

## **HOCKEY EAST COACHES MEDIA TELECONFERENCE (DEC. 1, 2009)**

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

#### ***About season to date...***

“We’ve been disappointed. We had expectations coming here that we were going to try and build on our momentum for last year. We had not been able to do that at this point. I think (head coach) Kevin (Sneddon) made a good point about the mental toughness in our league is that you can’t take a night off and you can’t expect things to happen without putting the requisite work habits into it and execute a game plan. For the first time in a couple years, we’ve had a pretty massive turnover on our roster and we’re trying to get all the pieces of the puzzle to fit correctly so we can get a rhythm and an identity to the way we play. So, that’s our challenge. It’s been our challenge to date and it’s been our challenge going forward.”

#### ***Describe the play of your freshman goaltender, Chris Rawlings, following the departure of Brad Thiessen...***

“I think he’s been really good. At the beginning of the year we were a bit concerned because he looked like he was having a hard time with his adjustment into college hockey. It was written in the (Boston) Globe, from the Colorado College game which was our first game, now a top 10 team at this point, that he was very poor and something went on in the third period and it seemed like the light went on and I think he’s been very good ever since then. Like our team, he’s a freshman and he’s trying to gain some consistency. He’d (Chris Rawlings) be the first to tell you that he does share some of Brad Thiessen’s qualities in regards to the high expectations he has for himself. He’s pretty determined to be an impact goaltender in this league and obviously that’s a pretty good formula for a freshman goaltender and to have those aspirations.”

#### ***Thoughts on the home-and-home series with Merrimack (Dec. 4 – 5)...***

“I had a chance to see them play against New Hampshire on Saturday and they’re clearly an explosive offensive team. Merrimack has a terrific powerplay and I think they’ve injected their line-up with incredible offense, whether it has been (Stephane) Da Costa or (Brandon) Brodhag, has given them a big lift offensively. I think the development and maturity of kids like (Chris) Barton, (Joe) Cucci and (Jesse) Todd and the return of (Matt) Mouakelis has given Merrimack more strength back there and the defense was very good last year. They’re always difficult to play against and that arena (Lawler) is always a fun place to play because everything happens so quickly and they play there everyday. Their home record reflects that. They have designed their team very well with big, physical defensemen that take up a lot of space and they’ve injected that offense with some credibility up front and that’s why they are having the success they’ve had to date.”

***What one area would you like to see the most improvement on coming from your team in these last couple of games heading into the break:***

“I think it’s mostly consistency. You know, we flirt with being a really good team and that Maine weekend is a perfect example. We got slapped around the first night, 6-2, and then we played really well and won, 5-2. We’re just having a hard time with that. It’s a process with a young team, but you can’t just keep saying that. It has to be done. My wish list is that we got some more consistency.”

***How would you judge some of the play of your freshmen? Has that met expectations to this point and filled in some of the roles of departed seniors?***

“Well I think (Ryan) Ginand and (Joe) Vitale carried the most weight offensively and I think Garrett Vermeersch has stepped in and done an excellent job and being an instant impact here. I think he’s going to be a terrific player with a great career. The final piece is the guy we mentioned a few minutes ago is the goalie, Chris Rawlings. He’s been pretty good too. I think there are three good players there in their respective positions and we’re waiting for the other guys to figure it out and join the pack. Once that happens, you’ll start to see some reliability.”