

WSHL WEEKLY NOTES 12.13.17 – MOUNTAIN DIVISION



CASPER COYOTES (9-14-0, 18 pts)

www.caspercoyotes.com

@CasperCoyotes

The Casper Coyotes are off this weekend and are now focused on Las Vegas where they will compete in the Western States Shootout. Casper is taking a six-game winning streak to the showcase and will play three teams who could pose a challenge for the young squad.

But, that challenge will have to work for a Casper squad that will return from Vegas for 12 straight games against Ogden and Colorado, two teams at the top of the WSHL. So, enjoy the desert, gentlemen, because winter is coming.

We've applauded Casper's ability to be a tough out, keeping most opponents in check even when the scoreboard may not show it. The Shootout will be an opportunity for the team to put those skills to work against teams they wouldn't play otherwise.

Led by Bradley Green (15-11-26) and Dallen Neese (9-9-18), the Coyotes are also getting solid play in net from Nolan Kare and Dylan Ossachuk.

We've always said that the Shootout is a place for the teams to turn their seasons around, and with their post-Vegas schedule, Casper will need a strong showing to carry over to 2018.

Western States Shootout Schedule:

Tues. 12/19: 1:15pm vs. Seattle Totems at City National Arena A

Wed. 12/20: 8:00am vs. CPJHL White at Sobe Ice Arena

Thurs. 12/21: 12:30pm vs. Dallas Snipers at Sobe Ice Arena

CHEYENNE STAMPEDE (2-25-0, 4 pts)

www.cheyennestampe.com

@StampsHockey

Cheyenne dropped both games to Superior over the weekend, getting three goals from Logan Syrup in Friday's 11-4 loss. Syrup now has an 8-3-11 line in ten games this season.

Before heading to the Western States Shootout, Cheyenne will have their dance cards full this weekend with the Mountain Division's Colorado contingent coming in for one game apiece. Superior visits on Friday and Colorado will take on the Stamps on Saturday.

In Vegas, Cheyenne has Southern Oregon (3-24-0), San Diego (1-19-1), and Wichita (2-22-0) on their docket. Those are three teams that will pose as worthy foes for a Cheyenne team still trying to get their footing this season.

Western States Shootout Schedule:

Tues. 12/19: 12:30pm vs. Southern Oregon Spartans in Sobe Ice Arena

Wed. 12/20: 5:00pm @ San Diego Sabers in Sobe Ice Arena

Thurs. 12/21: 10:15am vs. Wichita Jr. Thunder in Sobe Ice Arena

COLORADO EAGLES (16-5-3, 35 pts)

www.coloradojunioreagles.com

@COJrEagles

The Colorado Jr. Eagles have a one-night-only appearance in Cheyenne this weekend before going to the Las Vegas Western States Shootout where they will be playing against three of the top teams in the league.

Colorado's depth and system means lots of players contribute, and that combination will serve them well against teams in Vegas who don't play against teams with Colorado's depth and experience.

Case in point: While no players on the Jr. Eagles have broken 30 points, seven players have more than 20 which shows that, unlike most WSHL teams, the Jr. Eagles aren't top-heavy. There's no drop-off from the top scorer to the third scorer on the team, instead they are getting even production down the line.

Head Coach Steve Haddon says his team is looking forward to what lays ahead in the desert.

"We know the Shootout will be another great test," Haddon said. "Knowing you need to bring you're A-game everyday."

After Vegas, the Jr. Eagles will spend January playing Superior and Casper as they try to catch up to the Mustangs for first place.

Western States Shootout Schedule:

Tues. 12/19: 12:30pm @ Long Beach Bombers in City National Arena B

Wed. 12/20: 2:45pm vs. Valencia Flyers in City National Arena B

Thurs. 12/21: 10:15am @ Idaho IceCats in City National Arena B

OGDEN MUSTANGS (21-6-1, 43 pts)

www.ogdenmustangs.com

@OgdenMustangs

The Mustangs were 18-1-1 in their last 20 games going into last weekend, but suffered their first two-game losing streak of the season when they dropped both games to in-state rivals Utah.

Ogden gave up three goals in two minutes in the 2nd period and couldn't climb back on Friday, losing 4-3 for the fourth one-goal game between these two clubs this year.

The Mustangs signed 1998 defenseman Matthew Thielemann before the weekend and he made his presence felt in his first series with Ogden. The Highlands Ranch, CO native scored an assist in each game over the weekend impressing his new team with his puck moving abilities.

Ogden will now turn their attention to Las Vegas and the Western States Shootout where they will put their skills to the test when they face Valencia, OKC, and the league's best El Paso Rhinos.

But, Head Coach Jake Laime says the overall goal is still the endgame and not necessarily the Shootout.

"We aren't specifically preparing for the showcase," Laime said of his team's focus. "We are trying to fine tune the inconsistencies and prepare for the stretch."

Not many teams would look at a recent two-game losing streak as a time to reevaluate their season, but Ogden has the luxury of a combination of success and expectations.

