



Mark Mauno photo

WSHL WEEKLY NOTES 10.13.17 – WESTERN DIVISION

FRESNO MONSTERS (1-5-0)

@WSHLMonsters

www.FresnoMonsters.com

Sometimes a team's record can be deceiving and does not truly represent the club's talent level. That is absolutely the case with the Fresno Monsters, who have dropped five of six games to start the year despite playing well almost every time out.

Fresno's first two series to open the season were against Long Beach and Valencia, the top two clubs in the Western Division last year.

After dropping their first five games, which included three one-goal contests, the Monsters took their frustration out on previously undefeated Valencia in an 11-3 blowout victory.

Forwards Cody Key and Daylon Mannon share the early team lead in goals with six apiece. Mannon owns the edge in assists with six compared to four for Key.

Goaltender Adam Barvik has been played much better than his 0-3-0 record would indicate. He owns a .921 save percentage while leading the team in ice time.

Fresno will look to build some momentum from its big win over Valencia this weekend when it travels to San Diego for a three-game series against the winless Sabers.

LONG BEACH BOMBERS (5-0-0)

@LBBombersHockey

www.JrBombers.pointstreaksites.com

After a pair of dominant wins over San Diego last weekend, the Long Beach Bombers are undefeated through their first five games.

Netminder Domenic Bosetti logged his first shutout of the season in a 7-0 win before the Bombers recorded an 8-2 victory in the second game.

Bosetti is one of the biggest reasons Long Beach has given up a division-low 11 goals, good for an average of about two goals per contest.

The Bombers' penalty kill has stymied opposing power plays thus far, allowing just one goal while netting a pair of shorthanders – meaning Long Beach has actually outscored its opponents when it is down a man.

Surprisingly, the power play has not been as effective as expected early on, as it is converting at a 15.8% clip.

While that number will likely improve with time, it's a huge step back for a club that scored on 31% of its power play opportunities last season.

The Bombers will play their first road series of the season this weekend at Arizona Ice against Phoenix.

ONTARIO AVALANCHE (5-1-0)

@TmOntAvs

www.OntarioAvalanche.com

The Ontario Avalanche took care of business against Phoenix with a series sweep, pushing themselves into a second-place tie in the Western Division while moving their winning streak to four games.

The Avalanche came out on top by scores of 8-1, 5-3, and 4-1.

Ontario's goal differential is now plus-12, good for ninth-best in the league.

The Avs have gotten an enormous boost from star netminder Filip Subrt, who leads the league in save percentage (.957) and goals against average (1.44) among goaltenders who have appeared in at least five games.

The three-year veteran is establishing himself as one of the top goalies in the league and seems to be getting better with every start.

Ontario will travel to El Paso this weekend for three games against the perennially contending Rhinos at Desert Ice Castle.

PHOENIX KNIGHTS (0-6-0)

@PhoenixKnightsJrA

www.PhoenixKnightsHockey.com

The Phoenix Knights are not off to the start they envisioned after being swept by Valencia and Ontario to begin the season.

Unfortunately, things won't get much easier this weekend for the Knights as they will be tasked with taking down defending Western Division champion Long Beach.

The Bombers are off to a perfect 5-0-0 start and would be difficult for any WSHL team to beat, let alone the struggling Knights.

Something needs to happen soon to jumpstart the Phoenix offense, which has scored just eight goals through its first six games.

A good way to start would be to work on improving a power-play unit that has just two goals in 30 tries, a rate of 6.7%.

SAN DIEGO SABERS (0-2-0)

@sdsabershockey

www.SanDiegoSabersHockey.com

The San Diego Sabers opened their season last weekend with a pair of lopsided losses to Long Beach.

Not much went right for San Diego against the Bombers as it was outscored 15-2 in the two-game series. Luckily for the Sabers, two games don't decide a season. They still have about five months of hockey ahead of them.

San Diego will look to right the ship this weekend as it plays its first home series of the year against Fresno.

It will not be an easy matchup despite the Monsters' poor record. It should make a good test for the Sabers as they get into the swing of things following an extended offseason.

VALENCIA FLYERS (8-1-0)

@valenciaflyers

www.ValenciaFlyers.com

The Valencia Flyers suffered their first loss of the season last weekend against Fresno but still managed to claim four of six possible points to increase their record to a WSHL-best 8-1-0.

The Flyers seem to be on a mission, and their total domination up to this point has led to the best goal differential in the league at plus-45.

Goaltender Spencer Kozlowski has been a brick wall, with a .948 save percentage and a perfect 5-0-0 record.

Valencia recently picked up a pair of former Las Vegas Storm players in defenseman Jake McKenna and forward Nikita Pintusov.

Pintusov has recorded 11 points (5-6-11) through his first six games while McKenna has picked up an assist while providing solid defensive depth. McKenna and Pintusov were teammates with Kozlowski for part of the season last year with Las Vegas.

Valencia is off this week. It returns to action October 20-21 for a home-and-home series against Ontario.

Following the Ontario series, the Flyers will play two games in a row against Long Beach in what should be a fantastic matchup.

--- *Jared Tennant for Harrington Sports Media*