them that I like our team a lot, but the problem is I like every other team in our league, too.”

“I saw UMass play in our tournament (Ice Breaker) at the beginning of the year with North Dakota and Michigan State. I thought they played terrifically well in both games and should have won both. They split, but they played real well. I’ve seen them on tape and they’re playing very, very well, obviously, and that was a team that was picked a little bit farther down. You’ve got Maine that just beat BC. They have so many new players that we didn’t know where they going to be, but obviously they’ve bounced back pretty quickly. We’ve played Merrimack and beat them in a real close game – much closer than the score indicated – and obviously they had a pretty good night against UMass.”

“Teams that were rated to be down in the lower echelon are as good as anybody in this league, and the teams in the upper echelon of our league are as good as anybody in nation. I would have to say that from a historical point this is the best league that we’ve ever had from top to bottom – vis a vis ourselves and vis a vis the rest of the nation, as well.”

#### ***On BU’s upcoming weekend games with UMass and Northeastern:***

“First of all, I think that both of these clubs will absolutely be in the running for home ice berths with us and some other clubs down the stretch. Any league game is important, but when you’re playing teams that you’re hoping you can stay ahead of or keep close to for the home-ice fight, you want to play well. I don’t think there’s any question that these two teams are very, very capable of not just earning home ice, but winning the league, as far as I can see. They will be real battles – no question.”

“You add to the fact that UMass is coming off a loss and us being pushed to the No. 1 spot in the polls, it’s almost like a trap game for us. You know, thinking that we’re pretty good and UMass can’t be that good because they just lost to Merrimack, but we already know how good Merrimack is, and we played them at our place, not at their place. And we already saw how good UMass was when they played in the tournament here, so we shouldn’t be falling into that trap.”

“Northeastern has played us tough for a long period of time and they continued to play us tough last year. I thought that they were the most improved team in the league last year and I think they will be the most improved team standing-wise this year. I thought they would wind up higher than they did last year, to tell you the truth, with the way they were going early on. Now they’re going really well again and I think they will sustain that throughout the season.”

“We’ll have our hands full with two teams that we’ll be battling all the way down to the wire for hopefully a home-ice berth in the playoffs.”

***On the Terriers’ strong early-season schedule:***

“All of a sudden we’re opening up with North Dakota and Michigan State, which was a little insane on my part because we haven’t gotten off to quick starts the last couple of years, but I think the challenge of playing those guys got the best out of us. Then we had to play Merrimack, UNH and Michigan and then go on the road to Vermont and Lowell. We’ve had a tough road to hoe as far as the quality of the teams we’ve been playing, and low and behold it’s a much stronger early schedule than we had last year, but we’re playing much better than we were last year. We didn’t win our sixth game last year until January. We’ve got a completely different type of start than we had last year and I think that has a lot of it has to do with the quality of the teams we’ve been playing. We knew we had to be ready and we were much more prepared to open up the season this year.”

**On being ranked first in the country**

“I don’t think it means anything, to tell you the truth. People knew that we had a pretty good team this year. We were voted fairly highly in the preseason polls in our league and in the nation.”

“The last time we were rated No. 1 was in 2006 – the very last poll of the year after the Hockey East tournament. Then we proceeded to lose two games later to Boston College in the national tournament. The polls did not project and somebody else became the No. 1 team.”

“The polls are something for the fans to get involved in. When the NCAA comes out with their polls (PairWise) starting in January, that means a little more something because that’s the selection poll based on the RPI and the correct criteria. Even then, that changes so drastically from game-to-game, that the only poll then that counts is the last poll that selects the NCAA tournament field. After that, the NCAA champion will be the No. 1 team in the nation. That’s what everybody fights for and everybody’s trying to get to. One team wins their last game and everybody else loses their last game. This doesn’t mean much to us except that we’ll have a little bit bigger target on our backs.”

## **HOCKEY EAST COACHES MEDIA TELECONFERENCE (NOV. 11, 2008)**

### **MAINE HEAD COACH TIM WHITEHEAD QUOTES**

*Coming off a big win against BC on Sunday afternoon, talk about how the team is doing to this point:*

“We are pleased to get that win at home. It was a great crowd, an exciting atmosphere, so it is a good feeling.”

Talk about the BC game and what it means about the overall parity in the league, you are going against the defending national champion Boston College and you have a young team:

“That was a great aspect of that game for our conference, recognizing that we were a team that had no points in league play, going against one of the top teams in the country. For us to beat them 2-1 does show a lot of competitiveness for our league. But, that is nothing new for Hockey East. We have had that in our league for many years, and it is just a reminder that we still have that. It is an indication that it is going to be another great season for the league.”

It must feel a little different, because you are used to being that top team and with the youth of this team, are you viewing it from a different perspective?