A strong showing for many teams would equal an opportunity to start the new year as a new team, but for Ogden, anything less than a dominating showing in Vegas would be acceptable.

Coach Laime doesn't see his team's preparation for the stiff competition in the desert as any different than when they play any number of teams during the season.

"We want to be competitive short term, but prepared and ready long term," Laime said. "The key to winning anywhere is to work harder and make less mistakes."

Ogden may come out of the Shootout more focused than they've been all year, and that could spell trouble for those in their way come 2018.

Western States Shootout Schedule:

Tues. 12/19 at 8am vs. Oklahoma City Blazers in City National Arena B

Wed. 12/20 at 2:30pm @ El Paso Rhinos in City National Arena A

Thurs. 12/21 at 5pm vs. Valencia Flyers in City National Arena B

SUPERIOR ROUGHRIDERS (14-12-0, 28 pts)

www.SuperiorRoughRiders.com

[@SPR_RoughRiders](#)

Superior swept the Stampede in a home-and-home two-game series over the weekend. The RoughRiders continue to be led by rookies and Nikita Sheberov's 4-5-9 line over the weekend has him up to 34-27-61 totals on the season, good for third in the Mountain Division.

Thore Weyrauch scored 6-2-8 against the Stampede bringing his season totals to 20-26-46.

Goalie Emanuel Hertel-Bauman made 24 saves in the 11-4 victory Friday. LJ Newell made 40 saves in the 6-0 shutout victory on Saturday.

Superior will give Cheyenne another chance before the Western States Shootout where the RoughRiders will have some fun games with teams from the Northwest and Western divisions.

The RoughRiders have been hovering around .500 all season and pretty much know where they stand in the pecking order within the Mountain Division, so playing games against teams from around the WSHL will help clear the picture for them a bit.

And, as we've said before, being led by so many rookies means that there may come a time sooner, rather than later, where the kids put it all together and make a nice run for a few weeks. And, there's no place like Las Vegas to turn your fortunes around.

Western States Shootout Schedule:

Tues. 12/19: 5:00pm @ Lake Tahoe Icemen in City National Arena B

Wed. 12/20: 5:00pm vs. CPJHL White Team in City National Arena B

Thurs. 12/21: 3:30pm @ Ontario Avalanche in City National Arena A

UTAH OUTLIERS (20-5-0, 40pts)

www.UtahOutliers.com

[@UtahOutliers](#)

12.08.17 – Utah 4 @ Ogden 3

12.09.17 – Ogden 1 @ Utah 6

Pack it in, everyone – the season's over. Where's the Thorne Cup? Anyone seen the Thorne Cup? Just hand it over to the Outliers. We're good here. OK that may be a bit much, but you get the picture. The Outliers are H-O-T.

Utah swept the Ogden Mustangs in their two-game series over the weekend, and are now off to their best start in franchise history with a 20-5-0 record through 25 games. They've haven't lost two in a row since the top of October and they can not stop, nor will they stop.

The Outliers scored three goals in two minutes in period two of Friday's game, including two from Brandon Krumpshmid, to win the game 4-3 marking the fourth time these two in-state rivals have played to a one-goal game.

When we say "rival," we generally mean "two teams who play each other a lot," but the season series between the Mustangs and Outliers is arguably the best rivalry in the league right now. Utah now has a 4-3 record against Ogden in a series that has seen two games be decided by more than two goals. Utah has outscored the Mustangs 23-20 in the seven games.

They have the strongest goalie tandem in the league with Dawson Rodin (10 wins, 1.72/.945) and Otto Saxin (8 wins, 1.20/.925) just making fools of opposing scorers. Rodin's .945 SV% is tops in the league and Saxin's .120 GAA leads the WSHL.

But, it's their offense of late that has this team riding high. They've scored 70 goals in their last dozen games while going 11-1 while only allowing 19 goals in that time.

Head Coach Paul Taylor thinks going with the hot hand on offense will see his team continue to find success.

"We have been playing well and finding the net the past few weekends," Taylor said. "We will continue to work on our offensive game as we head into the showcase and hope it pays off."

Utah plays in the league's toughest division, with three teams at the top of their game within the Mountain. So, going to Vegas to play the likes of the Western Division leaders Long Beach and Valencia will go a long way to showing just how far the Outliers have come.

"We will be preparing all week to face the teams we are scheduled against in Las Vegas," Taylor said. "I think the key to our success in Vegas will be the

same as it has been all season. We need to play a complete game and have contributions throughout our line up. Having different guys step up and lead us at different times has been a big key for us all season. We hope to see that trend continue."

With the test that is the Shootout, we'll see if 2018 will, in fact, be the year of the Outlier.

Western States Shootout Schedule:

Tues. 12/19: 2:45pm vs. Valencia Flyers in City National Arena B

Wed. 12/20: 12:30pm vs. Long Beach Bombers in City National Arena B

Thurs. 12/21: 12:30pm vs. Oklahoma City Blazers in City National Arena B

--- *Tyler Whidden for Harrington Sports Media*