



# Weekend Preview

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## BC-BU HEAVYWEIGHT BOUT WELCOMES NEXT ROUND *Battle of Merrimack Valley key for both squads involved*

The bell is about to ring on the latest round in the everlasting bout between Boston College and Boston University. Even more so than usual, this particular round promises to be something special.

Both teams enter this weekend's home-and-home series on enviable hot streaks. The BC Eagles have won six straight overall, the best string of victories for any Hockey East team this season. Their last loss? That came December 3rd – at Boston University.

That BU triumph was the fifth straight in league play for the Terriers, who now have a run of seven consecutive Hockey East wins, the most by any team since BU last did it in 2001-02. A win Friday would make it eight straight, the best such run since 1998-99.

This long-standing rivalry is one of the best and best known in Hockey East, and every year adds a new chapter to the epic. Recent history has backed the value of this legacy. In 2002-03, the Eagles managed the first sweep of the three-game regular season series by either team since 1994-95, only to surrender to the Terriers in both the Beanpot championship game and the Hockey East semifinal. Last year, BC added the Beanpot title game to another regular season series sweep as part of a 23-1-3 overall run in midseason. Hardly fazed, the eighth-seeded Terriers took two-of-three games from the top-seeded Eagles in the Hockey East quarterfinals.

Another hot team is UMass Lowell, boasting a nine-game unbeaten streak after finally potting its first league wins of the season last weekend. Prior to that, Lowell was the only team trailing Merrimack, who has had a rough first half in Hockey East play. The Warriors will need to start picking up some wins if they hope to secure their ninth straight postseason berth, a streak unmatched by four other Hockey East teams. If Lowell keeps up its current pace, Merrimack will have to focus on edging out either Northeastern or Providence, who face-off in the third home-and-home set of the weekend. The Friars won the first game of the regular season series, 3-1, back on November 14. Both teams are seeking to emerge from moderate slumps and each is likely eyeing the other as an opportunity.

Maine will visit UMass for two games to echo one of the best matches in Hockey East his-

tory: last year's championship. The Black Bears outlasted the Minutemen, 2-1, in triple overtime with goaltenders Jimmy Howard and Gabe Winer combining for 112 saves. The Maine offense chased Winer from the first rematch earlier this season, potting four goals in the first two periods en route to a 6-2 win.

UNH, eager to recover from an exhausting 9-8 loss to Dartmouth, hosts Yale on Saturday. Strangely, the last four games in this series have ended in favor of the visiting team.

### RANKINGS

TEAM	PWR	USAT	USCHO
Boston College	4	2	2
Boston University	4	8	8
New Hampshire	7	6	6
UMass Lowell	9	–	–
Maine	15	15	15
Northeastern	21	–	–
Massachusetts	26	–	–

### RESULTS / SCHEDULE

#### Tuesday, January 11

Boston College 1, at Yale 0

#### Wednesday, January 12

Dartmouth 9, New Hampshire 8 #

#### Friday, January 14

Boston Univ. at Boston College (NESN) \*

Maine at Massachusetts \*

Merrimack at UMass Lowell \*

Northeastern at Providence \*

#### Saturday, January 15

Boston College at Boston Univ. (NESN) \*

Maine at Massachusetts \*

UMass Lowell at Merrimack \*

Providence at Northeastern \*

Yale at New Hampshire (NHPTV)

\* Hockey East game

# Commissioners' Cup series

Games start at 7pm unless indicated.

All times Eastern



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## HOCKEY EAST STANDINGS

Team	GP	W	L	T	Pts	Overall	HE Offense	HE Defense
Boston University	10	9	1	0	18	13-7-0	4.20 GPG	2.10 GAPG
New Hampshire	10	8	1	1	17	14-5-2	3.50 GPG	2.10 GAPG
Boston College	10	6	1	3	15	12-3-3	2.70 GPG	1.60 GAPG
Maine	10	6	3	1	13	11-8-3	3.60 GPG	2.10 GAPG
Massachusetts	11	4	6	1	9	10-11-1	2.64 GPG	3.73 GAPG
Northeastern	10	3	6	1	7	7-11-2	2.50 GPG	2.80 GAPG
UMass Lowell	9	2	5	2	6	11-5-2	2.67 GPG	3.56 GAPG
Providence	12	2	8	2	6	6-12-2	2.25 GPG	3.08 GAPG
Merrimack	12	1	10	1	3	8-14-2	1.83 GPG	4.17 GAPG