“Yes, it puts a different wrinkle on it for us. As one of the announcers said Sunday night, this would not be unusual for Maine to knock BC off at home just two years ago, but last year and this year we are in a rebuilding phase, so this one feels extra special. We have had a year and a few months where we have not been in that situation, so this was a good feeling for us.”

*Talk about your rookies:*

“We are very pleased with our freshman class. They and the sophomores make up the bulk of our team, so it is important that they do contribute right away, and they have. We have strong freshmen at all three positions. As you mentioned, we have Scott Darling in the net. We have Will’O’Neill, Ryan Hegarty and Mark Nemec at defense. We have quite a few freshmen forwards in Spencer Abbott, Brian Flynn, Gustav Nyquist, Kyle Solomon, Theo Andersson, Nick Payson. They have all played significant roles for us. We are very pleased that each one is contributing. Nyquist has put up quite a few points. Scott has been very good in the net. They are perhaps the two most notable. Brian Flynn scored the game-winner against BC. The other guys have contributed quite a bit and we are happy with their development this year.”

*What do you think that the win on Sunday does for the confidence of the team?*

“It is one thing to have moral victories, those are fine. We played very well against Northeastern, but did not get the result. There was some sense of a moral victory there, but those only carry you so far, until you need a real victory. In this case, against Boston College, we were able to play well and win. That does give us a moral victory and a sense of accomplishment. This was a very important step for us. It was just one game in the 36-plus game season, but it is a big one. Hopefully it will give up some confidence, but not too much. We certainly don’t deserve too much. We need to earn respect every week. But this reminds our players that if we execute things, stick to the game plan and play as a team, we can beat some very good teams.”

*Do you take more satisfaction in a game like that?*

“I think that we would like to speed up our development as quick as we can. But, we have to be careful not to get too high, just like we don’t want to get too low after our losses. We have to keep it in perspective and recognize that it is not going to come easy. That win certainly did not come easy. We had to fight through a lot in that game to get the win. That is how it is going to be every night, regardless of who the opponent is. We are certainly impressing that on our players this week. That was just one game, a real good one, but just one stepping stone along the way. We have to make sure that we respect all opponents. And the way our team is right now, I don’t think that there is any risk of guys being over confident. They know that we have a long ways to go, but this is a good step.”

***Talk about weekend series at Providence:***

“I have not seen them play yet this season, but I know that they will be a very well coached team. They will play great up-tempo hockey. I will watch them on tape this week and get prepared. There is no question that after a few wins in a row, this is a very dangerous weekend for us. I know as a coach how competitive these games are going to be in Providence. We have enough veterans on our team that understand that this is going to be a very challenging weekend for us. Providence is going to be chomping at the bit and we are going to have to be ready for a very tough challenge.”

## **HOCKEY EAST COACHES MEDIA TELECONFERENCE (NOV. 11, 2008)**

### **MASSACHUSETTS HEAD COACH DON “TOOT” CAHOON QUOTES**

#### ***General Thought's On Start Of Season:***

“It has been a tough season as we thought it would be; every game has been a battle and we have received every challenge and all the competition that we knew would be there at the start. I am very happy with our mindset of taking things as they come and keeping our season in the present and not getting too far ahead of ourselves. It is about what I could hope for at this part of the season, but at the same time there are a lot more challenges and unknowns that are staring us square in the face.”

#### ***On Depth And Success Of Hockey East Early In The Season:***

“I think all of the programs in the league have worked diligently and responsibly to improve themselves. What we ran into last Saturday at Merrimack was no huge surprise to us – they skate better and move the puck better than they have in recent memory and Coach Dennehy has a lot of young players there who are continuing to improve. I think a lot of teams are going to be in for a rude awakening if they go into Merrimack’s building unprepared.”

#### ***On Facing Boston University, UMass Lowell This Weekend:***

“Boston University is one of the premier programs in the nation and creates a great challenge for us. They have some of the best scorers in the league and a whole host of athletes who are capable of being difference makers. They have improved goaltending that gives them added confidence in the tight games. Arguably, they have the best defensive corps in all of college hockey. They have a bunch offensive defensemen back there who like to play defense. Plus the number one ranking and they present a lot of challenges. We are focused on getting ourselves prepared to face those challenges and really, we cannot look beyond that. I know UMass Lowell is not looking beyond New Hampshire as they have business to take care of on Friday. You cannot spend a lot of time on the second game until the first one of the weekend has been played.”

#### ***On Strength of Special Teams This Year:***

“I think all of the credit on special teams go to the players as they are the ones performing and making the decisions on the ice. Red Gendron runs our man-down situation and Len Quesnelle has the power play. They have done a great job with the teaching and execution in practice and games. Plus I think we have some compliments in both areas with veterans on both sides who have a wealth of experience. We also have a variety of abilities that we can put on the ice with speed, puck handling, and shooting on the power play. On the man-down, the speed and experience is a big part, with the addition of the willingness to block shots. The final part of it has been good goaltending. Paul Dainton was hurt earlier in the year, but Dan Meyers came back and had some great outings. The goaltending has been the biggest part of the penalty kill so far.”

