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WCHA Women's League

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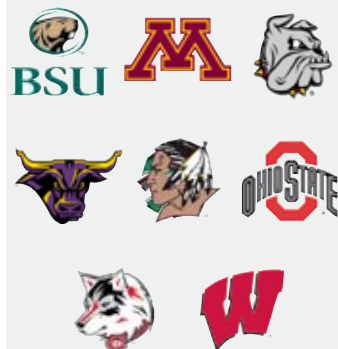
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March 3, 2011/For Immediate Release

UWs Duggan, UMD's Irwin, UW's Knight, UM's Rätty Among Ten Finalists Named for 2011 Patty Kazmaier Memorial Award 14th Annual Award to Be Presented March 19 in Erie, Pa.

Release courtesy of USA Hockey, Inc.

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. – The USA Hockey Foundation today announced the 10 finalists for the 2011 Patty Kazmaier Memorial Award, presented by Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine. The award, annually bestowed upon the top player in NCAA Division I women's ice hockey, will be presented at a brunch ceremony on March 19 at the Bayfront Convention Center in Erie, Pa., in conjunction with the NCAA Women's Frozen Four (March 18 & 20).

The 10 finalists, of which four are from the Western Collegiate Hockey Association, are (in alphabetical order): senior forwards Meghan Agosta (Ruthven, Ont./Mercyhurst College), Vicki Bendus (Wasaga Beach, Ont./Mercyhurst College) and Meghan Duggan (Danvers, Mass./Univ. of Wisconsin); sophomore defenseman Laura Fortino (Hamilton, Ont./Cornell Univ.); junior forwards Haley Irwin (Thunder Bay, Ont./Univ. of Minnesota Duluth), Rebecca Johnston (Sudbury, Ont./Cornell Univ.) and Hilary Knight (Sun Valley, Idaho/Univ. of Wisconsin); sophomore goaltender Noora Rätty (Espoo, Finland/Univ. of Minnesota); senior goaltender Molly Schaus (Natick, Mass./Boston College); and senior forward Kelli Stack (Brooklyn Heights, Ohio/Boston College).

The top-10 class for the 14th annual Patty Kazmaier Memorial Award, presented by LECOM, represents all four women's college conferences - College Hockey America, ECAC Hockey, Hockey East and the Western Collegiate Hockey Association.

The award selection process began in late February, when NCAA Division I women's ice hockey coaches were asked to nominate players for the award. Players who were nominated by two or more coaches were then placed on an official ballot, which was sent back to the coaches to vote for the top 10 finalists. The independent accounting firm PricewaterhouseCoopers, LLP, tabulated the ballots.

The three finalists, including the recipient of the Patty Kazmaier Memorial Award, will be chosen by a 13-member selection committee comprised of NCAA Division I women's ice hockey coaches, representatives of the print and broadcast media, an at-large member and a representative of USA Hockey, the national governing body for the sport of ice hockey in the United States.

The three finalists for this year's award will be announced on March 10.

Notes: Among the 10 finalists are last year's winner Vicki Bendus and top-three finalist Noora Rätty. Prior to taking the 2009-10 season off for the 2010 Olympics, Meghan Agosta was a top-three finalist in 2007, 2008 and 2009, and Rebecca Johnston, Hilary Knight and Molly Schaus were all top-10 finalists in 2009 ... Six schools are respresented, including two finalists each from Boston College, Cornell University, Mercyhurst College and the University of Wisconsin ... Among the finalists are seven forwards, two goaltenders and one defenseman, including five seniors, three juniors and two sophomores ... Tickets to the ceremony are still available and may be purchased by calling 719-538-1184 or by submitting a completed ticket form (located at PattyKaz.com). Individual seats are \$65, while tables of 10 are available for \$600 ... Mike Ruzzi, sports director at WICU-TV (NBC) in Erie, Pa., will serve as the master of ceremonies, while Laura Halldorson, who led the University of Minnesota women's ice hockey team to three NCAA Division I national championships as head coach, will be the keynote speaker. Halldorson was recently announced as the 2011 recipient of the American Hockey Coaches Association's Women's Ice Hockey Founders Award ... The 2011 Patty Kazmaier Memorial Award Ceremony, presented by LECOM, will be broadcast live at USAHockey.FASTHockey.com ... USA Hockey and the NCAA will team up once again to put on free girls' skills clinics in conjunction with the Patty Kazmaier Memorial Award and the NCAA Women's Frozen Four. Both will take place on March 19, at Mercyhurst Ice Center with an American Development Model session set for 3-4 p.m. EST and a Try Hockey For Free clinic to take place from 4-5 p.m.

