



NORTH AMERICAN HOCKEY LEAGUE WEEKLY RELEASE

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Press Release Prepared By Brian McDonough, NAHL Director of Marketing & Communications
 Phone: (612) 929-2171 • Fax: (214) 975-2250 • bmcdonough@nahl.com • www.nahl.com

STANDINGS

North Division

TEAM	GP	W-L-OTL	PTS	PCT	GF	GA
St. Louis	31	25-5-1	51	.823	138	81
Mahoning Valley	31	19-9-3	41	.661	126	94
Marquette	31	19-10-2	40	.645	115	108
Alpena	31	17-12-2	36	.581	99	94
USNTDP	32	15-15-2	32	.500	113	118
Traverse City	31	11-14-6	28	.452	88	110

South Division

TEAM	GP	W-L-OTL	PTS	PCT	GF	GA
Wichita Falls	32	21-10-1	43	.672	113	94
Fairbanks	30	19-9-2	40	.667	84	62
Topeka	27	15-8-4	34	.630	83	66
Alaska	31	14-15-2	30	.484	92	117
Kenai River	32	8-18-6	22	.344	89	137
Texas	34	9-22-3	21	.309	85	123

Central Division

TEAM	GP	W-L-OTL	PTS	PCT	GF	GA
North Iowa	28	20-7-1	41	.732	106	66
Springfield	34	17-14-3	37	.544	123	119
So. Minnesota	30	14-11-5	33	.550	115	116
Fargo-Moorhead	30	12-16-2	26	.433	105	110
Bismarck	31	12-17-2	26	.419	83	114
Alexandria	26	9-15-2	20	.385	92	120

LEADING SCORERS

PLAYER	TEAM	P	GP	G	A	PTS
Cardwell, Adam	WIC	F	30	19	31	50
Walters, Shea	NIO	F	28	12	38	50
Graham, Derek	MVY	F	31	23	24	47
Salazar, Luke	WIC	F	32	20	24	44
Warda, Ben	STL	F	31	10	31	41
Everett, Grant	WIC	F	31	13	26	39
Patterson, Cory	SPR	F	33	17	20	37
Bozoian, Sam	STL	F	30	13	24	37

(three players tied with 36)

LEADING GOALTENDERS

PLAYER	TEAM	GPI	MINS	W-L-OTL	GAA	SPCT
Reichard, Cody	FBX	26	1540:50	16-9-0	1.95	.936
Moss, Robby	NIO	20	1197:57	16-3-1	1.95	.938
Merriam, Bryce	TPK	24	1455:14	12-8-4	2.23	.903
Johnson, Mike	STL	15	848:30	11-2-1	2.40	.909
Bartus, Garrett	MVY	18	1070:38	12-3-2	2.52	.917

GOALS

PLAYER	TEAM	P	GP	G
Graham, Derek	MVY	F	31	23
O'Kane, Kyle	STL	F	26	21

(two players tied with 20)

ASSISTS

PLAYER	TEAM	POS	GP	A
Walters, Shea	NIO	F	28	38
Cardwell, Adam	WIC	F	30	31
Warda, Ben	STL	F	31	31

PLUS/MINUS

PLAYER	TEAM	POS	GP	+/-
Merrifield, Mike	STL	F	31	+19

(three players tied at +18)

Texas alive and well

Tornado brewing down South after sweep

Wins haven't been easy to come by for the Texas Tornado this season, making its two-game sweep over the Topeka RoadRunners last week-end all the more meaningful.

"We've been working towards this outcome for quite awhile," said Tornado coach-GM **Dwight Mullins**, whose team improved to 9-22-3 on the season. "We've played well, but haven't earned the win at the end of the night, so to get these two, hard-fought wins will go a long ways as far as regaining some confidence."



John Bullis

On Friday, the Tornado bested the RoadRunners in a shootout, 3-2.

Justin Lee and **Ben Van Lare** tallied for Texas in regulation, with **Gustav Bengtson** and **Andrew Blazek** notching shootout goals.