#### ***On The Line Of Alex Berry-Cory Quirk-James Marcou:***

“I have talked about the compliment of skills and how it adds dimension. Alex Berry has a big body, skates well and handles the puck well. He can create space for the little guy James Marcou who has a world of hockey sense and can make plays and make people around him better. Cory is a consummate three-zone player and gets around the rink really well and battles for pucks. He is willing to play every-bit as hard getting back defensively as he is getting up the ice offensively. They compliment each other very well and are a veteran group which is comfortable reading each other and playing off each other.”

#### ***On Playing A Lot Of Early Road Games, Then Having A Lot of Home Games:***

“When we started the season we knew it would be easy to get into trouble playing on the road and that we had to play with a sense of urgency, block out any distractions and let the games play out between the glass. I think the guys for the most part were pretty successful with that. Now we have the challenge of blocking out the home ice situation so that does not distract us and again let the game take place between the glass.”

## **HOCKEY EAST COACHES MEDIA TELECONFERENCE (NOV. 11, 2008)**

### **UMASS-LOWELL HEAD COACH BLAISE MacDONALD QUOTES**

#### ***General Thoughts:***

“I think the Lowell team is pretty pleased with the way we’re playing. We’re getting really good contribution from all four lines and six defensemen. We’ve gotten a little bit more out of David Vallorani than we expected as a freshman, leading our team in scoring. Overall we’re playing well. The defeats we’ve suffered easily could have gone either way. We feel like we’ve been very, very competitive in every game this season. We’re pleased with our attendance at home. It’s been spectacular. We’re averaging close to 4,500 people a game. The pride and enthusiasm on campus is the best it’s ever been.”

#### ***Thoughts on facing New Hampshire and Massachusetts this weekend:***

“UNH is a team that has branded itself as a high potent, high powered offensive team. They have a lot of weapons offensively and are very dangerous. They have great special teams and they play well in their own zone. They’re a team that, every year, has an opportunity to compete for a national championship. They’re going to be a real good test for us again this weekend.

“UMass is a team that played really well against Providence. They put up 14 goals. Maybe they had a little setback against Merrimack, but Merrimack is a very good team. UMass is a team with great team speed and presents a lot of challenges and opportunities to shut them down as well. There’s no easy holes on this golf course.”

#### ***On Carter Hutton:***

“Carter is starting to come into his own as a goaltender. We have a goalie coach for the first time since I’ve been at Lowell. It’s really helped Carter’s game. He has great poise back there and great communication skills. Unfortunately he’s going to be out for a month, so that hurts us.”

#### ***On the Leadership of the Captains:***

“All of those players have played really important roles in their careers. They understand the value of team and unity and brotherhood and all those types of phrases. One of our strongest assets and talents is our ability to play as one and to be as one. That starts with the leadership in the locker room. They do a terrific job of leading by example and being able to communicate effectively and efficiently with their teammates on what needs to be done and how it should be done.”

#### ***On the Freshman Class:***

“Matt Ferreira has played extremely well for us. He doesn’t show up on the stat sheet, yet. But he’s been snakebit a couple of times. Against Vermont their goalie made an unbelievable toe save. He had some terrific opportunities against BU the night before. He’s getting his chances. He’ll put up some great numbers. He’s a guy that recovered from brain surgery last year. He’s playing with tremendous force. He plays with grit and determination. He’s relentless. He’s on our power play, penalty killing and a regular shift. That’s pretty impressive for a freshman.”

“We didn’t lose any forwards off last year’s team. There’s a kid who has only played one game, Mike Budd, who every day in practice is getting better and better. He looks like he’s going to be a wonderful talent down the road as well.”



***On the Depth of Hockey East:***

“I don’t think there’s been a year that’s ever been this competitive. And we’re just starting. We’ve all seen other teams play. I’ve seen UNH, Northeastern. I’ve seen Merrimack play. This is easily the most competitive and challenging year ever.

“This weekend for us was a good example. I thought we outplayed BU and deserved better. But our goalie got hurt in the second period. It was a tough position to put a freshman in and they scored four goals in the third period. We played great. Their goalie stole the game. Vermont the same thing, I thought the score could have been flipped easily. We had a lot of great opportunities. Their goalie was just equal to the task.

“Providence is a team that plays with a lot of offensive moxie. Once they get their goaltending situation and their rhythm defensively they’re going to be good. Its who controls the controllables the best that has a chance to win.

***On Special Teams:***

“We’re doing a very good job on the penalty kill and on the power play. It’s not always reflective in the statistics. There are key times to kill. Against BU they scored one kind of fluky power play goal, but we had two great kills in the third period that kept us with a one-goal lead. The same thing out at Michigan State, our penalty killing gave us a ton of momentum.

