

## WSHL WEEKLY NOTES 02.07.18 – MOUNTAIN DIVISION



**CASPER COYOTES (13-25-0, 26 pts)**

[www.caspercoyotes.com](http://www.caspercoyotes.com)

@CasperCoyotes

Watch out for the Casper Coyotes. In what has been one of the more exciting divisional seasons in the WSHL, the Mountain continues to provide hockey fans with really great hockey.

The Mountain Division has three of the league's top teams vying for first place all season, and then you have a team like Casper who continues to grow and surprise.

The Coyotes posted an impressive upset victory for the second weekend in a row when they beat Ogden in Game One of their three-game set this past weekend. That's after they beat the Jr. Eagles in their final game the weekend before, giving the 'Yotes two wins in a row against the division's top teams.

"Our locker room has finally shown signs of coming together," Head Coach David Cole said of his team's recent run. "The team appears to be working much harder and appears closer as a group."

Casper swapped punches with the Mustangs in their 5-3 victory, going into the third period with a 2-1 lead after scoring both goals in the first. Hamish Campbell's 5th goal of the year gave the Coyotes a 3-1 lead to open the final frame, but Ogden came back with a goal of their own.

Coyotes goalie Dylan Ossachuk has been the talk of the division in recent weeks, keeping his team in games while facing a remarkable amount of shots. Friday's game was no different with Ossachuk making an astounding 85 saves in the victory – including 63 in the first two periods – keeping Ogden from tying the game.

So, in two straight wins for the 'Yotes – against the top two teams in the division – Ossachuk made 133 saves. He went on to make 59 more on Saturday and 27 in one period of duty on Sunday for a three-game total of 171 saves.

"Ossachuk has turned in a couple strong goaltending performances," Coach Cole said. "He'll be expected to continue to be solid when called upon."

Casper has Cheyenne this weekend before facing off with the rest of the division to close out their season. If they can keep playing this way come playoff time, they may be in line to upset a team or two.

"We will need to continue to be a hard-working hockey team to continue to turn the corner after a tough start," Cole said. We will need to bring a lunch pail to work every single game."

**CHEYENNE STAMPEDE (2-43-0, 4 pts)**

[www.cheyennestampede.com](http://www.cheyennestampede.com)

**@StampsHockey**

The Cheyenne Stampede met with a motivated Utah team looking to take over first place in the division for the first time, and wasn't able to play the spoiler.

Nikita Gordeev (2-5-7) scored the lone goal for the Stamps and Robbie Hufnagel faced a ton of rubber over three games and the Cheyenne goalies continue to stand up to the amount of work they get in their games.

The team is led by Logan Syrup's 14-8-22 line, and defenseman Matthew Lyszyk (0-5-5) leads the team with 99 PIMs.

Cheyenne has just five games remaining in their season including a three-game set with Casper this weekend. They'll end the year with the Jr. Eagles the following weekend.

This weekend's series with the Coyotes – the team's final home series – will be their "Pink in the Rink Series" for cancer awareness.

Events like these have made the Cheyenne Stampede finalists for the Community Service Award and Small Business of the Year Award presented by the Greater Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce.

Congrats to Mark Lantz and the Stampede organization for proving that leaders are shown on the ice, but are made off it.

**COLORADO EAGLES (28-6-5, 61 pts)**

[www.coloradojunioreagles.com](http://www.coloradojunioreagles.com)

**@COJrEagles**

The Jr. Eagles split their two-game series with Superior over the weekend, shutting out their in-state rivals on Friday, but losing in OT on Saturday. Earning three of four points keeps them within reach of first-place Utah.

Five different Jr. Eagles skaters scored on Friday and Cameron Chabot and Anders Saarela added two assists apiece.

Colorado needed three third-period goals to tie the game after falling behind 3-0, with defenseman Michael Petrotto scoring the final two including the tying strike with just under two minutes to go in the final frame.

The Jr. Eagles managed 55 shots on net while Colorado goalie Braden Lajoie made 29 saves himself. Lajoie also got the shutout Friday behind 25 saves.

Colorado has proven all season that they're capable of scoring from all over the rink while also shutting teams down and their 91 goals against is good for top-5 in the WSHL.

While many teams in the league find the end of their schedule works in their favor, Colorado will have to push their depth these upcoming weeks.

Still well-within reach of first place, the Jr. Eagles will take on the Mid-Western Division's top team El Paso this weekend in Texas. After that, it's a makeup game with Cheyenne, along with a two-spot with Superior next weekend before closing the season out with fellow Kings-of-the-Mountain competitors Utah and Ogden.

It's been an incredible season for Mountain Division fans all year and Colorado is certainly doing their part to make it go down to the wire.

With the WSHL trade deadline a week away, the Jr. Eagles are getting busy. The team acquired forward Dawson Keay (26-33-59) for defenseman Jacob Yoho (1-6-7), forward Cameron Tobey who has been playing in the NA3HL, and forward Hudson Kubasek (0-10-10 in 18 games). Keay now becomes the team's leading scorer.

In a separate trade, Colorado received forward Tom Ignatovich (25-25-50) and Tyler Goclan (9-16-25) from the Seattle Totems for forward Christopher Calabrese (3-3-6) and goalie Anthony Carlier (2.88/.883 in 7 games).

The Jr. Eagles, already rich in scoring depth, just added two top-notch scorers to their roster just in time for a Mountain Division championship run. If people didn't think they were a serious contender for the Thorne Cup before these trades, they should now.

