

WSHL WEEKLY NOTES 12.07.18 – NORTHWEST DIVISION



BELLINGHAM BLAZERS (18-5-0-0, 54 pts.)

@BhamBlazers

The Bellingham Blazers posted a three-game sweep of Southern Oregon at home last weekend, but they suffered a regulation loss to Seattle on the road on Wednesday evening.

The defeat marks the second time in the last couple of weeks that the Blazers have lost to Seattle on the road in regulation. It wouldn't be that notable if it wasn't for the fact that Bellingham has dropped only five games this season.

The rivalry between Bellingham and Seattle is becoming one of the more entertaining back-and-forths in the WSHL. The Blazers won the first three matchups of the season between the two clubs, but Seattle has stormed back with four straight wins.

The two teams will meet again next weekend with a one-game matchup in Bellingham on December 14. Unless something changes from now until the end of

the season, the Blazers and Totems seem to be destined to meet this coming spring to decide the winner of the Northwest Division in the Thorne Cup playoffs.

Forward Thomas Steven is tied for second in the league in goals with 28. Steven (28-16-44), Timothy Prexler (20-32-52), Robbie Eichelberger (11-36-47), and Jamahl Eackett (20-22-44) represent four of the top eight scorers in the WSHL.

Forward Christopher Fogelberg (18-17-35) isn't far behind, sitting just inside the top 15 in the WSHL scoring race. Having such an abundance of talented scorers has allowed the Blazers to rack up a league-high 134 goals, good for 5.8 goals per contest.

The Blazers will play a home-and-home series against West Sound this weekend, beginning on Friday night at Bellingham Sportsplex.

SEATTLE TOTEMS (14-5-1-2, 46 pts)

@SeattleJrTotems

Despite being the favorite in the series, the Seattle Totems dropped two of three games to West Sound last weekend with both losses coming on home ice.

A winning hockey team can quickly move past disappointing defeats, and that's exactly what the Totems did when they beat Bellingham by a 4-3 final on Wednesday in front of their hometown fans.

In the win, blueliner Dominik Basek scored with just over seven minutes to go in the third period to break a 3-3 tie and give his team a big win over the first-place Blazers.

Bellingham had fought back to tie the game after falling behind by scores of 2-0 and 3-1, so Basek's goal represented a huge shift in momentum.

The win allowed the Totems to maintain their eight-game point streak on home ice. Seattle owns a sparkling 7-0-0-1 record at Olympicview Arena this season.

With 46 points, the Totems are eight points behind division-leading Bellingham with one game in hand. They are very much alive in the race for the Northwest Division title, especially with the WSHL's newly-implemented point format where a regulation win nets three points.

Seattle is off this weekend but will return to action next Friday night to take on Bellingham once again. The following night, the Totems will play their final game before the Western States Shootout against West Sound.

SOUTHERN OREGON SPARTANS (6-13-0-1, 19 pts.)

@wshlspartans

There were some encouraging signs, but the Southern Oregon Spartans ultimately failed to earn a point last weekend in a three-game series against Bellingham.

Other than a few poor stretches, the Spartans managed to keep the Blazers high-powered offense in check through the first two games of the matchup, but Bellingham broke through for nine goals in the series finale.

Southern Oregon now sits in a third-place tie with West Sound, which has made strides in the last few weeks. Things won't get much easier this weekend as the Spartans host the Fresno Monsters for a three-game tilt.

The Monsters are in second place in the Western Division, just three points behind the Long Beach Bombers. They own a plus-28 goal differential and feature plenty of talent, but Fresno has a mediocre 5-4-0-0 record away from home.

Winning this weekend's series would give the Spartans some extra momentum as they head into their slate of games at the Western States Shootout in a couple of weeks.

Southern Oregon is set to take on the Steamboat Wranglers, Casper Bobcats, and Valencia Flyers at the Las Vegas event. None of those teams have a winning record and Southern Oregon will have a decent chance at beating all three.

WEST SOUND ADMIRALS (5-13-2-0, 19 pts.)

@wsadmirals

Last week, Admirals Head Coach and General Manager Dave Daniello said that his team has played well but needs to build some consistency.

West Sound responded with one of its most balanced efforts of the season last weekend in a successful series against Seattle, which is nine games above .500 and in second place in the Northwest Division.

The Admirals won two of three games in the series, dropping the opener before posting a 9-6 victory and a 6-5 overtime triumph.

With just 19 points through 20 games, West Sound still has a long way to go to prove it's truly a contender in the Northwest Division. Last weekend's series was a great first step to achieving that goal.

"To get back into the division race, we need to win these crucial divisional games and we need to figure out Bellingham," Daniello said.

The Ads have struggled in the defensive zone, and that's probably why they haven't been able to beat the Northwest Division leaders from Bellingham. West Sound has lost seven games against the Blazers to open the season, allowing 47 goals in the process.

The Admirals will get another shot at Bellingham this weekend with a pair of games. After taking on the Blazers on the road on Friday, the West Sound will welcome Bellingham to Bremerton Ice Center on Saturday evening.

---Jared Tennant for Harrington Sports Media