“This past Saturday we were 1-for-9 [on the power play] against Vermont but had probably 85-percent offensive zone time. A couple of shots missed the net, we hit a post and their goalie made a couple of great saves. Although statistically it wasn’t what we wanted in terms of puck possession and momentum, it was fantastic.”

## **HOCKEY EAST COACHES MEDIA TELECONFERENCE (NOV. 11, 2008)**

### **MERRIMACK HEAD COACH MARK DENNEHY QUOTES**

#### ***General Observations:***

“There’s been a little bit of inconsistency. Our first two league games were against BU and BC at their home arenas and we spent the better half of the first 15 minutes counting the banners. When we settled down and actually played, we made it a bit of a game. We definitely got some momentum against Boston College that we took into our home contest against them the next night. “

:Our last two home games have been better. We played extremely well against BC at home. Give Coach York and his team credit. Great teams find ways to win games. I thought we deserved to win that game. To quote Coach McDonald, I thought we did everything but win.”

“We need to do a better job on the road in the conference. Our defense and goaltending has been good but we need to get our power play going.”

#### ***Level of Parity in Hockey East:***

“I think the teams at the bottom end of last year’s table have strengthened themselves. We think we have. One of the things I wanted to do when I came here was to make sure that there were no easy nights in Hockey East. Anyone who was at Lawler Arena last Friday against BC might have witnessed the most exciting game there in a number of years.”

#### ***On the play of Joe Cannata and Andrew Braithwaite:***

“I think they’ve played good, not great, with the exception of Braithwaite against UMass and Joe’s first start against Army. They’ve both been pretty good. If you ask both of them, there’s probably a goal or two they would like back, and that’s what makes them great. We don’t need a number one goaltender until the stretch drive or until the playoffs. But we’re looking for someone to step up. And if one of them does, they might get a bigger piece of the pie. I believe competition will only make them better. It would be nice if one or both of them get hot to the point where I think about giving one or the other more ice time.”

#### ***On the emergence of Pat Kimball:***

“Pat led our team in scoring our freshman year, albeit with 11 points. He came in as a sophomore thinking he knew a little more than he did. He’s always been very coachable but didn’t come in with the same vigor as his first year. That has returned for him. He is in great shape and has warranted ice time on our top two lines. He’s always been the type of kid that is fearless about taking it into traffic areas. He’s getting more second opportunities and found the back of the net for us.”

#### ***On the importance of the power play:***

“Both power play goals we’ve had were actually without him. We’ve done a good job of moving the puck around. I think we need to move with the puck a little more. At the end of the day, special teams are streaky and when things aren’t going well, you just need to get pucks to the net and outnumber your opponent in front of the net.”

#### ***On the freshmen:***

“This is the best class we’ve had. It’s our third recruiting class since I got here. Karl Stollery is as good a young defenseman as I think there is in the league. He’s logging big time minutes for us. He’s a plus six, tied for fifth in the league. He plays with incredible poise. Jesse Todd and Elliott Sheen are used to playing at a high level of hockey. Sheen can really get around the rink. We’ve tried to improve our speed. They’ve all come in and they’ve contributed. We have more depth than we’ve had in the past. We feel we have a core of players and we can put them on the ice against anybody in the nation and let the chips fall where they may.”



## **HOCKEY EAST COACHES MEDIA TELECONFERENCE (NOV. 11, 2008)**

### **NEW HAMPSHIRE HEAD COACH DICK UMILE QUOTES**

#### ***General Thoughts:***

“I thought we got off to a pretty good start. Our first three or four games been a little, I don’t know if it’s inconsistency or what. We played against a pretty good Minnesota team last weekend, we had a non-league loss at St. Lawrence, which I thought St. Lawrence was a typical Joe Marsh team. They really came after us and just took it to us up there. I think things are ok. I thought we played pretty well for five and a half periods and it kind of blew up on us Saturday night against a very good Minnesota team.”

“Not very good on power play; I’ve been listening to the other coaches (on the call) and ours isn’t very good that’s for sure. We’re very disappointed in our power play, penalty kill I think has been ok. Sometimes it’s tough how they kind the back of the net, but I think our penalty kill has been ok. Power play is something we need to continue to work on, we are changing some personnel and trying some new ideas, but we definitely have to find a way to get the puck on net, get more shots, and find the back of the net.”

“Other than that you just look at Hockey East... We are coming of a non-league game this past week at Minnesota, now we head down to Lowell. I think Lowell has gotten off to a good start. I think they played pretty well this weekend and lost some games with Vermont and Boston University.”

“Hearing the scores, obviously Mark’s (Dennehy) team is playing well and Timmy’s (Whitehead) got Maine playing well and those are the teams supposedly at the bottom at least in the preseason are supposed to be at the bottom. That just tell you how strong the league is.”