**OGDEN MUSTANGS (31-10-1, 63 pts)**

[www.ogdenmustangs.com](http://www.ogdenmustangs.com)

**@OgdenMustangs**

Ogden ran into a hot Casper squad that came to play, beating the Mustangs in game one of their three game series. Not from lack of trying, Ogden took the loss even after putting 89 shots on net.

Saturday and Sunday saw the 'Stangs get back to it, winning both games and taking four of six possible points from their division rivals.

But, the loss on Friday, coupled with Utah's sweep of Cheyenne, means the Mustangs find themselves in second place.

Matus Spodniak went 2-3-5 to bring his season totals to a 55-62-117 line, leading the league scoring race, and has him on track to tie the league record for points in a season. He is also within seven goals of the league career record.

Harry Gulliver went 2-4-6 against Casper for a season total of 17-29-46 in just 39 games this year.

Goaltender Tymen Edelkoort made 79 saves in the first two games and the first period Sunday before giving way to partner Jonathan Chin who made 27 saves in the final two periods of the victory.

Edelkoort is now slashing a sporting a 2.21/.924 line since joining Ogden, to go along with Chin's 1.87/.918 and 12 wins.

The exciting Mountain Division season will continue this weekend when Ogden takes on a well-coached and well-built Superior team, while Colorado goes out of the division to take on the Mid-Western Division's first-place El Paso Rhinos. Utah, meanwhile, takes on Northwest Division powerhouse Idaho.

So, things could change in the standings come Monday, but coach Jake Laime has never been one to focus on anything other than the Thorne Cup. After the RoughRiders, the Mustangs will have their own shot at Idaho and then Colorado to close out the season, giving Ogden a nice chance to get into playoff mode before the postseason comes.

Once the regular season ends, Ogden could very well hit the playoff road running.

**SUPERIOR ROUGHRIDERS (20-20-0, 40 pts)**

[www.SuperiorRoughRiders.com](http://www.SuperiorRoughRiders.com)

**@SPR\_RoughRiders**

Superior continues to prove themselves worthy opponents in the league's toughest division, taking an overtime victory from the Colorado Jr. Eagles.

After getting swept on Friday, the RoughRiders came back with three straight goals to open Saturday's game, including Thore Weyrauch's 28th strike of the year just 20 seconds after the opening puck drop. Austin Tautfest (9-15-24) and Dylan Steele (13-7-20) also scored for the RoughRiders.

But, it was Kyle Cagnoni, who came back for his second stint with Superior in the last two seasons, who scored the OT winner on an assist from Nikita Sheberov. Cagnoni had a 21-20-41 line in 41 games with Springfield of the Mid-Western Division before this weekend.

The RoughRiders and Jr. Eagles have been battling all year and they will have one more shot at each other in two weeks. In the meantime, Superior will take on Ogden this weekend before ending their season with Casper and Utah.

We've loved the RoughRiders' season, especially given the job Head Coach Paul DePuydt has done with so many new players, and they have a real chance to shake things up in the Mountain Division where three teams are fighting for the top prize.

Heading into the playoffs, no team has more chances to play spoiler than the RoughRiders and that makes them a team worth keeping an eye on.

### **UTAH OUTLIERS (32-6-1, 65 pts)**

[www.UtahOutliers.com](http://www.UtahOutliers.com)

[@UtahOutliers](#)

Utah are outliers no more after taking over first place in the Mountain Division for the first time this season.

Kane Toriumi went 8-4-12 to bring his season totals to 28-25-53 on the year. The Outliers now have four players with 50+ points and Head Coach Paul Taylor likes where he's getting scoring.

"I wasn't sure exactly where our offense would come from when the season began," Taylor said. "At this point of the season, it is pretty clear that our offensive strength lies in our depth. Each night it seems a different guy or group of guys carries us."

To his point, the team is led by first-year defenseman Zach Hoffman's 15-41-56 line and seven Outliers have more than 15 goals.

But, scoring isn't enough in the WSHL, and Utah has sported one of the league's best goalie tandems. Dawson Rodin's 17 wins are top-5 in the league while playing with a 1.65/.944, and crease partner Otto Saxin's 1.50/.911 sits well with his 11 wins.

Even Trenton Wendt (1.50/.914) has filled in well, winning his four games in spot duty.

Aside from the scoring and saving, the Outliers' depth has been an asset and coach Taylor sees guys playing hard even if they're not getting the print.

"Forwards Kaeden Meuer (14-20-34, 96 PIMs), Benji Mickel (6-13-19), Locke Wischmann (9-9-18) and Alex McCloskey (6-5-11) compete hard every game," Taylor said of his unsung heroes. "They kill penalties and add character to our group."

Taylor said his team's depth has also succeeded in their ability to compete every night.

"I think we have demonstrated pretty good consistency this season," Taylor said. "There haven't been too many nights where we didn't show up or compete hard. I would also add that the team has responded well after a loss."

The Outliers haven't lost two games in a row since a 4-3 loss to Colorado in their second series of the year in which the Jr. Eagles scored in the last seconds.

Utah won't have much time to celebrate their first place standing as they host perennial powerhouse Idaho IceCats this weekend. From there, it's Casper, Colorado, and then Superior to close out the regular season.

--- *Tyler Whidden for Harrington Sports Media*