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GIRLS HOCKEY, PAGE D4

After slow start, West
downs Rochester JM

Sports

College hockey gameday



Mike Zacharias



Dan Tormey

Minnesota State at Minnesota Duluth

Five of the Mavericks' next six games are on the road, starting tonight against the Bulldogs, who are ranked 13th in the Pairwise. Minnesota State (11-11-3, 7-9-2 in WCHA) sits one point ahead of Duluth (11-7-6, 5-6-5), in the conference standings, although the Bulldogs have played two fewer games in WCHA play. The Mavericks lead the all-time series 14-13-5, including a 1-1-2 mark with three overtime games last season.

The 5-hole

Five things to know about the matchup:

1. Bruised and battered: Minnesota State is still without defenseman Ben Youds (knee) and will be without forward Jason Wiley (undisclosed injury) this weekend. Defenseman Brian Kilburg will be a game-time decision after missing some practice time with an undisclosed injury this week. "We're banged up a little bit," coach Troy Jutting said. "It's been one of those years where injuries have played a big part."

This weekend's series

7:07 p.m. today and
Saturday, Duluth
Entertainment &
Convention Center
Radio: KTOE 1420 AM
TV: Charter cable
channel 14

2. Net game: As of Thursday morning, Jutting said he hadn't reached a final decision on who will be tonight's starting goaltender. Mike Zacharias (.901, 3.04) stopped 24 of 25 shots in a win over Alaska-Anchorage last Saturday. A week earlier, Dan Tormey (.917, 2.22) stopped 27 of 28 shots in a win at Colorado College. He followed that up with a 18-save performance in a 4-2 loss to Anchorage.

3. Top of the charts: MSU defenseman Kurt Davis (5-21-26) continues to lead the team in points, followed by captain Mick Berge (5-16-21). After snapping a four-game scoreless streak, Davis has assisted on four goals in his last three games, including two helpers last Saturday. Davis and Berge lead the team in assists, while the top goal scorers are Mike Louwerse (10-9-19) and Trevor Bruess (10-4-14)

4. Hit the DECC: No WCHA team has a better home record than the Bulldogs, who are 7-1-3 at the DECC, including a 5-0-2 record there since mid-November. Last weekend, Duluth swept a nonconference home series against Bemidji State, winning 3-2 and 4-2. In the second game, junior goaltender Alex Stalock (.918, 2.26) sat out, ending a 59-game starting streak. Stalock is 1-2-2 against Minnesota State.

5. Scouting the Bulldogs: Duluth boasts the WCHA's top scorer, sophomore winger Justin Fontaine (12-19-13). Only two other players in Division I hockey have more points. Nine of his goals have come on the power play which clicks at 21.6 percent. Senior MacGregor Sharp (11-13-24) and freshman Mike Connolly (8-12-20) also sit among the leaders of coach Scott Sandelin's team.

Around the rinks

Minnesota State women: The Mavericks (6-14-2, 3-13-2 in WCHA) will look to end a 12-game winless slide Saturday and Sunday when they host North Dakota at All Seasons Arena. Both games begin at 3:07 p.m. Minnesota State has been outscored 58-26 over its last dozen games. Earlier this season, the Mavericks tied and defeated the Sioux (12-10-2, 8-9-1) at Grand Forks, N.D.