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MSU womens hockey finally back in the win column



Ben Youds



Mike Louwerse

Minnesota State vs. Minnesota

The Mavericks (11-13-3, 7-11-2 in WCHA) will host the Gophers (12-5-5, 9-4-3) for the first time since last March's WCHA playoff series tonight and go to Minneapolis on Saturday. Earlier this season, the two teams tied 3-3 at Mariucci Arena, and, the next night, Minnesota won 6-3 at the Xcel Energy Center. Minnesota State is 3-28-6 against Minnesota all-time and has won just once in their last 25 meetings.

The 5-hole

Five things to know about the matchup:

1. Ben is back: Mavericks sophomore defenseman Ben Youds is expected to be back in the lineup after missing the last five games with an injury. Youds is tops on the team with a plus-7 rating. He also has seven assists. "It's good to have him back," coach Troy Jutting said. "He's a veteran kid who skates very well. He's somebody we count on in a lot of different situations." Forward Jason Wiley remains out with an unspecified injury.

2. Offense, anyone? Jutting said he's trying to find ways to boost his team's 5-on-5 scoring. Minnesota Duluth shut out MSU in even-strength situations last weekend.

Trevor Bruess will go back to the No. 1 line with Geoff Irwin and Kael Mouillierat tonight, while Rylan Galiardi, Mick Berge and

Mike Louwerse will form another potential scoring threat. Louwerse has 11 goals, while Mouillierat and Bruess each have 10.

3. By the numbers: Minnesota State enters the series with the nation's 15th-ranked power play (19.4 percent). Louwerse has eight power-play goals, and Mouillierat has six. Minnesota is fifth in the country in power play (21.7 percent) and also boasts the nation's top penalty kill (91.4 percent). The Mavericks concentrated on their penalty kill this week and with good reason: They're 53rd in the nation in that department (79.5 percent).

4. Hobey hopeful: Minnesota junior forward Ryan Stoa (15-15—30) has been mentioned as a candidate for the Hobey Baker Award, which goes to the nation's top player. In league play, Stoa leads the WCHA with 13 goals and 25 points, including two goals and two assists in the Gophers' last meeting against the Mavericks. Minnesota also has the top-scoring rookie in the country, Jordan Schroeder (10-17—27).

5. Scouting the Gophers: Minnesota was idle last weekend but, before that, swept St. Cloud State 5-1 and 8-6. Those 13 goals were the most the Gophers scored in a weekend in more than two years. Those were the first games back for coach Don Lucia, who missed the previous four with an illness. They were the first games he missed in 22 years of coaching. Sophomore goalie Alex Kangas (.906, 2.68) has started every game for the Gophers this season.

By Shane Frederick
Free Press Staff Writer

MANKATO — While Saturday's shootout victory over North Dakota officially goes into the record books as a tie, the Minnesota State women's hockey team had a dark cloud lifted away from it.

"It started the momentum shift," said Mandy Krause-Rideout, one of the Mavericks' two interim

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coaches. "Sunday really finished it."

On Sunday, a 13-game winless streak was snapped for good when MSU defeated North Dakota 5-3, getting a pair of goals from Kala Buganski and a three-point game from Ashley Young. "We played very well,"

Paul Willett, the Mavericks' other interim coach, said. "Obviously, we were pleased with the shootout victory Saturday, but Sunday may have been the most complete game we've played defensively all year."

The winless streak, which dated back to Nov. 14, included a stretch of five games in a row without a win after coach Jeff Vizenor stepped down on Jan. 6.

"We're seeing a lot more confidence out of our players now," Willett said. "They're looser, they're happier and they're as focused as they've been this year. We're excited about this weekend."

Minnesota State will take on second-ranked Minnesota Friday and Saturday at All Seasons Arena.

On the air

This weekend's men's

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Minnesota State women: The Mavericks (7-14-3, 4-13-3 in WCHA) suddenly have an unbeaten streak going and will have to try to extend it against second-ranked Minnesota (21-3-2, 16-2-2). With a goal and two assists Sunday, junior Ashley Young has set a career high for points in a season with 18. Freshman twins Monique Lamoureux (25-24—49) and Jocelyne Lamoureux (15-27—42) are two of the nation's top three scorers.

games between Minnesota State and Minnesota will be televised on Fox Sports North.

