



PRESS RELEASE

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NOTRE DAME TO JOIN HOCKEY EAST IN 2013-2014 SEASON

NOTRE DAME, Ind. - The Hockey East Association and the University of Notre Dame announced today that Notre Dame has been accepted into the league as the 11th member school in the conference and will begin play starting with the 2013-14 season. The announcement came at a press conference on the ice at Notre Dame's new Compton Family Ice Arena.

"It is not an overstatement to say that this is one of the most significant days in the history of our conference," said Hockey East commissioner Joe Bertagna. "The addition of new institutions is always exciting but Notre Dame brings a unique set of qualities and circumstances to the continued growth of our league. We are proud to welcome Notre Dame into the fold and we look forward to getting to the many details that come with this announcement."

Hockey East began as a seven-member conference with Boston College, Boston University, Maine, UMass-Lowell, New Hampshire, Northeastern and Providence College making up the original members in the 1984-85 inaugural season. The conference has added teams on three occasions prior to today. Merrimack College was the eighth member beginning play in 1989-90, Massachusetts joined in 1994-95 and the University of Vermont became the 10th team in the 2005-06 season.

"We are excited to be joining Hockey East beginning in the 2013-14 season," said North Dame athletic director Jack Swarbrick. "Many factors played a role in our decision, but three were of special importance to us. The first two were the critical issues of the student-athlete experience and Notre Dame's fit with the other schools in the conference. But of special importance in this instance was our goal of giving our hockey program an unprecedented level of national exposure through our expanded partnership with the NBC Sports Group. Athletics at Notre Dame has always served as a platform for promoting the University."

Notre Dame is currently a member of the Central Collegiate Hockey Association (CCHA) and has had two stints in the CCHA during their 44-years of Division I hockey. Notre Dame has won two CCHA regular-season and tournament titles (2007 and 2009). Hockey East will be the third Division I conference that the Irish will have belonged to; the Irish started in the Western Collegiate Hockey Association (WCHA) from 1971-81, then moved to the CCHA from 1981-83 and again from 1992-2013. Notre Dame also played as a Division I independent from 1968-71 and 1984-92.

The current shift in conferences began with the Big Ten's decision to form their own hockey league beginning in 2013-14. That started the realignment process in both the WCHA and the CCHA that has occurred this past summer and fall.

"We are honored and pleased to join Hockey East for the 2013-14 season," said Notre Dame head coach Jeff Jackson. "It is an established league with a great tradition and outstanding programs that share Notre Dame's values. The exposure for our players and team in a major media and NHL market will be second to none. Hockey East's commitment to playing a smaller league schedule will allow us to enhance our home and non-conference schedule with traditional western and Big Ten rivals. This will allow us to bring a lot of great games to the Compton Family Ice Arena and create a more diverse, nationally televised schedule. We are grateful to Joe Bertagna and the Hockey East conference members for this tremendous opportunity."

Hockey East teams have faced off against Notre Dame 69 times dating back to 1970, most recently the Fighting Irish eliminated both Merrimack and New Hampshire from the 2011 NCAA Tournament at the Northeast Regional at the Verizon Wireless Arena in Manchester, N.H. to advance to their second appearance in the Frozen Four. This season, Notre Dame will face three Hockey East teams during the regular-season all at the Compton Family Ice Arena. Boston College visits on November 18 for the "Dedication Game", Northeastern will travel for a two-game series on December 2-3 and Boston University will play the Irish on New Year's Eve, December 31.

The Hockey East Association is a 10-team Division I college men's hockey conference founded in 1984 and an eight-team Division I women's league which began play in 2002-03. The men's league has won seven NCAA championships in the past 19 years. Since 1999, Hockey East has won five NCAA Championships and have placed 18 teams in the Frozen Four, along with 45 teams in the NCAA Tournament.

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