

**HOCKEY EAST QUATERFINALS
COACHES MEDIA TELECONFERENCE
(MARCH 9, 2010)**

UMASS-LOWELL HEAD COACH BLAISE MacDONALD QUOTES

General comments:

“Our season has been like most of our opponents in Hockey East. We’ve had some really terrific stretches of hockey in which we’ve played very well and we’ve had some games in which we played great and didn’t quite get what we deserved out of it. We’ve also been challenged to get a consistent line-up together. We’ve had a lot of moving parts here in the second semester which has caused some alterations to our game plan. For the most part, we’ve been very consistent. When I look at our team, we’ve lost 14 games and I would say that [13] of them have been by one goal. We’re right there and we’re constantly in search of that extra five percent that turns some of those close games into victories. I think we’re on a pretty good run right now and it’s a good time for us.”

How important is that momentum headed into the playoffs?

“Maybe I should rephrase that run to a short little sprint we’ve been on, but we will take what we can get. It is very important, if you take a look at how we’ve finished the last few years dating back to this group’s freshman season where we were 5-2-2 down the stretch—I think it is a good time to play well. I think we’ve got some consistency in our lineup and we’ve been able to manage the game effectively because in Hockey East, your last six games are like playoff games. It has been important for us to understand that and it certainly gives us that level of certainty going into the playoffs that we can compete with the pressures of the environment.”

How important is your recent split in Maine to the team’s confidence?

“It reminds me a little bit of last year when we had to go up to Vermont near the end of the season and we had some success in a tough place to play, then had to go back there in the playoffs. It is somewhat similar this year so I think it does give us a good feeling going into a playoff series. I think most people’s opinion is that of all the home ice advantages, Maine certainly enjoys the very best and it is the toughest place to play for an opponent.”

Why does Kory Falite always seem to rise to the occasion when playing Maine?

“You’ll always find a player that plays particularly well against a certain team. I think Kory just enjoys competing against the best, that’s when his concentration and awareness is at its highest. You can’t play a team as good as Maine, historically, and not be at your very best. Your best players rise to that occasion and I think he certainly exhibits that.”

Does Carter Hutton thrive on being the number one goalie down the stretch?

“That is one position where the numbers tend to bare things out a bit. We’ve said over and over that we have two phenomenal goaltenders. Given the dimensions and the style that we want to play, the transition game we’d like to incorporate, Hutton gives us the best opportunity to play that way while still being very fundamental and calm in the net

to make the big saves when we need them. They're both very good, but Carter has shown he has a few more tools in his toolbox to help us at this point."

How much of Maine's home ice advantage is negated due to the absence of Scott Darling next weekend?

"There are a lot of ways to look at that. I'm not sure it means their fans are going to go mute on them. I think it could amplify the confidence of any player that wears a Black Bear uniform, whether it is Joe MacDonald or Dave Wilson. That fan base gets a lot out of its team and that team gets a lot out of their fan base. It's a non-factor to me, if anything I think situations like this bring an opportunity for a team to come together with a more acute focus."

How important is it to have a strong group of seniors with experience headed into the playoffs?

"It's all negligible unless you play, respond and execute. It is better than having 15 freshman, but there are advantages having young teams in those situations as well. At the end of the day I guess you can say, you talk about being in close games, you've watched it, but once you've experienced it there is no way you can duplicate that—it is a tangible experience. We hope we use that wisdom when playing in a tough place like Maine. We've had success recently in the playoffs. In this league it is tough to get in the playoffs and once you get in, if you don't have home ice it's difficult to advance. We had a good experience last year and took Boston University to three games two years ago, so that's something we will lean on a bit."