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WOMEN'S WEEKEND PREVIEW

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WEEKEND PREVIEW #20

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NO. 2 UNH FACES OFF AGAINST PROVIDENCE ~BC/BU face off in a fight for the final playoff spot~

WAKEFIELD, Mass. – No. 2 New Hampshire and Providence College will meet for a two-game set this weekend, beginning on Saturday afternoon at Schneider Arena. On Friday night, Boston University kicks off its key weekend series with arch rival Boston College at Walter Brown Arena, while Northeastern will play its series opener with Vermont on Friday at Gutterson Fieldhouse.

The Wildcats (26-3-1, 16-0-1 WHEA) enter the weekend with a 34-game unbeaten streak (31-0-3) in league play. UNH can clinch the regular-season title outright with a win or a tie on Saturday or a loss or tie by UConn in its series with Maine. The 'Cats are in the midst of a eight-game unbeaten streak vs. PC (6-0-2). The two teams have met in the Hockey East Championship in three of the five years of the league's existence, with Providence winning the first two meetings. In the first meeting of the season between the two teams, PC and UNH skated to a 1-1 tie at the Whittemore Center on January 19. The Friars need a three-point weekend to clinch the third playoff spot or they can gain points as BU and BC face each other. Senior blueliner Kathleen Smith (Waterloo, Ont.) leads all Hockey East defensemen with 14 points (7g,7a) in league play. Her 0.93 points per game ranks tied for third nationally among defensemen.

The Terriers (12-15-3, 8-8-1 WHEA) and Eagles (12-12-6, 7-8-2 WHEA) are separated by one point in the league standings. BU is currently in fourth place with 17 points. Boston University won both previous meetings this season, a 3-2 overtime win on December 6 and a 3-1 triumph in the opening round of the Beanpot on February 5. BC's Kelli Stack (Brooklyn Heights, Ohio) has tallied 24 points (13g,11a) in league play this season, ranking her fourth among Hockey East skaters.

No. 8 Connecticut (20-5-5, 11-3-3 WHEA) will host Maine for a two-game match up beginning on Saturday afternoon at Freitas Ice Forum in Storrs, Conn. The Huskies are 9-1-4 in their last 14 games with their only loss during that stretch coming on February 10 to Providence. UConn won the previous meeting in the season series on November 16, 4-2. The Black Bears have won two of their last three games heading into the weekend. Most recently, Maine lost a hard fought game in overtime, 2-1, to BC on February 17 in Orono. Junior goalie Genevieve Turgeon (Lac Beauport, Que.) has amassed 116 saves in her last three starts in net for the Black Bears. Turgeon has been named Pure Hockey Defensive Player of the Week a league-high six times this season.

The Catamounts and Huskies will close out their season series this weekend, after NU edged out a 2-1 win at Matthews Arena on December 1 in Boston. Freshman Leah Sulyma (Inuvik, N.W.T.) has amassed 119 saves in her last three starts, averaging 39.6 saves per start during that span. UVM senior forward Kate Lesniak (Buffalo, N.Y.) has not missed a game in her four-year career. Her 130 games played as a Catamount ranks her sixth on the school's all-time list.

HOCKEY EAST WEEKLY NOTES: BC's Molly Schaus and Kelli Stack, as well as UNH's Kacey Bellamy and Sam Faber were named to the 2008 U.S. Women's National Team Preliminary Roster. Hockey East alumni Chanda Gunn (NU) and Karen Thatcher (PC) have also been named to the roster. Providence alum Jackie Barto will serve as head coach of Team USA. Team USA will hold a tryout in Colorado Springs, Colo., from March 24-31, with the final 20-player roster to be announced on March 28. Those players will go on to represent the U.S. in the 2008 International Ice Hockey Federation World Women's Championship from April 4-12, in Harbin, China.

RECENT RESULTS

Saturday, February 16
 at Maine 2, Boston College 1 *
 at No. 2 New Hampshire 7, Vermont 0 *
 at No. 8 Connecticut 2, Boston University 1 OT *
 Providence 4 at Northeastern 0 *

Sunday, February 17
 at Providence 8, Northeastern 3 *
 No. 8 Connecticut 4 at Boston University 2 *
 Boston College 2 at Maine 1 OT *
 at No. 2 New Hampshire 3, Vermont 0 *

UPCOMING GAMES

Friday, February 22
 Boston College at Boston University * (7pm)
 Northeastern at Vermont * (7pm)

Saturday, February 23
 Northeastern at Vermont * (4pm)
 Maine at No. 8 Connecticut * (1pm)
 Boston University at Boston College * (7pm)
 No. 2 New Hampshire at Providence * (1pm)

Sunday, February 24
 Maine at No. 8 Connecticut * (1pm)
 Providence at No. 2 New Hampshire * (2pm)

* Hockey East game
 All Games Eastern Standard Time (EST)
 (Rankings in composite schedule and release are from the USA Today/USA Hockey Magazine Poll)

2007-08 STANDINGS

Rk.	Team	GP	W	L	T	Pts	Overall	Offense	Defense
1.	New Hampshire *	17	16	0	1	33	26-3-1	127 (4.23)	34 (1.13)
2.	Connecticut *	17	11	3	3	25	20-5-5	85 (2.83)	57 (1.90)
3.	Providence	17	10	5	2	22	15-12-3	90 (3.00)	75 (2.50)
4.	Boston University	17	8	8	1	17	12-15-3	83 (2.77)	76 (2.53)
5.	Boston College	17	7	8	2	16	12-12-6	69 (2.30)	67 (2.23)
6.	Northeastern	17	5	11	1	11	6-21-3	57 (1.90)	111 (3.70)
7.	Maine	17	3	11	3	9	4-23-3	43 (1.43)	105 (3.50)
8.	Vermont	17	1	15	1	3	5-24-1	44 (1.47)	98 (3.27)

* clinched playoff spot

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