

## WSHL WEEKLY NOTES 11.16.18 – NORTHWEST DIVISION



### **BELLINGHAM BLAZERS (14-3-0-0, 42 pts.)**

The Bellingham Blazers are proving that they're a notch above the Provincial Division. The club has won its first five games during its tour through the WSHL's Canadian circuit.

With one game left in the Blazers' road trip, they have outscored the opposition 36-4. Their last game will be played on Saturday evening against the Hinton Wildcats, who they beat 7-0 on Thursday evening.

The lopsided scores have allowed several Bellingham skaters to pad their stats in the league scoring race.

With 40 points, Timothy Prexler is in fifth place in the league, four points behind WSHL leader Sebastian Heden (21-23-44).

Just one point behind Prexler is Robbie Eichelberger (10-29-39), who's on pace to surpass his 53-point output (16-37-53) from last season sooner rather than later.

The Blazers' leading goal-scorer is Thomas Steven (24-11-35), who continues to pace the league in goals. Steven is three goals ahead of Heden and Emil Johansson, a teammate of Heden's on the Edson Aeros.

The talented veteran corps is rounded out by Jamahl Eackett, who has posted 34 points (16-18-34) in just 14 games.

Bellingham has built a nine-point lead over Seattle at the top of the Northwest Division. The two teams will match up once again next Wednesday, the night before Thanksgiving, at Olympicview Arena.

### **SEATTLE TOTEMS (10-4-1-1, 33 pts)**

Like their in-state rivals from Bellingham, the Seattle Totems have mostly cruised through their games against the WSHL's Canadian squads.

The Totems have blown out three of the four Provincial Division clubs, but they have had trouble with the Edson Aeros, who lead their division with a 10-1-1-1 record.

Seattle fell to Edson 6-1 to kick off their trip and narrowly lost to the Aeros again two days later, falling by a 5-4 final in overtime.

Still, the Totems have a 3-1-0-1 record this week, which is a successful road trip. They'll look to end things on a positive note on Saturday night as they take on the Cold Lake Wings, who they beat 11-4 on Thursday.

Veteran forward Michael Shippee has shined this week, with 16 points (8-8-16) over five games. The Seattle native now has a 14-24-38 scoring line on the campaign, good for seventh-most points in the league.

An area where Seattle has shown a ton of improvement this year is on the power play. With a conversion rate of 23.7%, the Totems currently have the fourth-best power play unit in the WSHL.

The penalty kill hasn't been quite as successful, but it's been more than respectable. The Totems are killing off 81.5% of opposing power plays, putting them just inside the top 10 in the WSHL rankings.

#### **SOUTHERN OREGON SPARTANS (6-9-0-1, 19 pts.)**

Northwest Division teams made a habit of blowing out their opponents this week, and the Southern Oregon Spartans are no exception.

The Spartans have won four of their first five games in Canada, posting lopsided victories in all their wins. Their only loss so far is a 6-3 defeat at the hands of Edson.

Southern Oregon will close out its road trip on Saturday in Edson looking for revenge on the red-hot Aeros.

Forward Eric Vanderhoff has separated himself from the pack as the Spartans' go-to option on offense. The 18-year-old has 41 points (16-25-41) over just 14 appearances, making him Southern Oregon's leading scorer by 16 points.

Vanderhoff is tied for third in the WSHL in points and has been a godsend for a Spartans team that lost both of its top two scorers from last season.

After Saturday night's game in Edson, the Spartans will get back to their usual Northwest Division foes on November 30 as they open up a three-game set on the road against Bellingham.

It will mark the first series of the year between the division-leading Blazers and the Spartans, who are looking to get back to .500 in the coming weeks.

#### **WEST SOUND ADMIRALS (4-11-1-0, 14 pts.)**

The West Sound Admirals have flashed plenty of positive signs, including a 5-4 win over Seattle in late October, but the results haven't always been there.

The Admirals opened their Provincial Division road trip this week by taking on arguably the top two clubs in the division, Hinton and Edson. As a result, West Sound opened the trip with three straight regulation losses.

The Ads recovered on Thursday night with an 8-4 win over Meadow Lake before defeating Cold Lake 6-5 in overtime on Friday.

The team is set to conclude their road trip on Saturday night with another game against Meadow Lake, which should be another good opportunity for a win.

West Sound's offense has struggled overall, but the trio of Alec Johnson (6-14-20), Oliwer Stensson (8-10-18) and Caleb Travis (4-12-16) has provided valuable production.

With 16 points in 15 games, Travis is the only player scoring at a point-per-game pace for the Admirals. The former West Sound Warrior was acquired from Seattle early in the season.

*---Jared Tennant for Harrington Sports Media*