

BOSTON COLLEGE HEAD COACH JERRY YORK

Opening Statement on last week's series with Merrimack and the upcoming matchup with BU on Friday

"The weekend with Merrimack, I said before, I thought the four teams that had home ice was just a fraction of a difference that were going to come and travel here. Sure enough, with the exception of Northeastern's second game with UMass, everything stayed tight and we were no exception. Merrimack and ourselves had a really good playoff series, I thought they battled extremely hard. We matched it, we were hard and intense, our goaltender was outstanding this weekend. Probably the difference in the two teams was just the ability of Joe (Woll) to make some critical saves for us. It's always terrific on Sunday to look forward to the Garden and the chance to compete for the Lamoriello Trophy. Our kids are very, very excited, it's snowing, it's hockey weather, there are a lot of good things going here in the Hockey East landscape."

What are you expecting to be the difference what to be to emerge as the champion?

"It could be what happened against Merrimack this weekend, on the Saturday night, we had a goal by Chris Grando, who had not scored since early November, so it comes from unexpected people in our lineup, Mike Booth scored his first goal of the year in that game. Here is a real critical game for us, we talk about goals by committee because we don't have that 24/25-goal scorer but we have been able to find goals from different sources. Those two unlikely players to score goals came through in the clutch for us and that's happened in the past for all of our teams, all of sudden the fourth line left wing scores a huge goal. I think we are going to need something like that during that game on Friday night, whether it's a defenseman or a third or fourth line player to chip in for a big goal. Goals are hard to get; the goaltenders seem to get better and better every year. These four goaltenders have had terrific years, I think they are pivotal players in the chase for the trophy."

Oh having such a young team this season

"It's been really unique in that aspect, usually you draw from four classes and you talk about senior leadership and the veteran players in big, big games. We will have that hopefully next year and the year after, this year it's been unique, but a lot of fun too to see the growth of the players. I think in the 24 years I have coached in Hockey East this has been the most competitive top to bottom that I have seen. I am not saying we have the high, high end team that some of us that have had in the past, that have been No. 1 in the country or that are expected to win a national championship. The competition in the league has been terrific and I wouldn't be surprised if one of these four teams that advances to the national tournament can bring home the trophy to Joe Bertagna's office up there. We are all getting better, it's kind of an underrated conference this year as far of, we aren't going to have a No. 1 seed, it's been a long time since that has happened. We have a chance to do something very special, hopefully our team gets hot and we are the team. I really think of these four, someone is going to emerge and bring home a trophy."

What is it about Terriers that makes them so difficult to handle?

"I think it's the best rivalry in college hockey, I really do. Other people might talk about different rivalries, Minnesota and Wisconsin, around the nation and I am sure there are good rivals, but I think rivalry, the history of it, the turn of the century, starting the series with our crosstown rival. Two

outstanding programs, well documented the national championships that we both have and the caliber of players we attract to our schools. They have been well coached over the years, whether is Jack Kelley or Jack Parker, or now Dave Quinn, they have always been a formidable opponent for us and for anyone else, and hopefully we have been the same for them over the years. Our players really enjoy playing BU, we have terrific respect for the program they have and the team they have, this year especially. It brings out the best in both of us, I think we all need that type of rivalry, some of us don't have it in other sports, but certainly here at BC we have one in Boston University."

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NORTHEASTERN HEAD COACH JIM MADIGAN

Opening statement about the UMass series and Friday's game with Providence

"It was a tough series, the first game was a 3-2 game, we scored later in that third period. UMass is a young team, but they play faster they have a lot energy and it was a tough series. The second night, we were up 2-0 after the first period and that second period we were able to create some separation, but all the way through it was a grind and our top line (Gaudette-Sikura-Stevens) really played well for us in both games and we got solid goaltending. We knew it was going to be a competitive series, it was, the second game score wasn't indicative of the series by any means, because that first game could have gone either way. And now we are just focused in on Providence College and getting ready for them on Friday night."

Talk about Jeremy Davies and what he has meant to the program?

