



MEN'S PRESS RELEASE

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MAINE, BC PREP FOR FROZEN FOUR

The countdown has begun for Boston College and Maine, as the two Hockey East squads prepare for the semifinals of the Frozen Four in St. Louis on Thursday, with the championship game set for Saturday. Three of the final teams, including BC and Maine, are making a return trip, while Michigan State is making its first appearance in the Frozen Four since 2001. The four opponents, however, know each other well.

The first semifinal is a rematch of last year's East Regional final, when Maine ousted Michigan State, 5-4. The 23-14-1 Black Bears earned their way to St. Louis by way of a 4-1 win over St. Cloud State and a 3-1 victory over Hockey East-counterpart UMass in the East Regional. The 24-13-3 Spartans bounced Boston University, 5-1, and Notre Dame, 2-1, to capture the Midwest Regional. It will be the 11th Frozen Four appearance for each program, though Tim Whitehead's crew has the more recent experience. In last year's semifinal, the Black Bears came up short against eventual NCAA champ Wisconsin, losing 5-2. Like Maine, the Spartans came into the NCAA tourney without having won the CCHA regular season or championship crown. However, they've gotten hot at the right time, and 5-foot-6 sophomore Jeff Lerg has been huge between the pipes, earning Midwest Most Outstanding Player honors in after allowing only two goals against BU and Notre Dame. At the other end of the ice, towering 6-foot-7 sophomore Ben Bishop (Des Peres, MO) of Maine is enjoying a homecoming of sorts (he was also drafted by the St. Louis Blues with the 85th pick overall in 2005), but the Black Bears were encouraged to see the lanky goaltender return to the ice from a groin injury just in time for the NCAAs.

However, it was senior captain Michel Léveillé (Levis, QC) who garnered Most Outstanding Player accolades in the East Regional, leading third-seeded Maine with a goal and two assists. Freshman Teddy Purcell (St. John's, NF) added three assists in a 4-1 win over St. Cloud State. By sweeping the East Regional, the Black Bears remain undefeated on neutral ice this season (5-0-1) and haven't lost a non-conference game all year, a good omen for St. Louis. Speaking of omens, the Black Bears even have a favorable voice in the press box, as ESPN's play-by-play announcer for the semifinals and championship game – Gary Thorne (Old Towne, ME) – is a Maine graduate. Michigan State and Maine have tangled 13 times since 1986, with the Spartans holding an 8-4-1 lead in the series. The Spartans have won two national championships (1966, 1986) and have played in four title games. Since the inception of Hockey East in 1985, Maine has won two titles (1993 and 1999) and appeared in five finals.

In the nightcap, two long-time adversaries get re-acquainted as Boston College (28-11-1) and North Dakota's Fighting Sioux (24-13-5) face off. The Eagles edged Coach Dave Hackstol's squad last year in a wild semifinal shoot-out, 6-5. This

year, goals might be more scarce, as BC's outstanding junior netminder Cory Schneider (Marblehead, MA) only allowed a single puck to get by him in the two regional games. His counterpart, ND's Philippe Lamoureux, surrendered seven goals in big wins over two high-powered teams, Michigan (8-5) and Minnesota (3-2), but was a wall against the Gophers in overtime of the West final. The Eagles come into St. Louis riding a 12-game winning streak – the longest of Coach Jerry York's tenure at the Heights – outscoring their opponents 55-19. During that stretch, the Eagles have relied on Schneider, balanced scoring, and effective special teams. BC has lit the lamp on the power-play 12 straight games, and 14 of its last 15 contests. In those 15 games, the Eagles converted 31.3 percent (20 for 64) of their power-play opportunities, while killing penalties at a 93.6 percent clip (73 of 78). Much of the scoring spark has come from senior Joe Rooney (Canton, MA) and a trio of high-flying sophomores – Brock Bradford (Burnaby, BC), Nathan Gerbe (Oxford, MI) and Benn Ferreira (Essex, MA) – while the league's leading scorer, Brian Boyle (Hingham, MA), has been rock-solid on defense since making the switch to the blue line.

The Fighting Sioux have won seven national championships between 1959 and 2000, but in 2001 the Eagles denied North Dakota title No. 8 when Krys Kolanos converted an overtime strike, giving BC its second NCAA crown. BC returned to the final last year after bumping off North Dakota (and avenging a 2005 quarterfinal loss), but lost to Wisconsin, 2-1. In the past decade, the Eagles have a 48-14 post-season record, for a .774 winning percentage, both tops in Division 1 hockey over that span. Maine is second, at 37-13 (.740 winning percentage). Should BC and Maine win, it would be the first time two Hockey East teams met for the NCAA crown since 1999, when Maine edged New Hampshire, 3-2 in overtime. If either team makes it to the final, it will be the 14th time in the past 17 years that Hockey East has sent a team to the championship game.



HOCKEY EAST in the NCAAs

March 23

East Regional, Rochester, NY
 Massachusetts 1, Clarkson 0 (OT)
 Maine 4, St. Cloud State 1

Midwest Regional, Grand Rapids, MI

Michigan State 5, Boston U. 1

March 24

Northeast Regional, Manchester, NH

Miami 2, New Hampshire 1
 Boston College 4, St. Lawrence 1

East Regional Final

Maine 3, Massachusetts 1

March 25

Northeast Regional Final

Boston College 4, Miami 0

Thursday, April 5

NCAA Semifinals, Scottrade Center, St. Louis, MO

Maine vs. Michigan State, 4pm ESPN2
 Boston College vs. N. Dakota, 8pm ESPN2

Saturday, April 7

NCAA Championship, Scottrade Center, St. Louis, MO

Teams TBD, 7pm ESPN

All times Eastern Daylight Time

2006-07 HOCKEY EAST STANDINGS

Team	GP	W	L	T	Pts	Overall	Goals	Goals Against
New Hampshire	27	18	7	2	38	26-11-2	96 (139)	62 (89)
Boston College	27	18	8	1	37	28-11-1	89 (135)	65 (87)
Boston University	27	13	6	8	34	20-10-9	69 (99)	51 (78)
Massachusetts	27	15	9	3	33	21-13-5	71 (109)	63 (91)
Maine	27	14	12	1	29	23-14-2	80 (131)	69 (95)
Vermont	27	12	10	5	29	18-16-5	55 (87)	56 (78)
Northeastern	27	9	13	5	23	13-18-5	60 (84)	66 (94)
Providence	27	9	15	3	21	10-23-3	66 (76)	71 (108)
UMass Lowell	27	7	16	4	18	8-21-7	51 (74)	76 (104)
Merrimack	27	3	22	2	8	3-27-4	28 (37)	86 (111)



2007 Division I Men's Ice Hockey Championship

www.NCAAsports.com

First Round

Second Round

Semifinals

Championship

All Times Eastern



Regional Sites

East: Blue Cross Arena
Rochester, New York
March 23-24

Northeast: Verizon Wireless Arena
Manchester, New Hampshire
March 24-25

West: Pepsi Center
Denver, Colorado
March 24-25

Midwest: Van Andel Arena
Grand Rapids, Michigan

East Seeds

1. Clarkson (3)
2. St. Cloud St.
3. Maine
4. Massachusetts

Northeast Seeds

1. New Hampshire (4)
2. Boston College
3. St. Lawrence
4. Miami (Ohio)

West Seeds

1. Minnesota (1)
2. Michigan
3. North Dakota
4. Air Force

Midwest Seeds

1. Notre Dame (2)
2. Boston U.
3. Michigan St.
4. Ala.-Huntsville

Overall seeds in parentheses.