#### ***On the sophomore class:***

“I think that’s what we are looking to. The sophomore class is a skilled group; we have nine players in our sophomore class and I think there is a lot of skill there in the area of goal scoring, play making, and they are the guys who are going to have to fill the role left by Mike Radja and Matt Fornataro, some of the scorers we’ve had over the past few years. James van Riemsdyk is putting the puck in the net, Phil DeSimone is another sophomore who I think is going to be a goal scorer for us. Just getting into that role, the positions we’ve been flipping him with James and various combinations. Danny Dries, Mike Sislo those are all forward I think can add some scoring for us. We are going to need to get scoring from them. They have been an important group in that sense and hopefully that improves.”

#### ***On Brian Foster in net:***

“Brian’s playing very well for us. Overall, he’s played very well for us. He was injured last weekend in our series with Northeastern and Matt DiGirolamo, a freshman, played Saturday night at Northeastern and it was an absolutely fabulous game it was a tremendous atmosphere and Matt did a great job for us and we ended up pulling off a tie. Our goaltending, we’re comfortable, there is a lot of confidence and I don’t think that’s a concern for us.”

#### ***Early strength of schedule:***

“Yes, the schedule been difficult, but when you schedule non-league games at Minnesota and up at St. Lawrence and Wisconsin at home those are the teams you want to play. You know they make you a better program. I believe coming back from Minnesota as difficult as it was only getting one point out there. They are a very good team and they make you better. They play at a great pace, there is an awful lot of skill and hopefully we’ve learned something. We’ve got to be better defending which is something we are going to need to do if you are going to compete in this league.”

## **HOCKEY EAST COACHES MEDIA TELECONFERENCE (NOV. 11, 2008)**

### **NORTHEASTERN HEAD COACH GREG CRONIN**

#### ***General thoughts about the season to this point?:***

“I heard a little bit of Jack [Parker]’s comments and the end of his interview and I think we have had a difficult schedule -- going out to Anchorage to start the year I was a little bit nervous, particularly with the troubles that BU had out there last year. Anyone that’s been out there knows that it’s a long grueling trip, and it can take on a challenge mentally as well as physically as far as guys getting sick and injured, so I was thrilled we got through that trip without any of the injuries or illnesses, and then we obviously got three out of the four points there. It turns out early in the year I always say it’s rubber bullet time – you don’t really get the full competition you’d expect in mid-November, even mid-October. So you find out Fairbanks has done a pretty good job; they beat Michigan 5-1, they beat Miami and Miami 2-1, so they’ve got a pretty good club. And of course Anchorage has flirted in the top 20. So those were good opponents for us. I think they were really good preseason games – they count but they don’t count, so it was good for us. I’ve got to be frank with you, I think we’ve been OK. I think you see that in our shots against. There’s been a lot of shots that we’ve given up. I’ve said it a number of times in these interviews and other interviews that shots don’t necessarily dictate who controls the puck, who controls the pace of the game, but I’d say our goalie [Brad Thiessen] has been our best player. He has been honored as player of the month because of that, and I just don’t think that we’ve hit a really good rhythm to the way we’ve played. And that may sound superficial with our record, but I think I know this team pretty good, particularly with everybody back from last year, and I just don’t think we’ve been as consistent as we need to be to be a top-10 team.”

#### ***After the UNH game a few weeks back, you were a little concerned about the power play, but can you talk about the key focus areas you really have, and are kind of leaning on the team to improve upon in the next couple of weeks of the season?:***

“I think the first thing goes back to the power play again. I think the twin to the power play is the penalty kill, and our penalty kill has been good. It has been really good and I think it’s bailed us out a lot with the goaltending. But you know, we’re going into a gauntlet right now with UVM and BU Friday and Sunday and both of them away games, and then we’ve got UNH at home and then we’re at Lowell the following night before we have a Thanksgiving tournament. So I call it a gauntlet because those four games, they’ll be tremendous games and they’re going to dictate particularly where we sit going into the Christmas break. The catalyst behind our success has got to be our power play, and it hasn’t been. I think we’ve been riding the penalty kill, and our power play has got to get going. The other issue that the coaching staff has as a challenge moving forward is an identity, offensively. We kind of come and go in a game, we sustain some pressure, sustain possession, and then it kind of slips away from us a little bit. You probably saw it up at UNH, Bob, in the second period, then we kind of got it back in the third period, and that’s the consistency I talked about earlier. To go back to the power play, I think after being here for three-plus years, there’s enough talent to have more success on the power play and it’s squarely rests on the coaching staff’s shoulders to get those players involved. A couple of the key people on our power play have been Muench and Silva and they’ve been out for three weeks so we haven’t enjoyed their talents on the ice. I’m not sure what their status is going to be this weekend, but they’re slowly coming back. Despite the fact that we don’t have those two guys, we still should have more success than we’re having. Now I’m not going to give you exactly what’s going on with the power play, but I don’t think we’re moving the puck very efficiently. We’re kicking it around off of skates and we’re making poor passes, which stall the flow of the puck.

