



# Weekend Preview

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## TOP TEAMS READY TO TANGO *BU-Maine, BC-UNH highlight weekend action*

It's only halfway through the season, but the "cream" has already risen to the top.

BC, BU, Maine and UNH, the league's traditional powerhouses, currently occupy the top four spots in the Hockey East standings with a relatively comfortable six-point cushion above the rest of the field.

But that may be about to change.

UMass Lowell, undefeated in 12 straight with four straight league wins, is charging hard while Maine, last year's Hockey East champion, hasn't been as dominant as usual.

This weekend will be a tough test for the Black Bears, who host Boston University for a pair of games. The Terriers rang off seven straight wins in league play before running into Boston College last week and getting uncer-

emoniously swept by the second-ranked Eagles. Chances are they'll be seeking swift redemption, and a win or two at Maine would bring just that.

In their first meeting of the year, BU outlasted Maine, 2-1, in Boston in the first "big" start of walk-on goaltender John Curry's career. He earned it with back-to-back wins over Vermont and Providence, and cemented his status as BU's No. 1 guy in the 25-save effort vs. Maine.

He won't be able to catch the Black Bears off guard this time around, but Maine's Jimmy Howard is no secret either. Following a spectacular sophomore season, Howard has been strong but not unbeatable in his third year.

While BU and Maine open the weekend Friday on NESN, BC and UNH will have to stay focused for their own Friday matches before meeting each other on Saturday.

The Eagles host Northeastern Friday and are seeking a sweep of the season series. But the Huskies are notorious spoilers, as evidenced by a 3-0 win over BC last year that marked the only blemish in a 23-1-3 stretch for the Eagles in midseason. Their last meeting was particularly painful for Northeastern, however, as BC got a goal from Dave Spina with less than 30 seconds remaining in overtime to secure a 2-1 home victory.

UNH, meanwhile, will host Merrimack, a team in serious need of wins in league play. The Warriors' last visit to the Whittemore Center yielded a highly unexpected result: a 7-2 win for the visitors in one of the toughest home buildings in the league. That broke a drought

of 0-26-3 for Merrimack vs. UNH, but likely served as motivation for the Wildcats the next time they met, which ended 9-1 in favor of UNH. The first meeting this year was a 4-1 triumph for the Wildcats in mid-November.

UNH and Northeastern trade opponents Saturday when UNH visits BC (their first game this season) and Merrimack visits Northeastern. Elsewhere, host Massachusetts will be bent on breaking Lowell's hot streak, and Providence visits Brown for the annual Mayor's Cup.

### RANKINGS

TEAM	PWR	USAT	USCHO
Boston College	2	2	2
Boston University	5	11	11
New Hampshire	9	7	7
UMass Lowell	11	15	15
Maine	15	-	-
Northeastern	20	-	-
Massachusetts	29	-	-

### RESULTS / SCHEDULE

#### Tuesday, January 18

UMass Lowell 0, at Brown 0 (OT)

#### Friday, January 21

Boston University at Maine (NESN) \*

Northeastern at Boston College \*

Merrimack at New Hampshire \*

#### Saturday, January 22

Boston University at Maine (WABI) \*

New Hampshire at Boston College (CN8) \*

UMass Lowell at Massachusetts \*

Merrimack at Northeastern \*

Providence at Brown (Mayor's Cup)

\* Hockey East game

Games start at 7pm unless indicated.

All times Eastern



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**Fridays at 6pm on NESN**  
*(re-airs following Friday Night Ice)*  
 First show features segments on Blaise MacDonald, Tim Judy and more!

## HOCKEY EAST STANDINGS

Team	GP	W	L	T	Pts	Overall	HE Offense	HE Defense
Boston College	12	8	1	3	19	14-3-3	2.92 GPG	1.58 GAPG
Boston University	12	9	3	0	18	13-9-0	3.75 GPG	2.42 GAPG
New Hampshire	10	8	1	1	17	15-5-2	3.50 GPG	2.10 GAPG
Maine	12	7	3	2	16	12-8-4	3.58 GPG	2.08 GAPG
UMass Lowell	11	4	5	2	10	13-5-3	2.91 GPG	3.18 GAPG
Northeastern	12	4	6	2	10	8-11-3	2.83 GPG	2.58 GAPG
Massachusetts	13	4	7	2	10	10-12-2	2.54 GPG	3.69 GAPG
Providence	14	2	9	3	7	6-13-3	2.14 GPG	3.29 GAPG
Merrimack	14	1	12	1	3	8-16-2	1.79 GPG	4.14 GAPG