

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

### ***Thoughts on season to date and stretch run:***

So far it's been a pretty good second half where we've played much more competitively and reversed the fortunes of losing a lot of one-goal games to turn those into victories. I don't think you can point to any one particular player or reason for that other than maturity, evolution and a great percentage of work ethic and attention to details.

### ***On playing big games down the stretch:***

I don't think there's any question that the mindset is everything at this point in time. As long as you have a healthy roster your mind can be your strongest ally. Most coaches would say every weekend in Hockey East feels like a playoff weekend. There are always huge implications of winning points or not winning points. That something we've gone through all year.

Last weekend we played BU. You can look at the score, its 3-3 with nine minutes to play, and think 'you're right in there', its two power play goals. But we really played poorly by our measure. And weren't in a good place going into the UMass game, but mentally our guys were able to change their outlook at play really, really well and do the things we wanted to do to get a big victory. You have to have short-term memory loss sometimes and move on to the next task.

[Playing in big games down the stretch] is going to go a long ways in our development this year and through next year being in the hunt for home ice at this point in the season and playing these very important games.

### ***Thoughts on home and Home series with BC:***

BC is a team that has an awful lot of offensive talent, a national championship goaltender and is very strong defensively. They're a team that last year had a similar type of season where they had to overcome some adversity throughout the year and ended up winning the national championship. I think they're looking at this weekend as a chance to really continue playing well at the important time of they season. They're battle tested.

We've had success in one game this year so that will give us a little confidence. BC plays very tough at home so our game management will have to be at a very high level. It's a great opportunity for us. They're right there with us. This is a real good opportunity to grab some points.

### ***On Mark Roebathan:***

We only have three seniors and he's one of them. He was out for six weeks. That was when we lost a lot of those one-goal games. To have him back it's not a coincidence that all of a sudden we're winning those games. He's been a key contributor both production wise and leadership wise. He's a verbal leader. He's an inspirational guy. He loves to play the game. He shows his emotion. Our team feeds off that, no question. He really helps that line with Scott Campbell and Mike Potacco play at a much higher level. He's been instrumental in our success since he's been back.

***On potential of securing home ice:***

We feel like we're right in the mix. We got home ice the first year I was here (2002) and we've been in the hunt a couple of times since. To get it is really difficult. We don't want to look too far ahead, but the fact that it's the middle of February and we're still looking at that as a realistic goal for ourselves is a good thing. We're really consumed, and I think it's a good trait with this team, with our game, the system and not the opponent or the consequences. If we can maintain that laser-like focus I think we'll be in pretty good shape. I'm happy for the guys that they are still in this hunt. I feel real confident going forward.

***Comments on keys to recent success:***

I don't think we've played nearly to our potential to be honest with you. There's not a lot about this team that I'm like 'wow, we're really doing that well.' There are games when we play our system and we're really tough to beat. There are other games where I don't know what system we're playing because we get a little chaotic. We haven't been as consistent as I'd like.

I don't think our defense corps of six guys has played at the level I think they can play. We're starting to move in that direction. If we get everybody up to the level we think they can play at, we can be really, really good. It's a collective effort. We have to have everybody chipping in offensively. We've got to have everybody helping out defensively. And our goaltending can continue to get better, for sure. We're an honest team and we work relatively hard. But there's a lot of room for improvement for us.