"We recruited him to be an offensive type defenseman and he certainly hasn't let us down. He came in as a freshman last year and had a real good year taking on a lot of meaningful minutes for us playing 25 minutes a game. This year he has just elevated his game, he plays on most nights 27/28 minutes, because we track time on ice. He's smart, he's a puck mover, he's our quarterback back there. Since January 1, we lost a senior defenseman this year, Jeremy then even elevated his game more. He came back from playing in the Spengler Cup representing Canada, where they won a gold medal and his second half has been tremendous. His numbers point to being very good offensively, but he's very good defensively, he's really smart, he's an intelligent player and sometimes I don't think he gets enough credit for his defensive play and how he breaks our team out of our own zone, because they just see the offense. He's a catalyst, him with those other three guys, when they are on the ice, they scored a goal in here on Saturday night, which was kind of a tic tac toe play, Davies was obviously involved in the play with those other three, we are fortunate to have Jeremy back there.

How patient does your team have to be to beat the three-man forecheck?

"You said it in the opening part of your question, patience is what we preach. Teams know how we break out, video doesn't lie, we will make some adjustments here and there, but we need patience and we are fortunate we have patience on our break out. We have got some veterans back there who have got some poise and some composure in Davies, Shea, Williams, Cecere, and Owen. We need patience and we are comfortable in scrums, we don't mind scrumming it up and getting on the right side of the puck and body position. We will throw in a few different wrinkles just to make sure we are not too predictable. The opposition is countering that, UMass was pressing a lot and they way they forecheck. I thought we were able to break it down and we backed them off by doing a couple things in that series

to create some rushes for us and eventually some goals. So if you do that you push back that forecheck a little bit.”

Can you talk about the team defense?

“We put an emphasis this year at defending better in our own zone, it’s all five guys plus our goaltender in our own zone, not that we didn’t emphasize it in previous years, but we just knew we needed to get better there. We thought we were going to have enough offense this year that would sustain us during the course of the year and that defense is what has allowed us to get to where we are right now. We led the league in goals against this year, overall, we were very good in the 36 games we have played with our goals against. We have had tremendous goaltending, which helps in that regard, they young guy in net Cayden Primeau has just been tremendous and consistent from day one. Our defense corps has been really good, and our forwards have made the sacrifice, we block a lot of shots, we make the sacrifice to get pucks out. Our whole mantra is the least time we are playing in our zone, the more offensive zone time for us. Our kids like playing offense and we work a lot on our offense here at Northeastern. Coach (Jason) Smith has them defending less, has them defending quickly in our own zone, to spend less time in our own zone and Coach Keefe is working them going on the offensive attack, playing in our offensive zone. So, it’s a good recipe for us and our kids realize, hey the quicker we can defend and exit our own zone cleanly, we will have more time on the offense.”

On solidifying an NCAA spot

“Our focus is on winning Hockey East, this is a major tournament. This is the best league in the country, there is a lot of prestige winning Hockey East. We are excited about the opportunity to play Providence and a goal of ours in to win Hockey East and we know we have to get through Providence first, but we are not looking beyond this weekend. This is a great opportunity for our young men and they take it seriously because this league is tough top to bottom and winning Hockey East is a tremendous accomplishment, as it is for the other three schools whose goal it is. That’s our goal, regardless of what we have secured or haven’t secured, we want to win Hockey East and get in to the NCAA tournament, through the Hockey East Championship.”

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PROVIDENCE HEAD COACH NATE LEAMAN

Opening Statement on Maine series and playing Northeastern on Friday

“Obviously a real good playoff series with Maine, in the first game they scored two goals on us really quickly and it was a game we were kind of chasing the game the whole game and managed to win it late on a 4x4 play, so that was a good win for us. I thought the second night, I loved our first period, I thought we had a little bit of a letdown in the second period, they’re a good team and they took advantage of that and we closed the game out after that. A hard-fought series, not that that wasn’t expected against a good Maine team, we are very happy to be moving on.”

On the challenge of facing a complete team in Northeastern

“Well you have to play a complete game against complete teams and we knew that when we played the series earlier in the year against them. I think their defense probably isn’t given as much credit, but I think they’re a team that can get out front early and forces teams to chase games a little bit. I think that

helps their defense, so you have to play a complete game. That was the message sent to our team yesterday, I thought there were a couple times in the series against Maine that we had letdowns. You can't have letdowns going forward, you have to play 60 minutes."

