

WSHL WEEKLY NOTES 11.08.18 – MOUNTAIN DIVISION



CASPER BOBCATS (3-9-0, 9 pts)

www.casperbobcats.com

@BobcatsCasper

The Casper Coyotes last played a game on October 28, when they closed out a nine-game homestand with a 6-2 loss to the Ogden Mustangs. The Bobcats are off again this week and will not play again until they head to West Valley City to visit the Utah Outliers at Accord Ice Arena November 16-18.

The break, coming 12 games into a 52-game schedule, gives veteran head coach John Ambrefe an opportunity to make an early assessment of his players individually, and of his team as a group, before they resume the grind of the WSHL regular season.

Josh Arnold played WSHL hockey in Casper in 2015-16 before moving on to two productive seasons with the North Iowa Bulls in the NA3HL. He has become the latest in a long line of hockey development success stories to come out of the WSHL.

Arnold has moved on to the NCAA Division III program at Wisconsin-River Falls where he scored two goals and added a pair of assists in his first four collegiate games.

CHEYENNE STAMPEDE (0-12-1, 1 pts)

www.cheyennestampede.com

@StampsHockey

The Cheyenne Stampede host the Mountain Division-leading Ogden Mustangs for three games at Cheyenne Ice and Events Center here on Military Appreciation Weekend.

The Mustangs, the only undefeated team remaining in the Western States Hockey League, present the latest challenge for a Cheyenne team playing competitive hockey, but just not getting the results in the early part of the season.

Last Weekend, the Stampede travelled to play three games against the Utah Outliers. Cheyenne stayed in the first two games into the third period against the perennial contenders, but ultimately fell short in all three. Despite the disappointing results, the effort gives head coach Neil Breen and the Stampede something to build on.

“We are certainly better than our record,” said Breen. “We put forward good efforts on both sides of the puck for 40-45 minutes. As we mature, that time increases.”

“Even though we are older collectively than last year, we still have young guys adjusting to the league,” Breen said. “Facing the adversity of tight, physical games is new to some of our guys. As our guys continue to mature, heal and gain more experience, those mindsets and composure elements will start to come around.”

19-year-old goaltender **Brendan Carew** turned in a herculean effort for the Stamps in Saturday’s 5-1 loss, making 73 saves on the night, and stopping 46 of 47 shots through the first two periods.

OGDEN MUSTANGS (15-0-0, 45 pts)

www.ogdenmustangs.com

@OgdenMustangs

Things are rolling along quite nicely in Ogden. The Mustangs are the last remaining undefeated team in the WSHL and lead the overall points race. They have also out-scored the opposition 60-13 while playing five-on-five this season.

In the wake of last weekend's series between the El Paso Rhinos and Long Beach Bombers, there is another marquee match-up on the horizon as the Mustangs will go into Oklahoma City to play the Mid-Western Division-leading Blazers November 16-18. But Ogden can't look ahead as they travel to Cheyenne to play a Stampede squad that is playing much better than their record indicates.

Rhett Rampinelli is really dishing out the assists with 23 through his first 15 games. The franchise record for assists in a single season is 77 – one of several records Matus Spodniak set last season. If Rampinelli can maintain his prolific pace he would challenge that mark.

Former Mustang Tyson Liverance has commenced his NCAA career with St. Mary's University. Liverance, 21, is making the transition directly from the WSHL to NCAA Division III hockey look easy. He has registered five points (3-2-5) in his first four games.

The Cardinals roster also includes WSHL alums Robert Roslund (Long Beach), Travis Hudek (Cheyenne & Oklahoma City), Carter Dahl (Fresno & Colorado) and Jake Hagstrom (Utah) – all of whom stepped right onto the St. Marty's roster the year after they finished their junior career playing in the WSHL.

STEAMBOAT WRANGLERS (3-12-0, 8 pts)

www.steamboatwranglers.com

@SWranglers

They did not bring back any points, but the Steamboat Wranglers put in a good showing against the undefeated Ogden Mustangs at The Ice Sheet last weekend. It was the type of experience that can help a team grow and be better prepared for a test of that magnitude later in the season.

The Wranglers enter play this week a single point behind the Casper Bobcats, but have played three more games. They won't pick up any ground this week as they are idle before welcoming the Cheyenne Stampede in for three games November 16-18 for a series that will be important for the teams jockeying in the middle/bottom of the Mountain Division standings.

Not that the second-place Utah Outliers are a walk in the park, but one of the main goals of the teams in the Mountain Division will be to finish in third place and avoid a first-round match-up with the undefeated Ogden Mustangs.

16-year-old Jordan Belley has been a revelation for the Wranglers. Belley has faced 493 shots – 173 more than the second-busiest target in the league, Wichita's Bronson Sudberry. For such a young netminder to be placed in such duress and keep his team in games against elite competition is very impressive and the Red Deer, Alberta native will no doubt have his name circled on a lot of lists for college scouts at the Western States Shootout in December.

UTAH OUTLIERS (10-5-0, 30 pts)

www.UtahOutliers.com

@UtahOutliers

Utah controlled play, but the Outliers had trouble finishing for the first 40 minutes Friday and Saturday against Cheyenne last weekend before scoring four goals in the third period of each contest to pull away.

They had no such trouble finding the net in Sunday's 15-0 win.

Utah travels to El Paso for a three-game series with the Rhinos this weekend in what will be a key test for both contending teams and must-see TV for junior hockey fans.

The Outliers boast a deep and balanced attack, but two junior hockey veterans in particular have been driving play for them this season.

Matt Bartell, 20, is a Brandon, Florida native who came up with the Tampa Bay Juniors program in the USPHL before playing Junior A hockey in Manitoba the last two seasons. He actually started a third MJHL season with the Dauphin Kings this fall, playing four games, before joining the Outliers.

Nicholas Ness is another 20-year-old player who joined the Outliers after playing high-level junior hockey elsewhere. Ness, who played seven games in Dauphin last season, also skated a season in the tuition free NCDC a year ago and started this season by playing three games in the NAHL with the Janesville Jets.

--- Compiled by Scott Harrington for Harrington Sports Media