



*Mark Mauno photo*

## **WSHL WEEKLY NOTES 10.17.17 – MID-WEST DIVISION**

### **DALLAS SNIPERS (1-5-0, 2 pts)**

[www.WSHLDallasSnipers.pointstreaksites.com](http://www.WSHLDallasSnipers.pointstreaksites.com)

@DallasSnipers

The Dallas Snipers took the first game of a three-game series against the Superior RoughRiders, 6-5, thanks to three third-period goals.

Sterling Cooper, expected to be a leader on the Dallas squad this year, tallied a 2-1-3 line on Friday, and Dennis Berdnicks added three assists.

Dallas kept themselves in Saturday's game, but just couldn't catch up to the high-powered 'Rider offense. Cooper added a goal and assist on Saturday, and Manny Legace stopped 22 in the 4-2 loss.

Sunday was probably a night to forget for Dallas, with a four-goal second period by Superior, as they pulled away on their way to a 10-4 victory over the Snipers.

Overall, the Snipers were outshot 124-78 in the series, but showed grit and guts in keeping themselves in the games against a Superior team averaging more than 5.5 goals per game this season.

For Dallas to stay competitive they're gonna need players like Cooper and Jaroslav Vasicek to show the team the way. Right now, those two are leading the team – along with Slovakian rookie Alex Hladonik – with seven points apiece. Hladonik went 3-3-6 against Superior.

### **EL PASO RHINOS (6-0-0, 12 pts)**

[www.ElPasoRhinos.com](http://www.ElPasoRhinos.com)

@El\_Paso\_Rhinos

El Paso traveled to California to take on the Western Division's Ontario Avalanche, winning all three games to remain unbeaten in the early season.

Team leader Chasteon Sare went 3-3-6 against the Avalanche and now has a 6-9-15 line on the year.

Friday's contest was a lopsided affair with the Rhinos outshooting the Avs, 53-14, on their way to a 5-1 win.

The next two games were much tighter with the Rhinos posting a pair of one-goal wins. They needed two early third period goals to take Saturday's game, 4-3, with a much closer 40-28 shot differential in El Paso's favor.

Another tight one on Sunday, as the Rhinos again came from behind in the third, with Phillip Pugliese scoring his second goal of the year with nine seconds left in the game on a 4-on-4 situation for another 4-3 win.

Overall, it was the Rhinos outshooting Ontario, 138-59, in the three games as El Paso continues to show their defense is just as effective as their offense.

Goaltender Filip Krasanovsky played the first two games and is now sporting a .939 SV% on the year – his first in the WSHL.

### **OKLAHOMA CITY BLAZERS (3-0-0, 6 pts)**

[www.OKCityHockey.com](http://www.OKCityHockey.com)

@OKCBlazersWSHL

The Oklahoma City Blazers still have not played since opening the season with a three-game sweep of Wichita last month.

They'll play at home the next two weekends with Mountain Division Superior coming to OKC this weekend. This could be a real test for the Blazers as they try to shake the early-season rust against a RoughRiders team that has been effective in the offensive end.

After Superior, the Blazers have dates against Dallas, Cheyenne, and Wichita – all teams that are struggling out of the gate.

After scoring 4-10-14 in his first three games against Wichita, look for veteran forwards Ivan Bondarenko and Josh Chamberlain (6-6-12) to be among the league leaders come this time next month.

### **SPRINGFIELD EXPRESS (3-1-2, 8 pts)**

[www.SpringfieldExpress.com](http://www.SpringfieldExpress.com)

@\_ExpressHockey

Springfield fought hard with one of the league's top teams in Colorado, losing all three games, but forcing two of them into extra frames to pick up a pair of valuable points in the Mid-West Division race.

Six different Express players scored in Friday's 7-6 overtime loss. Akos Szigeti scored with 15 seconds left in regulation to send the game to OT.

Saturday was a bit of a reversal with the Eagles scoring two unanswered goals in the third period to send the game to overtime, where Colorado again came out on top thanks to a goal in the second (three-on-three) OT.

The 417s couldn't hold on come Sunday with Colorado scoring in pairs to win 4-1 over Springfield.

Veteran Kyle Cagnoni leads the team with a 7-8-15 line in his first six games, with Stephan Doring (6-7-13) and Vegard Faret (5-7-12) not far behind.

The Express now have nine players averaging more than a point-per-game, with six producing double-digit points so far.

Goaltender Kristof Dobos was busy against the Eagles, making 107 saves over the three games.

The Express will roll into Fort Collins in two weeks, most assuredly using the bye week as an opportunity to focus on figuring out how to come up with the big goal when they need it against Colorado.

**WICHITA JR. THUNDER (1-11-0, 2 pts)**

[www.WichitaJuniorThunder.com](http://www.WichitaJuniorThunder.com)

@JrThunderHockey

The Wichita Jr. Thunder continued to struggle putting the puck in the net and suffered a sweep at the hands of the Casper Coyotes.

Corey Schultheis scored the lone Wichita goal in the series in the third period of Sunday's game.

It's been tough going for coach Rob Weingartner's team, but with so many new faces on the squad, there's expected to be a bit of growing pains.

Friday's 8-0 loss was the first time all year that Wichita was kept off the score sheet. Unfortunately, they suffered the same fate on Saturday in a 15-0 drubbing at the hands of the Coyotes.

The Thunder have been playing with a short bench all year, and will look to get the gears going against Dallas this weekend. This young and inexperienced team has been thrown to the fire in the early going. It's possible that this early-season experience builds some character that we see carry them come playoff time.

--- Tyler Whidden for Harrington Sports Media