Assessing your team top to bottom right now

"I think the big thing early in the season was were so young that we were struggling with battling through some adversity. When our opponent would score first or our opponent kind of carry the play for stretches, we were battling with it. We were young, and we would just get away from what our game plan was. That was a big thing that was addressed at Christmas time with our team, we showed our team the top eight teams in the country and their record when opponents score the goal first. I think that was what kind of set home to our guys was that it's a long game, it's a 60-minute game and we can't play the scoreboard, we have got to play the game. Our second half, what have been really impressed with is that we have taken a big step in that direction. The Maine game falling behind 2-0 three minutes in, for our guys to just say we are going to stay with it, keep going and keep going, and we played great that game, but for our guys to get rewarded for staying with it, that was big for us. Our second half, we have really done a good job of that."

On the experience factor in the Northeastern matchup

"I am actually really happy that our series with Maine was tight, because it was the first playoff game for a number of our guys. Brian Pinho has done a tremendous job being the captain this year and leading our team. We have Brian and Rob Hennessey that are the two seniors that kind of play for us all the time, but besides that, it's a younger corps behind them. I talked about this last week, when Brian came into our team, the team the won the national championship he was a freshman. He could look up to Noel Accari and Ross Mauermann, there were so many guys he could look up to and say alright this is how we approach a game, this is how we play a game, this is how we stick through a game. Brian has had to shoulder a lot of that this year and I actually think Brian's done one of the best jobs that I have ever had in a captain. It's all part of the mindset too, I don't buy into that you have to be old to win in college hockey, you definitely need some leadership and you definitely need some guys that are there that can go out and make a play and settle you down at times. We have that with Brian, we have that with Foley, with have that with Vinny, we have that with Bryson. We have got some guys like that, I think the youth bring a good energy, the youth brings an energy that they come to the rink each day and get better and when you do have a young team the growth curve can keep getting better and better and improving. I have seen us get mentally tougher in the second half. I still know we have better hockey in us and I know we are just starting to hit on some of the levels we can get some of our players at. Bailey Conger had a heck of a series and Jason O'Neill had a heck of a series, those are two guys that I know we can get to another level. I know a lot of our sophomores are still just starting to scratch what they can become. With a young team you can keep improving and you know there is so much more improvement in your game. You know that as a coach, if you can get them to that level, they can really do special things."

On the impressive year Jacob Bryson has had

"He kind of does a lot for us there, outstanding edges as a skater and a very, very high-end IQ as a player. Very rarely does he get in trouble at all as a defenseman. He's done a better job this year of getting involved in the offense, along with Spenser Young that has been a good positive for our guys. We

have told them all season, we are a better team with Jake shoots the puck, but he can do it all for us, he usually leads our team in minutes and I know usually he is on the other team's scouting reports. He can break pucks out with the best of them, he makes good decisions, he knows when to jump in the rush. The best thing about him is that has this poise about him, he never gets rattled ever on the bench, never in the game. He has great poise, there is not situation that's too big for him."

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BOSTON UNIVERSITY HEAD COACH DAVID QUINN

Opening statement on the UConn series and the matchup with Boston College

"It was certainly two hard fought tough games that's for sure. I thought UConn played really well, we have had great games with them all year. I don't know if we are going to see a team that competes harder than they do. The first game, I thought we were fortunate in a lot of ways, I didn't think we played well, but we were opportunistic. I did think we got better as the game went on, but we weren't ready to match they intensity level of UConn from the drop of the puck and we battled back from three one-goal deficits. I like how we answered the bell after they went up each time, we scored quickly and then we got a big goal in overtime from Bobo (Carpenter). The second night I thought we were ready to play, I thought we played a really good first period, got up 1-0 and it looked like we got nervous with the puck. After watching the film, granted give UConn credit, but I really thought there were a lot of times where we just kind of panicked with the puck and gave it to them, our puck management wasn't great. Our penalty kill was good and we got a power play goal. We had to defend more than we normally do and more than we wanted. I thought we really defended well, the shot totals obviously favored UConn, but we actually had some great chances, we actually had more scoring chances, our chances were great. I thought we did a really good job defending, unfortunately because we had to a lot. I thought we showed some of the things we are going to have to show moving forward, we defended hard, we competed, we didn't hurt ourselves when things were a little shaky or they were putting some pressure on ice. We took some icings and we learned to live another day, where as I felt earlier in the season we might have tried and done something too much and the puck might have ended up in the back of our net. There were some positives for sure, but we are going to have to play better moving forward if we are going to advance."

