

WSHL WEEKLY NOTES 02.27.18 – MID-WESTERN DIVISION



Photo provided by: Mark Mauno

DALLAS SNIPERS (13-35-0, 26 pts)

WSHLDallasSnipers.pointstreaksites.com

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

The Dallas Snipers will close out their regular season this weekend against Springfield at home after getting swept by El Paso this past weekend on the road.

Michael Pistek scored the lone Dallas goal against the Rhinos, thanks to an Arvidas Domeika assist. The goal brought Pistek's season line up to 14-24-38 on the year and Domeika now sports a 4-13-17 line to lead Dallas' defense.

Things got testy from the get-go in Saturday's game with fisticuffs breaking out in the first two minutes of the game. At the end of the second match-up, these two in-state rivals hit 130 PIMs.

Sunday didn't fare much better with the teams combining for 136 PIMs to close the weekend with 190 total PIMs.

After the Express series this weekend, Dallas will turn its focus towards the playoffs where they will face off with Wichita in the first round.

The Snipers are 11-1-0 against the Jr. Thunder this season including a six-straight wins to begin February.

EL PASO RHINOS (46-1-1, 93 pts)

www.ElPasoRhinos.com

[@El_Paso_Rhinos](#)

The El Paso Rhinos took it to Dallas over the weekend, looking more than primed for the playoffs to begin. El Paso will be hosting the Thorne Cup Finals, so it is a bit of destiny that they should finish with one of the WSHL's best single regular seasons ever.

The new kids seem to be adjusting well with Jakob Kranabetter (6-5-11) and Nikita Pintusov (3-1-4) chipping in against the Snipers. The 11 points adds to Kranabetter's league-leading career 340 total points.

Rhino goaltenders weren't exactly tested against Dallas, but Filip Krasanovsky's two wins against Dallas has him at 34 on the season, leading the league by seven victories.

Not only were the Rhinos sweeping on the ice, but they were sweeping up hair on the floor too. Packed houses over the weekend helped raise \$11,000 for St. Baldrick's after Saturday's game, as 53 participants volunteered their manes for charity.

El Paso welcomes Wichita this upcoming weekend to close out their regular season and head into a first round bye. A weekend sweep will give the Rhinos 99 points in the standings, besting their current WSHL record of 98 when they went 48-1-2 in 2007-08.

OKLAHOMA CITY BLAZERS (39-7-2, 80 pts)

www.OKCityHockey.com

[@OKCBlazersWSHL](#)

The Oklahoma City Blazers swept through Wichita over the weekend, extending their current winning streak to seven games with three more against Casper coming up at home this weekend.

OKC will have a first-round bye when the playoffs arrive by virtue of their second-place finish within the Mid-Western Division. They will await their first playoff opponent with open arms. The Blazers have beaten some of the top teams in the league and now boast the WSHL's most goals scored (355) and fourth-fewest allowed at 103 goals against this year.

Their 80 points in the standings are behind only perennial powerhouse Idaho (86), and Mid-Western Division rivals El Paso, who lead the league with 93 points.

Bobby Cloutier's 27 wins is second in the WSHL to go along with a spectacular 2.29/.922 slash line in a season that has seen him carrying the load for the Blazers with an incredible amount of success.

Ivan Bondarenko (55-62-117 this season) has led the way through the season, but the Blazers have some depth and could very well finish the season with three 100-point scorers. Josh Chamberlain (37-67-104) and Griffin Wiencek (42-54-96) are having career years for the Blazers and this is a team built for the long haul and they've been itching all season for the playoffs.

There are three more games at home this weekend with Casper of the Mountain Division before OKC heads to their first-round bye week.

SPRINGFIELD EXPRESS (23-16-6, 52 pts)

www.SpringfieldExpress.com

@_ExpressHockey

The Springfield Express were off this past weekend, resting up before playing their last seven regular season games.

It's nice to get a two-week layoff before the playoffs, but the 417s were playing really well, beating OKC in three of their last four games.

Veteran Nikita Sokov is having his best WSHL season with a 30-39-69 line this year, and his career totals are now up to 103-95-198 in 174 games between Springfield and the Colorado Evolution. His 99 points with Springfield is good for fourth on the franchise's all-time list with #2 sitting at just 114.

The Ledenkov twins continue their torrid pace in their first season of North America hockey. They not only boast the distinction of being the league's shortest players at 5'3", but the brothers Arkhip (31-31-62) and Filimon (19-41-60) pack a scoring punch combining for 122 points.

The depth on offense shows as the team has scored 261 goals this season, which has them in the league's top-6.

Springfield will feast on Dallas and Wichita to close out their regular season, with the season-ending Jr. Thunder series also closing out their home schedule.

WICHITA JR. THUNDER (3-42-0, 6 pts)

www.WichitaJuniorThunder.com

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

The Wichita Jr. Thunder scored three goals in Game One against OKC over the weekend, but ultimately fell in all three games against their Mid-Western Division rivals in the team's last homestand in Wichita.

Quinn O'Reilly, Corey Schultheis, and defenseman John Tucker each scored a goal and an assist in Friday's game. Tyler Alverson, Tyler Inlow, and John Lebar also added assists.

Wichita scored first in the third period, bringing them within reach at 4-3, but OKC turned it on, scoring five straight in the final frame.

Austin Tilton played Friday and Saturday, stopping 102 shots and bringing his season save percentage up to a respectable .890 SV%.

The Two Tylers connected again on Saturday for Inlow's 10th goal and Alverson's 10th assist. Braedon Thomas also assisted bringing his totals to a team leading 11-11-22 on the year.

There's still plenty of hockey left for the Jr. Thunder as they travel to El Paso this weekend then follow that up with one more road trip to Springfield.

--- *Tyler Whidden for Harrington Sports Media*