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Minnesota State University, Mankato

WCHA play starts up

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The Minnesota State men's hockey team will take to the ice for its first WCHA series this weekend against Michigan Tech. The Mavericks are looking to bounce back this season after finishing eighth in the conference last year with a record of 16-20-3.

The Mavericks will have a good opportunity to jump up in the standings early. Last year the Mavericks went 3-1 against the Huskies. It was one of the few teams the Mavericks had success against.



Channing Boe

The Mavericks lacked scoring last season and that could be a troublesome area for the team again after losing five of its top scorers. However, the Mavericks defensemen should be strong after returning Channing Boe, Ben Youds and Kurt Davis.

The three seniors bring a strong presence to the team and head coach Troy Jutting said this could be the strongest defensive group he has coached at MSU in his career. The goaltending could be a bright spot this year after the second half emergence of Phil Cook last season. The team also has Austin Lee who has 20 games of experience in net.

A lot of the success for this year's team will be whether they will be able to score enough. The Mavericks have senior forward Ryan Galiardi returning as their top scorer after putting up 25 points a year ago. Junior forward, Michael Dorr could also be a contributor after leading the team in points in the second half of last season with 16.

The Mavericks play on Friday and Saturday night. Both games are at 7:07 p.m. **R**