Between the pipes, **Thomas Callaghan** turned aside 30 shots.

Five different players rang up goals for Texas the next night as it skated to a 5-3 in over Topeka. **Adam Mitchell** recorded the game-winning goal, with **Sam Goodwin** and **John Bullis** each adding two assists. Callaghan picked up the win in net with 26 saves.

"I thought we competed hard physically, and we've been able to insert a few guys into our lineup that like to get involved and that's contagious," said Mullins.

The Tornado was energized by the return of Bullis. In his first weekend back since missing 13 weeks with an injury, the 20-year-old from Frisco, Texas, responded with spark and enthusiasm.

Blazek, a 19-year-old from Pittsburgh who saw his first weekend of action after being traded from Des Moines of the USHL, also paid immediate dividends.

"Being able to add John and Andrew to our lineup gives us instant impact in terms of speed and grit," said Mullins. "Both players have added a fresh feel and energy and really give us depth upfront."

The Tornado is also benefiting from the acquisition of Bengtson. He was picked up in a trade from Cedar Rapids of the USHL at Thanksgiving and has four goals for seven points in 13 games with Texas.

"He's really added an offensive spark that we were lacking early on in the season," said Mullins.

Callaghan, 19, also played a big role in Texas' success last weekend. The New Wilmington, Pa., native has been in net for six of the Tornado's wins this season and now holds a save percentage over .900.

Story continued at nahl.com...



LAST WEEK'S SCORES/HIGHLIGHTS

Thursday, December 27

Traverse City 1 @ Marquette 4 (MAR: Christian, 27 saves)

Friday, December 28

Fargo-Moorhead 1 @ Bismarck 5 (BIS: Maggard, GWG, 2A, +1)

Traverse City 4 @ Marquette 6 (MAR: Weight, G, GWG, +1)

Wichita Falls 3 @ St. Louis 5 (STL: Warda, G, A, +1)

Topeka 2 @ Texas 3 (SO) (TEX: Lee, G, A)

Saturday, December 29

Fargo-Moorhead 8 @ Bismarck 1 (FM: Klein-Collins, 2G, 2A, +2)

Springfield 5 @ North Iowa 4 (SPR: Greco, 2G, A)

Alexandria 3 @ Southern Minnesota 2 (ALX: Nesper, GWG, A, +1)

Wichita Falls 1 @ St. Louis 3 (STL: Miller, G, GWG, +1)

Topeka 3 @ Texas 5 (TEX: Goodwin-Bullis, 2A, +3)

Marquette 3 @ Traverse City 2 (MAR: Kesler, GWG)

Sunday, December 30

Springfield 3 @ North Iowa 5 (NI: Ring-Jarvi, G, GWG, +1)

Alexandria 9 @ Southern Minnesota 6 (SM: Freismuth, 2G, 2A, +3)

Monday, December 31

Traverse City 2 @ Alpena 3 (SO) (ALP: Anderson, 2G, SOG, +1)

Fargo-Moorhead 6 @ Bismarck 0 (FM: Philipp, 3G)

Springfield 4 @ North Iowa 6 (NI: Walters, 5A, +2)

NORTH PLAYER OF THE WEEK

Marquette goaltender **Beau Christian** recorded two wins last week as the Rangers skated to a three-game sweep over Traverse City. On Thursday, the 19-year-old turned aside 29 shots in a 4-1 win. The Moorhead, Minn., native followed that up with a 29-save performance on Saturday as the Rangers edged the North Stars, 3-2.

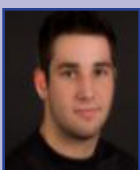


"Beau has been playing very well for us. He competes as hard as anyone on our team and puts us in position to win games," said Rangers coach **Randy Enders**. "He was steady all weekend and made the big save when we needed it, and that's all you can ask of your goaltenders and he didn't disappoint."