About the Patty Kazmaier Memorial Award: An award of The USA Hockey Foundation, the Patty Kazmaier Memorial Award is annually presented to the top player in NCAA Division I women's ice hockey. Selection criteria includes outstanding individual and team skills, sportsmanship, performance in the clutch, personal character, competitiveness and a love of hockey. Consideration is also given to academic achievement and civic involvement. The Patty Kazmaier Memorial Award is supported, in part, by a grant from the NHL Foundation.

About Patty Kazmaier: The Patty Kazmaier Memorial Award is named in honor of the late Patty Kazmaier, who was a four-year varsity letter-winner and All-Ivy League defenseman at Princeton University from 1981-86. An accomplished athlete who helped lead the Tigers to the Ivy League Championship in three consecutive seasons (1981-84), Patty Kazmaier-Sandt died on Feb. 15, 1990, at the age of 28 following a long struggle with a rare blood disease.

2011 Patty Kazmaier Memorial Award Top-10 Finalists

Name – Year, Position, School

Meghan Agosta – Sr., F, Mercyhurst College
 Vicki Bendus – Sr., F, Mercyhurst College
 Meghan Duggan – Sr., F, University of Wisconsin
 Laura Fortino – So., D, Cornell University
 Haley Irwin – Jr., F, University of Minnesota Duluth
 Rebecca Johnston – Jr., F, Cornell University
 Hilary Knight – Jr., F, University of Wisconsin
 Noora Rätty – So., G, University of Minnesota
 Molly Schaus – Sr., G, Boston College
 Kelli Stack – Sr., F, Boston College

Meghan Agosta

Mercyhurst College • Forward • Senior • Ruthven, Ont.
 Tied for the lead in the nation with 79 points ... Leads the nation with 46 assists, 13 power-play goals and four shorthanded goals, while ranking third with 33 goals and eight game-winning goals ... Team captain ... Nine-time CHA Player of the Week ... Three-time CHA Player of the Month ... Leads the CHA in all offensive categories ... Notched at least a point in 31 of 33 games played ... Has 28 multi-point games, including 17 with three or more points and 10 multi-goal games ... Became the NCAA all-time leading point-getter with a four-point effort on Feb. 4, surpassing Julie Chu, who recorded 285 points in her career. Now stands at 296 career points ... Became the NCAA all-time leading scorer on Feb. 25, with two goals in a win over Robert Morris University to score 152 career goals. Surpasses Nicole Corriero, who amassed 150 goals in her career ... Tied NCAA goals leader Nicole Corriero with her 150th career goal on Feb. 12 ... Made numerous appearances at local elementary schools and spent time talking with youth hockey teams around Canada and Erie, Pa. ... Volunteered with the Leamington Police Department, assisting officers in community service and drug and alcohol prevention ... Helped organize and participated in Skate with the Lakers, a holiday community engagement event that let members of the Erie community meet and skate with the team ... Raised funds and helped facilitate the team's Skate for the Cure Breast Cancer Awareness series.

