

Heather Linstad, Connecticut Head Coach Quotes

Team Status:

“I don’t think much changes with my team from year-to-year. We always have very good goaltending and are strong on the blue line and we find ways to score. I’m excited about the sophomore class. They’ve got a year under their belt. I’m very excited about the freshman class. They’ve come in in great shape. They’re all very athletic. Most of our team is made up of sophomore and freshmen, but I think we have terrific leadership in our senior class and our juniors. I think that we’ve got a great mix and certainly it’s going to be about chemistry and just playing every game as hard as we can.”

Importance of Senior Goaltender Alexandra Garcia:

“The foundation of our program has been the great track record of the person that stands between the posts. (Alexandra Garcia) certainly played a major role last year and did some great things. I don’t see her doing anything different, but making the saves that she is supposed to be making. She is certainly the key to our penalty kill because she makes those saves that we need.”

Key Returnees and Potential Breakout Players:

“We’ve always had very good defensemen. Sami Evelyn was a second team all-star last year, on the blue line, and she did create a lot of offense for us as well. Rebecca Hewett is another solid defenseman. I think that they will continue to be a presence. It’s hard to describe what they are if they don’t have all the numbers that other offensive defensemen might have, but certainly I’m expecting them to have solid years. Kelly Horan has always been great for us in terms of killing penalties and was a big factor on our power play last year. I expect that she’ll have a major impact on our offense. Another kid in that class is another defenseman and she’s an assistant captain, Maude Blain. Maude Blain has that offensive gift too. Hopefully, I’m putting all of these kids in the right situations. The biggest thing that we need to do is to make sure we get our offense rolling.”

Strengths and Weaknesses of Non-Conference Schedule:

“It has always been about making sure that we have enough offense. RPI, St. Lawrence, Clarkson are teams that are knocking on the door in the ECAC. Certainly, we want to make our mark against them and see where we are at. We’ve had great competition against them in the past, so I think we’ve created somewhat of a rivalry between them. Get the jitters out and go from there and then obviously take on a powerhouse in Minnesota-Duluth. We’re excited to have them come to our building for the first time.”

Strength of WHEA Competition:

“We’re more top heavy than we are bottom heavy, now. Certainly, we proved that last year with our record, as a league, against non-conference opponents. I think that that’s certainly showing in the way our league is. Obviously, having Boston College and BU get to the Frozen Four was huge for our league. It gives great exposure, but it also favors recruits continuing to come into Hockey East and knowing that every game that they play within the league is going to be a competitive one. I’m excited about where the league is

going and I think all of the coaches have done a great job in continuing to grow the league by doing a great job in recruiting.”

Championship Move to Hyannis:

“One thing that’s been terrific about our conference is that we’ve established a championship weekend. Certainly, going to a neutral site is just another stepping stone in making that a highlight. If you can make it a highlight then it’s a big thing for our student-athletes. They want to be a part of something really big and I think going to a neutral site gives that environment. Hopefully, we can draw the crowd that our student-athletes deserve. Certainly, it’s a great product. Our championships have been so competitive over the last five years. Hopefully, it highlights the hard work that our student-athletes and coaches have put into getting to the championship weekend.”