The second thing is that we don't shoot it enough. Those are things that we're trying to address in practice now."

***Going into November last year is when you guys started to hit your stride. In November this year, you guys have been hitting your stride in the beginning of the season. What do you assess as the comparison or the differences between last year's team and this year's team at this point in terms of its strengths if you will?:***

"Well, again, that's a good question, and it kind of speaks to the frustration I have with this team right now because we have everybody back from last year, and, as I said to you before, you know last year we actually played pretty well – we got swept at home by Maine, but I thought we played well both of those games, and we had a heck of a game against North Dakota and lost 3-0. There was a little more of an identity to our team and that ended up emerging there in November there when we hit our stride there and we went 11 games without losing. This year, we haven't really had that identity early, and that's why I'm thrilled that we're 6-1-2. I'm happy with everything that we've accomplished this early in the season, but I just haven't seen that rhythm, that identity that I would expect to have seen with a veteran team at this point. I'll give you a case in point: Joe Vitale is one of the marquis players returning in the league, and I think if anybody watched the nine games we've played, I'd say he's been really visible one game the entire game where last year he'd be visible in seven of the nine games. So we've got to get him going. He's too good a player to be just a part of the scenery in the game. The other guy that I think is a real special player on our team that makes plays, an awkward skater, but has got to get more visibility is Wade Macleod. He has not been as visible as he was last year at this time. So there's some key people involved in that identity that have not emerged and they've got to get going here because like I said, I think we're hitting the gauntlet coming up here. And we've got to get those people to start being more visible in games."

***How about in terms of the depth of your team, it seems like you look at your stats and you have a lot of contributions from a bunch of different people, and how does that factor in. Does that help?:***

"Obviously it helps to have quality depth. I think one of the things we've got now is the fact that Silva's down and Muench is down we've been able to put a kid like J.P. Maley in who's a freshman. He's kind of like a smaller version of Muench. He can skate, he's very tough along the boards and he's got pretty good offensive instincts. To be able to have a guy like that to insert into the lineup gives us that depth. And of course Rob Rassey, who's a 90-game veteran has been out of the lineup for the first four games because he just wasn't good enough through training camp, he comes in and scores two big goals up in Maine and most of the guys that follow our team would say he's a very reliable guy. To have a guy like that on the outside looking in speaks to the quality depth that we have. And you know, the other issue – this is the first time I've been here when we've had the luxury of only having a couple of freshmen in the lineup that have had to come in and earn their stripes, Quailer and Tuckerman. To go back to the identity piece, those guys are starting to become visible, which is good. They're starting to become more visible than they were early in the year and that just comes with freshmen getting confidence. To have those guys in the lineup and playing in a visible role is good. McLaughlin now has entered the lineup, he's another freshman out of Ontario that was a terrific player out of Aurora, he's now playing and he's getting more visibility. So I feel pretty good about the undercurrent of what we've got in terms of our upperclassmen. I think if we can get those guys playing, like I said, consistently, I'll be a little bit more comfortable with where we stand right now nationally."

## **HOCKEY EAST COACHES MEDIA TELECONFERENCE (NOV. 11, 2008)**

### **PROVIDENCE HEAD COACH TIM ARMY QUOTES**

#### ***General thoughts on the season so far and general thoughts:***

“We’re disappointed with our record obviously. You don’t want to be 0-4-1 in Hockey East and 2-5-1 overall, sitting in 10<sup>th</sup> in the standings. But, I think we’ve played some good hockey. I think the weekend that sort of stands out is the weekend against UMass. I thought UMass played quite well. I thought we struggled at times. We played well at times and we made some mistakes in situations. I think aside from that we played some good hockey and we need to find some consistency. It’s good early in the year you sort of find your way a little bit. You tweak things a bit as you move along. I thought we played well last weekend. We made good strides from the weekend prior. We’ll continue to work to get better and get ready for this weekend against a team that’s playing very, very well and a team that’s coming off a big win against Boston College. They’re playing good hockey. So, we need to keep working and keep moving in the right direction and get ourselves ready for Friday night.”