Vicki Bendus

Mercyhurst College • Forward • Senior • Wasaga Beach, Ont.
 Ranks fifth in the nation with 1.85 points per game and third with 1.19 assists per game ... Assistant captain ... Has five power-play goals and 17 multi-point games ... Ranks third in the CHA with 24 points, ninth with seven goals, second with 17 assists, and tied for second with 10 power-play points (3-7) ... Helped organize and participated in Skate with the Lakers, a holiday community engagement event that let members of the Erie community meet and skate with the team ... Raised funds and helped facilitate the team's Skate for the Cure Breast Cancer Awareness series ... Volunteered time with Hockey Canada and several community programs teaching children how to skate ... Honored with the NCAA Elite 88 Award, presented to the student-athlete with the highest cumulative grade-point average participating at the finals site for each of the NCAA's 88 championships ... CoSIDA/ESPN The Magazine First Team Academic All-American.

Meghan Duggan

University of Wisconsin • Forward • Senior • Danvers, Mass.
 Tied for the lead in the nation with 79 points ... Ranks second nationally with 44 assists, 2.19 points per game, 1.22 assists per game and 11 power-play goals ... Ranks second in the nation in goals (35) and short-handed goals (3), and fifth with 0.94 goals per game ... Leads the WCHA with 61 points, 34 assists and 20 power-play points (9-11), and ranks second with 27 goals ... Has five game-winning goals ... Holds a +65 rating in 36 games ... Recorded 57 points during a UW program-best 25-game point streak (Oct. 22-Feb. 4) ... Ranks seventh in NCAA history and leads UW with 230 career points ... Became seventh player all-time and first UW player to reach both 100 goals and 100 assists ... Became 13th player all-time and second UW player to reach 200 career points ... Has 25 multi-point games, including eight multi-goal games ... Team captain ... Two-time WCHA Offensive Player of the Week ... Volunteered at UW Kids Clinic ... Volunteered at Ronald McDonald House and Children's Hospital ... Volunteered with Second Harvest Foodbank of Southern Wisconsin.

Laura Fortino

Cornell University • Defenseman • Sophomore • Hamilton, Ont.
 Leads NCAA defensemen with 36 points (8-28) and ranks 26th overall in the nation with 1.24 points per game ... Part of top defensive pairing for nation's top scoring defense (31 goals in 31 games) ... Key member of the top penalty-killing unit in the nation that has allowed just six goals all season (94.1 percent) ... Quarterbacks power-play unit ranked second in the nation (25.7 percent) ... Leads ECAC Hockey defensemen with 28 points (7-21), good for fifth overall, while leading the league with 21 assists and 14 power-play points (4-10) ... Has nine multi-point games ... Ranks second among all defensemen in the nation with a +41 rating ... Named to preseason All-ECAC Hockey team ... Big Sister to area girls ... Organized Salvation Army Adopt-A-Family program ... Helped pack meals for Feed My Starving Children.

Haley Irwin

Univ. of Minnesota Duluth • Forward • Junior • Thunder Bay, Ont.
 Ranks fourth in the NCAA with 2.04 points per game with 42 in 23 games, second with 1.26 assists per game and thirteenth with 0.78 goals per game ... Ranks sixth in the nation with two short-handed goals and 15th with four game-winning goals ... Ranks seventh in the WCHA with 1.95 points per game with 37 in 19 games, eighth with 0.79 goals per game, eighth with 1.16 assists per game, second with three shorthanded points (2-1), first with two shorthanded goals and fifth with three game-winning tallies ... Owns a plus-37 rating ... Has had 14 multipoint games, including eight that have included three or more points ... Twice named the WCHA's Offensive Player of the Week ... Volunteered with P.R.O. in Thunder Bay, Ont., to help raise money for underprivileged kids in after school activities ... Showed dogs for the Thunder Bay Humane Society to help raise money and to raise awareness for adoption ... Participated in the Shooting Stars Foundation floor hockey tournament to help raise money for children's charities in Saskatchewan and helped plan an activity day involving a wide range of sports for schools in the Thunder Bay area ... Also volunteers at the Union Gospel Mission in Duluth, Minn., by helping serve meals.

