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UNH women's hockey will play host to St. Lawrence in an NCAA quarterfinal game

INDIANAPOLIS -- The second-ranked University of New Hampshire women's ice hockey team was selected as the third seed in the eight-team field of the 2008 NCAA Women's Ice Hockey Championship, the NCAA Women's Ice Hockey Committee announced Sunday evening. UNH, which earned one of three automatic bids by winning the Hockey East Championship Tournament on Sunday afternoon, will play host to St. Lawrence University in a March 15 (1 p.m.) quarterfinal game at the Whittemore Center.

UNH (32-3-1) enters the NCAA tournament with a 12-game winning streak and 18-game unbeaten streak (17-0-1). The Wildcats became the first team to complete the Hockey East regular season undefeated (20-0-1) to claim their fifth straight regular-season crown. The 'Cats then defeated Boston University (8-0) in the semifinals and Providence College (1-0) in the championship game to capture their third consecutive league tourney title.

St. Lawrence (28-9-1) earned one of the five at-large bids to the NCAA tournament. The Saints finished second in the ECAC standings at 18-3-1 and lost 3-2 in overtime to Harvard University in the ECAC championship game.

UNH and SLU faced off in the first two games of the 2008 season (Oct. 5-6) in Canton, N.Y. The Wildcats won the opener 4-2 but the Saints took the rematch, 3-0; that is the only time New Hampshire has been shut out in three seasons (2006, 2007, 2008).

This matchup is a rematch of a 2007 NCAA regional in which St. Lawrence prevailed 6-2 at the Whittemore Center. The teams have met four times overall in postseason play – the other three games were in the ECAC tourney – and both teams have won twice. UNH leads the overall series 24-9-3 with a 12-4-1 home record. In the six-year tenure of Wildcat head coach Brian McCloskey, the 'Cats are 3-3-3 vs. the Saints.

This marks the third consecutive trip to the NCAA tournament for New Hampshire; the Wildcats have hosted a quarterfinal game all three years. In 2006, UNH defeated Harvard University in a quarterfinal to advance to the Frozen Four.

The winner of the UNH-SLU quarterfinal will face the winner of the second-seeded Minnesota-Duluth (31-4-1) vs. Mercyhurst College (26-7-3) quarterfinal in a Frozen Four semifinal.

In the other half of the bracket, top-seeded Harvard (31-1-0) will play host to Dartmouth College (18-8-6) and two-time defending champion University of Wisconsin (27-8-3) travels to play fourth-seeded University of Minnesota (27-6-4).