#### ***Talk about your freshman class:***

“We’ve gotten good contributions from all of freshmen. In fact, the bulk of our scoring has come from our sophomore and freshman classes. And then you can add Johnny Cavanagh to that group as a junior. Those are the three classes that we’ve recruited. We don’t quite have our whole group of recruits in yet. The senior class is a group that we had inherited and you look at our junior class, our sophomore class and our freshman class, I think we’ve gotten a great deal of production from them and I think the freshmen have contributed really well. I think Justin Gates is finding his way in the net. It’s a tough adjustment for a freshman goaltender. I think he’s played some good hockey. He’s getting better with each weekend. I thought he played well last weekend. On the back end, we’ve gotten good contributions and a lot of minutes from Bryce Aneloksi, Danny New and David Brown, all playing a lot of key minutes. Aneloski is playing with Matt Taormina and doing a great job killing penalties. The other two defensemen are playing together, Brown and New and both playing on the power play. Brownie is already got a couple of assists and Danny has a goal and two assists. Up front, we’ve gotten good contributions from Andy Balysky and Robbie Maloney. They’re playing with Kyle MacKinnon right now. They’re got a lot of speed and they’ve developed into a good line. They’ve played three games together and played very well in all three zones. Andy is killing penalties. So, I’m very pleased with their contributions. And then, obviously Matt Bergland is off to a good start. He’s playing on a good line with Johnny Cavanagh and Ian O’Connor and they’ve got a nice fit together. They’ve got some abilities that allow them to have good chemistry and mesh with one another and Mattie is quick and very instinctive offensively. He’s got a good hockey mind and a good stick. He just understands the game very well. I think playing with some good people and getting some time on the power play, having a good skill level and a good sense for the game, he’s able to do some things offensively and play very well for us.”

#### ***Upcoming weekend series with Maine:***

“Well, I think like a lot of Hockey East weekends, it will be tightly contested. They’re playing very well right now. They’re getting contributions from their freshmen. They’re getting good goaltending. I think they always have good special teams. Their power play is always very, very good. They kill penalties really well. They’re physical. They always play well as a group and I think they’re playing very well as five-man units in all three zones and you can’t take a lot of penalties because their power play is always strong. So, we go into another tough Hockey East weekend. I think we’re improving and we made some adjustments that allowed us to be a better

team last weekend. I would expect that it will be a very good weekend of hockey. For us, it's a question of recognizing what Maine does well and being prepared for things that they do well. Obviously there's certain things that we need to do to be successful and we have to be prepared to stay diligent in those areas. I think that's the biggest thing that has plagued us early in the season. We've played some good stretches of hockey and we'll make some mistakes, I call them unforced errors, that end up costing us, sometimes that's due to over-exuberance and not quite having the experience in those situations and each game you play you get a little bit better and a bit more experienced. We need to make sure that we are consistent. I thought that we showed that Friday night against Vermont. We fell behind, 2-0, and we stayed with it. Whereas, the weekend before against UMass, we were up 2-0 to start the first game on Friday. We were up, 4-3, early in the second and when they tied it, we got scambly and they took advantage of it. Similar thing happened the following night after a good first period (0-0 game). We made a couple of mistakes, a couple of unforced errors. I think we were better with that. We stayed with it against Vermont. We worked ourselves into a five-on-three and Pierce Norton scored that made it 2-1 and we kept playing well. We stayed on top of things and we were able to tie it early in the third on a power play. I thought against Notre Dame we did the same thing. We fell behind, 2-0, and Matt Bergland scored early in the third period and got us back to 2-1 and then we made a mistake. We make a mistake off the rush. We didn't play it right. Against a good team like Notre Dame or any good player they score. They took advantage of it and now you're down, 3-1. So, there are some things we want to do as a team that make us a good team, but we have to stay consistent and that's the biggest focus going into the weekend, that we continue to find that consistency with a young group. I think we're getting there. I expect Maine, who is playing very, very well (you beat BC, you're playing good hockey), will come in ready to play and it should be a tight weekend."

***Talk about John Cavanagh's play and leadership:***

"For Johnny, it's about winning. He's been that way since he played a Toll Gate High School, when they unseeded Mount St. Charles for the Rhode Island High School Championship. Then they won the New England Prep School Championship at Salisbury. He's a guy that does what it takes. He plays in all three zones. He kills penalties and plays the power play. He wants to win hockey games. He does all the little things well. He is a very intelligent hockey player. He's gotten stronger over his three years and now as he moves into his junior year, he's gained some experience and knows the league better. What makes John a very good player is his commitment to details. He's able to play in any situation. He's gotten a bit quicker, he's gotten stronger as you do as you move throughout your college career, now as a junior, he's more suited to play at this level like a lot of players as they move from their freshmen to sophomore and junior years. His intelligence and his competitiveness make him a very, very good player."



## **HOCKEY EAST COACHES MEDIA TELECONFERENCE (NOV. 11, 2008)**

### **VERMONT HEAD COACH KEVIN SNEDDON QUOTES**

#### *Thoughts on this season to date:*

We felt like we started our season very strong; Had a big win up in Quebec City against RPI which was a great experience for our club to go up to Quebec City and participate in the first-ever NCAA game in Quebec...We got off to a good start; followed that up with a big win against Miami, who is a very tough team. Then the second night we had a tie and a mini shootout win. Even though it didn't count, in my book it was still a battle won. So, we really started off strong we felt like the team was going in a good direction.

