



MSU women to play against Olympians

Sports

Mavericks to take on Olympians

By **Shane Frederick**
Free Press Staff Writer

MANKATO — Even the off week is a tough one for the Minnesota State women's hockey team.

The Mavericks have lost six consecutive games, including series at No. 2-ranked Minnesota and, last week, at No. 1-ranked Wisconsin.

Tonight, MSU will play an exhibition game against the U.S. National Select Team, which features seven Olympians.

"It's been a tough road," Mavericks coach Jeff Vizenor said. "But it's a great opportunity to play against the best players in the world."

Tonight's game begins at 7 p.m. at All Seasons Arena.

The U.S. team will have two three-time Olympians, including forward Jenny Potter and defenseman Angela Ruggiero, both of whom were gold medalists in 1998. Forwards Natalie Darwitz and Julie Chu are two-time Olympians.

Defensemen Caitlin Cahow and Molly Engstrom and goaltender Chanda Gunn.

The team includes several former collegiate players who should be familiar to Minnesota State followers. Potter and forward Jessica Koizumi played at Minnesota Duluth.

Darwitz, forward Erica McKenzie and defenseman Winny Brodt played for Minnesota.

"It's a great opportunity for our players to see what it's like to play at the national-team level and compete," Vizenor said.

After taking the weekend off, the Mavericks will return to Western Collegiate Hockey Association action Dec. 12-

College hockey notebook

13 when they host Ohio State.

Peterson out

Minnesota State men's redshirt freshman Brett Peterson likely will miss the rest of the season after undergoing back surgery scheduled for next month.

Peterson, an Elk River native, is in his second season with the Mavericks. He has not appeared in a game and said the procedure will be done to fix a disk problem that has plagued him since his junior-hockey days.

Junior team named

On Wednesday, four WCHA players were named to the U.S. National Team that will participate in the World Junior Championship Dec. 26-Jan. 5 in Ottawa, Ontario.

Those players include three Minnesota Gophers: forwards Jordan Schroeder and Mike Hoeffel and defenseman Cade Fairchild and Wisconsin Badgers defenseman Ryan McDonagh.

Fourteen of Team USA's 22 players are current college players.

One-timers

The Gustavus women's and men's hockey teams will play their first games at the refurbished Don Roberts Ice Rink this weekend when they host Bethel Friday and Saturday, respectively. ... This week's WCHA players of the week were North Dakota forward Matt Frattin (offensive), Denver goaltender Marc Cheverie (defensive) and Denver forward Joe Colborne and Wisconsin defenseman Jake Gardiner (rookies).