

# WSHL WEEKLY NOTES 10.25.17 – MID-WEST DIVISION



**DALLAS SNIPERS (4-5-0, 8pts)**

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

[@DallasSnipers](https://twitter.com/DallasSnipers)

The Dallas Snipers bounced back from a six-goal defeat at the hands of Superior last Sunday to score 31 goals against Wichita in a three-game sweep of their Mid-Western Division rivals.

Dallas has been playing well lately, despite their sub-.500 record, being led by rookie Alex Hladonik (8-11-19) and veteran Sterling Cooper (8-10-18).

The Snipers blew up against the Jr. Thunder, with Hladonik producing 12 points (4-8-12), Michael Pistek chipping in with nine (2-7-9), and all three goalies getting a victory on the weekend including local product Evan Williams.

Head Coach Aaron Davis sees his team getting into mid-season form. "I think all the guys are starting to figure out their roles and adjusting to a faster and

more physical game than they have been used to," Davis said. "I have a younger team and we are trying to get the guys to learn to be consistent every shift every game."

While the team has scored an impressive 46 goals in their first nine games, they've also allowed a total of 48 thus far, but Davis said he's not concerned about his team's goal differential at this point in the year. "Right now, I am looking for guys to compete and learn game in and game out."

Dallas will face off with division rival Oklahoma City this weekend in what will surely provide an opportunity for Dallas to see where they stand within the Mid-Western Division.

"OKC will be a tough test we have watched a little video and gone over systems the last few days," Coach Davis said. "More or less we can watch as much film go over systems as we want but if we don't compete shift by shift it won't matter."

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

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

**@EI\_Paso\_Rhinos**

If you're not following the El Paso Rhinos Twitter, you really should. Especially when the team has had so many weekends off to begin the season.

A quick glance at @EI\_Paso\_Rhinos shows a team that is staying busy despite having only played six games in the first month of the season.

They've just completed their 9th Annual Golf Tournament, are committed to the El Paso Hockey Association's youth programs – fostering the game they love with the next generation of Rhinos, and are actively promoting the franchise and league within the community news outlets.

In order to keep sharp in their off-time, the team is keeping busy – hiking the local hillsides and practicing their shot release.

They should be ready to go this weekend when they back to it against the Western Division's San Diego Sabres. After that, it's the Mountain Division's Superior RoughRiders, meaning the Rhinos won't face off against a Mid-Western Division opponent until they play the Express November 10 in Springfield.

## **OKLAHOMA CITY BLAZERS (6-0-0, 12 pts)**

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

@OKCBlazersWSHL

The Oklahoma City Blazers remained undefeated after sweeping the Mountain Division's Superior RoughRiders by a combined score of 15-4 in three games.

Joshua Chamberlain went 3-2-5 against the RoughRiders and Ivan Bondarenko had a four-goal Saturday to finish the series 6-2-8 in three games.

Bondarenko leads the team with a 10-12-22 line in six games with Chamberlain sporting a 9-8-17 line.

The Blazers face off with upstart Dallas this weekend before taking on Cheyenne in Wyoming the following weekend.

After that, it's Dallas again and Wichita all in OKC. When they play Springfield to open December, that'll make 18 home games in the Blazers' first 21 games to start the season.

This weekend, OKC will welcome WSHL vet Lukas Slansky to the lineup. Slansky played the past two seasons with Cheyenne, scoring a 51-59-110 line in 79 career games. It's another log on the scoring fire in Oklahoma City.

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

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

@\_ExpressHockey

The Springfield Express will play a revenge series against Colorado this weekend, two weeks after the Jr. Eagles swept Springfield in three games. Two of those losses to Colorado came in extra periods, so the 417s will be looking to get the upper hand early.

Even having played the Jr. Eagles – one of the best teams in the league – the Express still rolled offensively, and now nine Springfield skaters have a point-per-game to begin the season.

Kyle Cagnoni leads the team with a 7-8-15 line in his first six games. The Massachusetts native had 28 career WSHL points coming into this season and should eclipse that mark in no time.

German forward Stephane Döring is sporting a 6-7-13 line in his first season in North America.

Springfield has a tough road ahead with dates against Colorado, Dallas and El Paso (twice) before December.

Don't be surprised to see the Express and Dallas build a nice rivalry this season. The two Mid-Western Division rivals play each other a dozen times this year, so come March – their final series and Springfield's penultimate series of the season – these two franchises may really hate each other and that series could have implications on the final standings.

**WICHITA JR. THUNDER (1-14-0, 2pts)**

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

**@JrThunderHockey**

Wichita's slide continued over the weekend, this time at the hands of the Dallas Snipers, who swept the Jr. Thunder in three-straight games. That brings Wichita's current losing streak to seven games.

David Zarycki provided some spark, going 1-2-3 in the three-game series, but Wichita is short-handed and are having a tough time getting their footing in the early going this season.

For the first time all year, they were out-penalized, with the Snipers accruing 90 PIMs to the Jr. Thunder's 51 over three games.

But, Wichita still leads the division with an astounding 327 PIMs this season, besting the next team (Colorado) by 100 PIMs.

Wichita will have a few weeks off before their next series – against Springfield, November 17 – to see if they can't pull it together before the holiday season.

They're still the reigning champs, and coach Rob Weingartner has spoken before about skating such a young and inexperienced team. Hopefully the long break will help them clean the slate.

*--- Tyler Whidden for Harrington Sports Media*