Rebecca Johnston

Cornell University • Forward • Junior • Sudbury, Ont.
 Ranks 16th in the nation with 1.59 points per game, ninth with 0.86 goals per game and 26th with 0.72 assists per game ... Ranks sixth nationally with two shorthanded goals (2) and ninth with five game-winning goals ... Has 13 multi-point games and has scored in 23 of 31 games ... Ranks second in ECAC Hockey with 17 goals, while sitting fourth with 29 points ... Third in ECAC Hockey with a +40 rating ... Named to ECAC Hockey Preseason All-League team ... Big Sister to area girls ... Organized Salvation Army Adopt-A-Family program ... Helped pack meals for Feed My Starving Children.

Hilary Knight

University of Wisconsin • Forward • Junior • Sun Valley, Idaho

Leads the nation with 46 goals and ranks fifth in NCAA single-season history ... Leads the nation with 1.28 goals per game, while ranking third with 75 points, 2.08 points per game and eight game-winning goals ... Leads the WCHA with 29 goals and ranks third with 50 points ... Has eight power-play goals and two short-handed goals ... Holds a +53 rating in 36 games ... Currently on a 22-game point streak (Dec. 10-Feb. 26) ... Has 23 multi-point games, including 15 multi-goal games ... Became first UW player to reach 100 career goals ... WCHA Preseason Player of the Year ... Three-time WCHA Offensive Player of the Week ... Assistant captain ... Volunteered with UW Kids Clinic ... Visited local school Thoreau Elementary.

Noora Rätty

University of Minnesota • Goaltender • Sophomore • Espoo, Finland

Ranks third in the nation with a .946 save percentage, sixth with a 1.59 goals-against average and seventh with a .781 winning percentage (24-6-2) in 32 games ... Leads the nation and broke a school record with nine shutouts ... Also combined with Jenny Lura for two additional shutouts and had five games with only one goal allowed ... Broke her own school record for saves in a season, now at 857 ... Finished the regular season with a conference GAA of 1.70, ranking second in the WCHA ... Her 1515:01 minutes played were the second most in conference action ... Opened the season with four consecutive shutouts ... Named the WCHA Defensive Player of the Week three times ... Set a career-high 46 saves when she helped the Gophers to a 2-2 tie against No. 1 Wisconsin ... Has volunteered with the HopeKids organization and Skate with the Gophers ... Earned a 4.0 GPA during the fall semester.

Molly Schaus

Boston College • Goaltender • Senior • Natick, Mass.

Fourth in the NCAA with a 1.42 goals-against average, fifth with a .941 save percentage, sixth with a .793 winning percentage (21-4-4 record) and 11th with four shutouts ... Team captain ... Ranks second in Hockey East with a 1.39 GAA, third with a .941 save percentage and second with a .725 winning percentage ... Named Hockey East Defensive Player of the Week once ... Has recorded 15 games with 20 or more saves and four games with 30 or more saves ... Received Bertagna Goaltending Award for the third time in her career in 33rd Annual Women's Beanpot after BC's 3-1 victory ... Participates in Newton Special Athletes, skating with children with special needs ... Annual participant in the Massachusetts Hospital School sled hockey game and visits with disabled students at the school ... Participates in Food for Families, collecting and distributing food to low-income families in Boston ... Member of the Boston College Athlete Pen Pal Program.

Kelli Stack

Boston College • Forward • Senior • Brooklyn Heights, Ohio

Ranks eighth in the NCAA with 53 points and third with 33 goals ... Team captain ... Ranks first in the country with four shorthanded goals, fifth with seven game-winning goals and fifth with eight power-play goals ... Leads Hockey East with 33 points, 22 goals, 12 power-play points (7-5), four shorthanded points (4-0) and five game-winning goals ... Named Hockey East Player of the Month twice ... Named Hockey East Player of the Week three times ... Has tallied 18 multi-point games ... Became the all-time leading scorer at Boston College this year, with 95 goals ... Holds the Hockey East career records in points (133) and goals (68) ... Holds the Hockey East active career record in assists (65) ... Participates in Newton Special Athletes, skating with children with special needs ... Annual participant in the Massachusetts Hospital School sled hockey game and visits with disabled students at the school ... Participates in Food for Families, collecting and distributing food to low-income families in Boston ... Member of the Boston College Athlete Pen Pal Program.