Friday's game in Mankato will be broadcast on tape-delay around 11 p.m., following coverage of the Minnesota Wild's game against the Edmonton Oilers.

Saturday's game in Minneapolis will begin at 6:07 p.m., one hour earlier than normal.

DU coach suspended

Denver coach George Gwozdecky received a one-game suspension by the university following an incident during Saturday's game at North Dakota.

Gwozdecky received a minor penalty and was ejected from the game by referee Todd Anderson after jumping up on the boards in front of the bench and arguing about a penalty that was not called. After being ejected, Gwozdecky walked across the ice to talk to another official before walking back and leaving the rink.

The coach was not suspended, however, until it was learned that he communicated with his team by headset from the press box during the third period of the game, a violation of rules.

Gwozdecky will miss Friday's home game against Alaska-Anchorage, and assistant Steve Miller will act as head coach.

The WCHA issued a press release endorsing DU's actions.

So long, CHA

Bemidji State is really counting on the WCHA now.

According to two reports Wednesday, Atlantic Hockey has accepted two of the four remaining College Hockey America members, Robert Morris and Niagara, into its league starting in the 2010-11 season.

That will leave Bemidji State and Alabama-Huntsville without homes.

Bemidji State announced that it is applying the WCHA right after the conference voted to lift its moratorium on expansion earlier this month. Huntsville may seek membership into the Central Collegiate Hockey Association.

One-timers

Minnesota State students began lining up for tickets to Friday's game against the Gophers at 7 a.m. Wednesday morning. The 1,100 free student tickets were distributed at noon. ... This week's WCHA players of the week included Minnesota Duluth goaltender Alex Stalock (defensive) and forward Jack Connolly (co-rookie) for their performances against MSU last weekend. ... Other WCHA honors went to St. Cloud State forward Drew LeBlanc (offensive) and Michigan Tech forward Brett Olson (co-rookie).

COLLEGE

Hockey standings WCHA men

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Denver	11	5	2	24	65	46
North Dakota	10	5	3	23	65	50
Wisconsin	10	6	2	22	67	51
Minnesota	9	4	3	21	52	42
Colorado College	9	8	3	21	53	61
Minnesota Duluth	7	6	5	19	52	44
St. Cloud State	8	9	1	17	59	57
Minnesota State	7	11	2	16	59	68
Alaska-Anchorage	5	9	4	14	45	61
Michigan Tech	1	14	5	7	31	68

OVERALL RECORDS: Denver 15-7-3, North Dakota 15-10-3, Wisconsin 13-10-3, Minnesota 12-5-5, Colorado College 13-9-6, Minnesota Duluth 13-7-6, St. Cloud State 13-11-2, **Minnesota State 11-11-3**, Alaska-Anchorage 8-10-4, Michigan Tech 5-18-5.

Today's games

Minnesota at Minnesota State
Minnesota Duluth at Wisconsin
North Dakota at St. Cloud State
Alaska-Anchorage at Denver

Saturday's games

Minnesota State at Minnesota
Minnesota Duluth at Wisconsin
North Dakota at St. Cloud State
Alaska-Anchorage at Denver

WCHA women

	W	L	T	SW	Pts	GF	GA
Minnesota	16	2	2	2	36	101	30
Wisconsin	16	1	3	1	36	95	29
Minnesota Duluth	11	5	4	1	27	70	39
St. Cloud State	9	10	1	1	20	45	60
North Dakota	8	10	2	0	18	50	69
Minnesota State	4	13	3	2	13	50	85
Ohio State	4	14	2	2	12	49	99
Bemidji State	3	16	1	0	7	27	76

OVERALL RECORDS: Minnesota 21-3-1, Wisconsin 22-1-3, Minnesota Duluth 16-6-4, St. Cloud State 12-12-2, North Dakota 12-11-3, **Minnesota State 7-14-3**, Ohio State 6-17-3, Bemidji State 6-17-3.

Today's games

Minnesota at Minnesota State
Bemidji State at North Dakota
St. Cloud State at Minnesota Duluth

Saturday's games

Minnesota at Minnesota State
Bemidji State at North Dakota
St. Cloud State at Minnesota Duluth
Ohio State at Wisconsin

Sunday's games

Ohio State at Wisconsin