

## **Preseason Teleconference with Maine Head Coach Maria Lewis.**

### **Would you like to talk a little about the team and your expectations?**

I think we will be a little more skilled this year than last year. We had a gap in talent from our better players those lower down on the depth chart. I think this year with adjustments to the roster and rookies coming in that the gap has closed quite a bit. So I think we will be a little more fun to watch and a little faster and a little more skilled and hopefully it comes together a little sooner rather than later.

### **Non-conference schedule to begin the year - what will you work on in that period of time?**

We've got to sort out our goaltending. Brittany Ott did an amazing job last year, but I think Kylie Smith and Candice Currier are going to have something to say about that. They will want to prove something and get more playing time. Obviously it's a good opportunity for our new players, we have eight of them, to get adjusted to the level and understand what it is we are trying to do. A lot like what the coaches said before, making the adjustment and making an impact right away, they all have it on their minds and its easier said than done. I think those games early on are good for them to get adjusted and for our upperclassmen to continue to improve and continue to get better and hopefully we can come together as a team at that time.

### **Players you expect to take another step from previous years / breakout player.**

I actually expect every player on our roster to improve this year. They all have the ability to do that. Danielle Ward, a transfer from Division III Southern Maine, has been outstanding for us and early on in the preseason. She has been unbelievable so I think she will take another step forward. Everyone across the board even our captain Dawn Sullivan. She improved a lot as a junior, especially as a captain in a leadership role. She has done an amazing job but I think this year she will contribute more. Kayla Kaluzny who we have moved up to forward this year, played defense last year. I think she will be able to contribute and fill some of the gaps left by Jennie Gallo who graduated last year.

### **In terms of building off making the playoffs last year, talk about goals of the team this year and what you expect / where the team is heading this year.**

We didn't really show our best in the tournament so it's good to have that experience. Moving forward we just want to continue to get better and want to continue to compete and continue to push ourselves as far as we can go. We're not going to set hard fast goals in terms of we need to have this certain number of wins or we have to win the first round of the playoffs. We need to set process goals of just getting better and believing in ourselves more and with every hurdle and everything that comes our way. We need to be mentally tough to overcome all of our challenges and play our game and not really worry about anything else we can't control. We can control ourselves and how hard we compete. Our goals are to continue to get better and improve compete work together as a team and continue to push ourselves.

**Freshmen to look for that will make a significant impact right away.**

Brittney Huneke, on defense coming from Minnesota, she's got skill and talent and our defense has typically been big defensive defensemen that started to rush the puck a little bit in the second half of the season last year. Huneke brings an element of skill that maybe we didn't have before. Jenny More upfront coming out of Notre Dame has proven to be somebody that can play at a very high level and also Tori Pasquarello who played for Brampton last year. She is a very determined kid who has a bit of an edge to her that I think could definitely go a long way for us and she will continue to improve everyday. Those are three right off the bat. We have a goaltender that we have redshirting this year, Megann Treacy. She's a big 5'9 goalie who is a little unassuming off the ice but on the ice is really quick and she will take the year to groom, but I expect big things from her in the future as well.

**Comment on the strength of the league and how important it is to play teams like that night in and night out.**

Well I definitely think we have the best parity in the country, there's no doubt in my mind about that. We can play with any team, not us Maine, but the teams in our league can play with anyone. I spent three years out in the WCHA and I know the mindset out there and I know where things are at and I think that there isn't a gap I think that we can compete with any team and it's good for us because eastern teams, that's where the tradition is, that's where the history is. We've had programs 30-40 years you know Providence, being one of the oldest programs in the country and I think there is a lot to be said for us being able to compete with the big money out in the midwest. Players choosing to come east rather than west is huge for our league as well and we'll keep getting better we try not to concern ourselves too much with everything else but within our own league. You know it's strong we can attract recruits we have great history and tradition we have great arenas to play in and it's a lot of fun for the student athletes who come and play in the east to be a part of what we have.