The following weekend we played Boston College and we started to see some things that we were not impressed with; we lost our attention to details, we struggled quite frankly to put together 60 minutes since the Miami weekend. It was really evident this past weekend against Providence. We had a 2-0 lead, which we are typically pretty tough when we have a two-goal lead, but give all the credit in the world to Providence, who in their own building just made it very difficult for us to play against. They really slowed us down in a good way, with their aggressive fore-checking style. I thought they got better as the game went on and as I said we lost our attention to details on the penalty kill and even 5-on-5. It was kind of a disappointing tie, but looking back on the weekend any time you can get a point at Providence, it certainly is a good thing.

I thought our team responded extremely well against Lowell the next night. I really felt that we got back to doing the things that we need to do to be successful and come out of there with a win against a very good Lowell team. Signs are right now that our players are learning what they need to do. I think it really rests in a fine balance. We have more speed and skill than we've had in the past but we are still a team that has to play very well defensively. I just think that we now have the ability to turn good team defense into a little bit more offense. Sometimes we teeter on both extremes, sometimes thinking too defensively and sometimes too offensively and forgetting what we need to do away from the puck. The signs from this past weekend were that we learned our lesson against Providence, came back and responded very well against Lowell. So, there is certainly good signs for us to this point.

I think the question mark that a lot of people had going into the season from the media and maybe from coaches around the conference, certainly not in our minds, but in their minds was what was our goaltending situation going to be? We are very impressed with the play of Mike Spillane as well as Rob Madore. We've got two good goaltenders going for us right now, that can play on any given night. I think that some of the players said it best when they said, we don't even think about that part of our game. Our goaltending is not a concern to our players. We play with a lot of confidence in front of our goaltenders. Again to sum it up we are just looking for a more consistent 60 minutes every time we play and that is the task at hand right now.

***What does it do for the team to have a freshman goalie come in and perform the way Rob Madore has?:***

“Well, you know we went with Mike (Spillane) early on. We went with him for the full sixty minutes against McGill and against RPI up in Quebec City. Then came back with him the first night against Miami so I think the first time that we got to see Rob Madore in any kind of competition was against No. 7 Miami. Certainly a tough challenge for a young freshman to come in without any exhibition time, and play against one of the best teams in the country in front of our home crowd, which was just a very exciting environment to play in and he played outstanding. He saw a little bit of everything in that game. He saw a 5-on-3, there were momentum swings, just a great college hockey game. Then he caps it off with a shootout win. I think our team was just kind of waiting to see how he would do. From that moment on we have felt very confident in front of him and every time he has played he has backed it up and helped us win a close game at Dartmouth. So, he has done it on the road and at home. He played great against Lowell this past weekend. Lowell’s power plays zipped it around pretty good and he was seeing it very good. I think the best thing about Rob is that he ends plays very well. He is able to swallow pucks and not give second and third opportunities. So, I think our guys have a lot of confidence in front of him and as I said feel good with either goaltender in net.”

***Importance of getting special teams firing on all cylinders:***

“I think that we have seen an increase in special teams play with the two-and-two system for referees that I think is great. The players and coaches need to adapt to what is being called. I think that we are a few weeks away from the players really adapting to that sort of structure. We are seeing improvements in those areas I think across the board and I am a big fan of what is going on officiating wise. Special teams are a huge part of play right now. I have been very concerned not only with getting our power play to produce, but more importantly from our standpoint also making sure that we are keeping pucks out of the net. We have done some things very well 5-on-5 in scoring goals, but our power play was really struggling, so we’ve switched things around. We’ve kind of overloaded one unit and simplified another and it paid off this weekend against Providence. Dean Strong’s unit had a lot of good puck possession in the zone, setup a great goal, turned out to be an important one for us. The next night I thought the other unit made a lot of great plays so that was certainly nice to see, as any coach would say power plays are cyclical. We were getting chances but we just weren’t finishing them. Hopefully it is now turning in the right direction for us. More importantly I was really impressed with our penalty kill this weekend. Even though we did give up a couple of 5-on-4 goals, I just really liked our attention to detail. I think we had 22 blocked shots against Lowell. We had to kill eight penalties including a 5-on-3. So, our guys paid the price, they did a lot of good things on the kill, so big steps for us in both categories.”

***On Peter Lenes:***

“Peter is a great leader for us, he has probably been our most consistent forward and he is just a ball of energy out there at 5’-6” on skates anyway, he plays like he is over 6’-0”. He finishes his checks, he has high energy every shift and he has a great skill set. So, it is no surprise for us that he is putting up points early on. We are certainly trying to put him in situations that give him opportunities to showcase that talent. He is off to a good start. I like the chemistry that he and (Justin) Milo have been able to muster up. Milo is obviously a guy who likes to have the puck on his stick below the circle and has a knack for the net.”