

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

UMASS-LOWELL HEAD COACH BLAISE MacDONALD QUOTES

General Comments:

“We’ve had some games where we’ve been fortunate to win. I think we’ve used our experience well, having many upperclassmen, and integrated some of our new players to be productive and understand the way we want to play. I still think we’re quite a ways from playing our best hockey, but we’re definitely making progress. Our special teams have been a big part of our success this season.”

Coach how about your goaltending situation, it seems like it’s almost been an even split with Hutton and Hamilton, have they met your expectations this year?:

“I think they’re similar to our team. They’ve had some good moments. Much like our team, they will continue to improve their play and can continue to improve their play.”

On opponents this weekend?:

“Well they are the top two teams in the league at this point. UNH has done extremely well within Hockey East and UMass is a team that plays with a lot of speed, energy and pace. Both teams also have two early candidates for Player of the Year in Bobby Butler and James Marcou and a tremendous supporting cast around them, so challenges will be plentiful around us.”

What is one area that you want to improve on before the break?:

Well, I think like most coaches we strive for consistency—that’s probably the primary area we need to get better at. Lately scoring goals have been a challenge for us, where as early it wasn’t. Also, lately our special teams haven’t been up to where they had been previously, so we want to establish greater consistency in our work habits.

Coach how about your captains, Ben Holmstrom, Jeremy Dehner and Barry Goers, just the job they have done for you so far this year?:

“Well they’ve been our captains for three years so they’ve established a deep footprint on how they want to lead this team and it has shown in our past success. They all lead in different ways; Ben is very demonstrative and vocal. They are all terrific leaders on and off the ice and in the community. Unfortunately Barry has been injured since the third week of October, so he hasn’t been in the lineup, but he is still a big voice in our locker room.”

Coach how about offensively, you said early in the season you were really putting pucks in the net, but the last couple of games you’ve been struggling a bit. Is there anything you can attribute that to?

“Well I think all teams will go through valleys in different parts of their game throughout the season. It is no secret that the key to a good offense is keeping the puck in the offensive zone and keeping possession of the puck. When we do that we are a team that can create a lot of offense and when we give it away we are a team that has to back-check.”