HONORABLE MENTION: Alpena forward **Russell Anderson**

SOUTH PLAYER OF THE WEEK

Texas goaltender **Thomas Callaghan** backstopped the Tornado to a pair of wins over Topeka last weekend, turning aside 61 shots. On Friday, the 19-year-old made 32 saves in a 3-2 shootout win. The next night, the New Wilmington, Pa., native stopped 29 shots as the Tornado downed the RoadRunners, 5-3.



"With the type of goaltending we're getting from Tommy right now, he allows us to make a few mistakes and still have chance to win the game," said Tornado coach-GM **Dwight Mullins**. "He's maturing into a very reliable netminder."

CENTRAL PLAYER OF THE WEEK

Alexandria forward **Luke Nesper** rang up three goals and three assists last weekend as the Blizzard skated to a two-game sweep over Southern Minnesota. On Saturday, the 20-year-old scored the game-winning goal and an assist in a 3-2 triumph. The next day, the Eagle River, Wis., tallied two goals and two assists as the Blizzard derailed the Express, 9-6. He was also a plus-3 for the weekend.



"Luke is a very talented offensive player and he showed that last weekend," said Blizzard coach-GM **Brad Willner**. "We're looking forward to big things from him in the second half of the season."

THE WEEK AHEAD

all times local

Friday, January 4

Marquette @ Alpena, 7:00 pm

Alexandria @ Bismarck, 7:05 pm

Alaska @ Fairbanks, 7:30 pm

Fargo-Moorhead @ North Iowa, 7:30 pm

St. Louis @ Springfield, 7:30 pm

Wichita Falls @ Texas, 7:30 pm

Southern Minnesota @ Topeka, 7:05 pm

Saturday, January 5

Alexandria @ Bismarck, 7:05 pm

Alaska @ Fairbanks, 7:30 pm

Fargo-Moorhead @ North Iowa, 7:30 pm

St. Louis @ Springfield, 7:00 pm

Wichita Falls @ Texas, 7:30 pm

Southern Minnesota @ Topeka, 7:05 pm

Marquette @ Traverse City, 7:05 pm

Sunday, January 6

Traverse City @ Alpena, 5:00 pm

AROUND THE NAHL

WINTER TO QUINNIPIAC: Second-year Mahoning Valley forward **Miles Winter**, 19, has committed to Quinnipiac University (ECACHL) for next season. After 31 games this year, the Horsham, Pa., native has 16 goals for 31 points.

TWO ROADRUNNERS COMMIT: Second-year Topeka forward **Corey Jendras**, 20, has committed to the University of Connecticut (Atlantic Hockey) for next season, while defenseman **Eric Artman**, 18, will attend the Air Force Academy (Atlantic Hockey) for 2009-10.

FORMER 'RUNNER TO BEMIDJI STATE: Former Topeka forward **Ben Kinne** (2006-07) has committed to Bemidji State University (CHA) for next season. Last year with the RoadRunners, the St. Paul native scored 20 goals for 37 points in 59 games.

FIT TO BE TIED: With six points in three games last week, including a five-assist effort in a 6-4 win over Springfield, North Iowa forward **Shea Walters**, 19, is now tied with Wichita Falls' **Adam Cardwell**, 20, as the league's top scorer (50 points).

DYNAMIC DUO: St. Louis goaltenders **Cal Heeter**, 19, and **Mike Johnson**, 18, continue to impress, backstopping the Bandits to a pair of wins over Wichita Falls last weekend. Heeter made 23 saves in a 5-3 victory on Friday, while Johnson turned aside 26 shots in a 3-1 triumph the next night.

RENEAU ANSWERS CALL: In his first weekend of NAHL action, North Iowa goaltender **Zak Reneau**, 19, picked up a pair of wins over Springfield, turning aside 66 of 73 shots.

STILL STREAKING: With four more points last weekend, Alexandria forward **Luke Nesper**, 20, extended his scoring streak to 11 games (23 points).

OFFICIALS RECOGNIZED BY IIHF: One current NAHL official (**Craig Hanson**) and three former officials (**Paul Carnathan**, **Keith Kaval** and **Tom Sterns**) were appointed by the International Ice Hockey Federation to work IIHF-sanctioned events this season.