Talk about the top four seeds advancing and the tightly matched battle in all three games. Who are you looking to step up?

"Well this time of the year it's always your goalie, you start there. Show me a team that's done well in the playoffs with a bad goalie and that would be the first time you ever see that. It certainly starts with your goalie, Jake (Oettinger) has had a really good second half, he's the reason why we were able to dig ourselves out of the big hole we had early in the year. Certainly we look to him to lead the way. Obviously Brandon Hickey has had a great second half, him and (Dante) Fabbro have done a great job on the blueline. Greenway-Tkachuk-Melanson, that line has been very good and the Bowers-Cockerill-Carpenter line has been good. To me, that's where we are going to win or lose in those areas. Our D corps have played well, but to me when you ask that question, the first I think about is first and foremost is the goaltending."

What has Logan Cockerill meant to the club and what he has meant to the offense provided in the second half?

“That line has been really good Cockerill-Bowers-Carpenter, I think Logan has 12 points in his last 14 games. He has a lot more skill than maybe people anticipated, people always talk about his speed, because it’s so eye-opening, but he can makes play, he scored a heck of a goal the other night. That’s great poise he showed, against a really good goalie. He hounds the puck, he’s strong on the puck, he’s really come on over the second half and it’s been fun to have that line together. They have been productive offensively, I guess people would call them our second line, but if you look at the goal totals, that’s a lot of goals for a second line. I think we have two first lines. Obviously because of Greenway and Tkachuk’s size, I think they get a lot of the attention, but Bobo has 19 goals, Bowers has 16 and Cockerill has eight. That’s a lot of goals from your ‘second line.’ That’s why in my mind, we have two first lines.”

On Greenway and Tkachuk playing discipline in the last series

“You look at our team total for penalty minutes and they are high, I always look at how many penalties we had to kill and I think we are in the bottom three or four in the league. Greenway and Tkachuk just draw so much attention to them, Greenway in particular, he’s kind of the measuring stick of toughness in college hockey. Anytime we play somebody, 18 skaters on the other team want to take a run at Greenway to see how tough they are. Tkachuk is in that mold as well, so usually when they are in the offensive zone and the goalie covers it up and there is a big scrum at the net. One of the things we talked about with them, if there is not a scrum at the net, then they aren’t doing there job. They need to be pissing people off with the way that they play. I think they have shown a lot of discipline throughout the season, rarely do they ever put us down a man, if they do get penalties a lot of times it’s coincidental. It’s an emotional game, if someone is cross-checking you and punching you in the head, it’s easy for people on the outside to say turn the other check, oh yeah, let’s see how you react when someone is cross-checking and punching you after a whistle, it’s not easy to do, we are all human beings. If we are going to be successful, they have to control their emotions and for the most part I think they’ve done a good job and I thought they did a great job of it this weekend.”

What is it like to have such high standards at your school?

“To me, it’s what makes these jobs so much fun. You want to be involved in high stake games, you want to be able to compete for championships. The pressure is on, no doubt about it, that’s why you get involved in sports. These are the games you love to play, would we have loved to have won a few more games earlier in the year, where we know we were in the national tournament, absolutely. I am sure Jerry (York) feels the same way, but we are both in similar situations and there is such a fine line. I am sure you look at your schedule and you go back to the game, if we had won that game or you lose a game in overtime or you lose a game with 16 seconds to go. The impact of those games is huge, especially when you are doing it against teams that are in top five in the Pairwise. I mean, a goal here and a goal there, you go from 17 to 11 in the Pairwise, it’s crazy the fine line. I have always said, your program in my mind is always measured by how bad is your bad year and both BC and BU still have a chance to win a trophy and make the national tournament. You win the Hockey East Championship and you’re playing in the national tournament, that’s a pretty good year. Around here and up the street, some people may think that’s a bad year or down year. That’s the great part of coaching at these institutions.”

