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WOMEN'S LEAGUE

PRESS RELEASE



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LOADED UNH THE ODDS-ON FAVORITE *BC, Providence expected to apply the most pressure*

The annual preseason coaches' poll has anointed the University of New Hampshire as the preseason favorite. The Wildcats, who won the regular season title in 2003-04 and shared it with Providence last season, were nearly a unanimous selection as the team to beat this year, garnering six of a possible seven first-place votes. Coaches are not allowed to vote for their own team.

A big part of the expectations placed on UNH this year arise from the retention the team boasts – only one significant player from last season's roster was lost. The opposite is true of the University of Connecticut, which lost over half of last year's regular squad, a squad that finished as runner-up in the Hockey East tournament. Consequently, the Huskies are only predicted to finish fourth this year, tied with Maine.

Three-time defending tournament champion Providence finished second in the preseason poll, just six points ahead of third-place Boston College. The BC roster is loaded with young snipers eager to threaten the establishment.

Northeastern was slotted to finish sixth again, followed by new Hockey East entries Vermont (seventh) and Boston University (eighth). This will be the first varsity season for the BU women's hockey team.

The Women's Hockey East Association is an eight-team, Division-I college hockey conference, with offices based in Wakefield, Mass. Charter members UNH, Northeastern and Providence combined to win 15 ECAC conference championships prior to the new league's inaugural season of 2002-03.

2005-06 Preseason Coaches' Poll

<u>Team (1st Place Votes)</u>	<u>Pts</u>
1. New Hampshire (6)	55
2. Providence (2)	49
3. Boston College	43
4. Connecticut	36
Maine	36
6. Northeastern	26
7. Vermont	20
8. Boston University	15

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