



WSHL WEEKLY NOTES 10.05.17 – NORTHWEST DIVISION

BELLINGHAM BLAZERS (0-2-0)

www.BellinghamBlazers.pointstreaksites.com

@Bhamblazers

The Bellingham Blazers are back in action this weekend as they take on Seattle in a brief two-game series at home.

The first four games of the Blazers' schedule are against the Totems. Last weekend, Bellingham lost both games in a home-and-home series against Seattle.

Coach Mark Collins may give some playing time this weekend to netminder Kolter Pawlick, who did not appear in the club's first two games.

Fellow goaltenders Jake Holden and Edward Coffey are both off to rough starts, and a new face between the pipes could benefit a Blazers team looking to avoid going winless through the first couple of weeks of the season.

Forward Jamahl Eackett is on fire to start the year and has scored five of Bellingham's 10 goals thus far.

The two-year veteran was a late-season pickup last year and has previously appeared in games with the Las Vegas Storm and Ogden Mustangs.

As a veteran, Eackett is being relied upon heavily by Collins and his coaching staff. Early on, it seems that the Utah native is responding nicely.

IDAHO ICECATS (0-0-0)

www.IdahoIceCats.com

The Idaho IceCats have one more week off before finally opening up their season at home against Tahoe on October 13.

Idaho is one of four WSHL clubs that has yet to play a game, and it is the only team in the Northwest Division that hasn't begun play.

Idaho's light October schedule will give it plenty of time to adjust to the new season after a run to the Thorne Cup finals last spring.

The IceCats play only 10 games in their first month of action, including a pair of three-game sets against division rivals Tahoe and West Sound.

Idaho fans can email photos to icecatsfanzone@yahoo.com to have them posted on the IceCats' Facebook page and website.

The photos will appear on the fan zone section of Idaho's website.

SEATTLE TOTEMS (3-0-1)

www.SeattleJrTotems.com

[@SeattleJrTotems](#)

A pair of wins over Bellingham has pushed the Seattle Totems into second place in the division with seven points and a 3-0-1 record. Coach Michael Murphy pointed out a few reasons for his club's early success:

"A lot better play in goal so far with both of our goalies giving us a chance to win every game, and our veteran guys have really stepped up so far along with good contributions from all our newcomers as well."

Netminders Naoki Onodera and Garrett Wills are the goaltenders Murphy was referencing, and both have been solid up to this point.

Both goalies have started two games so far, and Onodera owns a perfect 2-0-0 record and a .901 save percentage.

Murphy thinks his team has turned a corner and moved on from its losing ways of past seasons.

"Guys are sick of losing, and I think we will find ways to win close games this year instead of finding ways to lose them.

"Also, discipline and trying to cut down the stupid penalties is helpful as well."

The Totems will play two more games against Bellingham on the road this weekend.

SOUTHERN OREGON SPARTANS (1-2-0)

www.SOSpartans.com

[@wshlspartans](#)

This weekend, the Southern Oregon Spartans will get their first taste of the West Sound Warriors as the club travels to Bremerton Ice Center for a three-game series.

The Spartans need their goaltenders to step up if they hope to take down the Warriors. The duo of Krystof Holub and Austin Toussaint combined to allow 16 goals over three games against Tahoe during the first weekend of the season.

Offensively, Southern Oregon has been a bit streaky early in the season. After finding the back of the net five times in their season opener against Tahoe, the Spartans scored just one goal the following night before closing out the series with another five-goal effort.

The West Sound series represents the first half of Southern Oregon's six-game road trip, which will conclude with a three-game set against the Utah Outliers beginning October 13.

After playing West Sound, the Spartans will not take on another Northwest Division opponent until a November 3-5 series against Bellingham.

TAHOE ICEMEN (3-1-2)

www.Tahoelcemen.com

@Tahoelcemen

Through their first two series, the Tahoe Icemen are sitting all alone at the top of the Northwest Division.

The Icemen collected three of six possible points against the Ontario Avalanche last weekend, giving them eight points thus far.

Goaltender Wade Conlan's bid for a breakout season continued against the Avs as he stopped 68 of the 72 shots he saw.

Conlan now owns a sparkling slash line of 1.68/.955 and seems to be emerging as one of the top starting goalies in the WSHL.

Tahoe's offense has been a pleasant surprise. The Icemen are averaging five goals per game despite being shut out in a dramatic 1-0 overtime loss in the series finale against Ontario.

In addition to the efforts of leading scorer Paul Frys, offensive-minded blueliner Phil Heisse is off to another strong start with three goals and four assists through his first five games.

Heisse has also shown plenty of toughness with 27 penalty minutes, second on the team only to Easton Easterson's 56 PIMs, 45 of which he accumulated in Tahoe's season opener against Southern Oregon.

Tahoe was originally scheduled to play the dormant Kent Ravens this weekend. Instead, it will take a week off before traveling to Idaho for a three-game series against the IceCats beginning on October 13.

WEST SOUND WARRIORS (1-1-0)

www.WestSoundWarriors.com

@WS_Warriors

Warriors Head Coach Ty Smith and his club are ready to get back at it after splitting a pair of games against Seattle in West Sound's first series in the WSHL.

The Warriors begin a three-game series at home against Southern Oregon on Friday night.

Smith is extremely encouraged after seeing his team face its first opponent.

"I thought we played very well for our first weekend as a program," he said. "I think we made some noise up against a much-improved Seattle Totem team.

"I'm very excited for this season. We got a ton of chances and just couldn't bury the puck, as the goaltending for Seattle was superb."

Last season, Smith was behind the bench for the Butte Cobras, and it was quite a successful season.

He led the club to its first-ever playoff series win before falling in the division semifinals. Smith believes the experience he gained last season has helped both himself and a few veteran Warriors players who previously suited up for the Cobras.

“I think the playoff run helps myself and our veteran players to understand that it’s a long season, and the number one goal is to improve day in and day out.”

--- Jared Tennant for Harrington Sports Media