

OSU Women's Hockey Wins WCHA Title



Head coach Nadine Muzerall just keeps making history at Ohio State.

After capturing the school's first women's hockey national championship and first WCHA conference tournament title in 2022, with a 3-1 win over No. 6 Wisconsin Sunday the No. 1 Buckeyes won the first regular-season WCHA crown all-time.

OSU's league record of 23-4-1 beat out No. 4 Minnesota's mark of 22-3-3, 70 points to 68. Teams get three points for a win and one point for a tie in the WCHA standings.

Entering this past weekend with a six-point advantage, the Buckeyes needed to win one of their games against the Badgers to claim the conference title outright or tie both to guarantee a share of it.

Wisconsin beat Ohio State 6-5 in overtime Saturday, and with Minnesota slated to play a St. Thomas team with a 3-24-1 in WCHA play, it looked like a win would be required of the Buckeyes Sunday to take the league championship.

A goalie battle ensued in Sunday's matchup, with both netminders posting a shutout through the opening two periods. OSU's Amanda Thiele had 19 stops entering the final frame while UW's Cami Kronish had 15.

Wisconsin forward Laila Edwards finally broke the ice seven minutes into the third period with an even-strength goal. Undeterred, Ohio State picked up a power play off a hooking penalty and forward Emma Maltais netted an equalizer with nine seconds remaining in the man-advantage.

Overtime seemed a likely destination as the contest stayed tied 1-1 with the clock winding under a minute, until Madison Bizal converted a forced turnover off a forecheck with a snipe over Kronish's right shoulder. Maltais, who took the puck away initially, and defenseman Sophie Jaques picked up assists on the play.

That put OSU up 2-1 with 55 seconds to go. Compounding the issue for the Badgers was a lost challenge by coach Mark Johnson, resulting in a delay of game penalty.

Bizal scored another goal on the power play to stop any hopes Wisconsin had of winning and start the celebration for Ohio State. Thiele finished 31 of 32 on saves in the victory.

The Buckeyes open WCHA tournament play Friday at the OSU Ice Rink with a quarterfinal matchup against the last-place team in the conference, Bemidji State. Ohio State swept the Beavers 4-0 in the regular season, outscoring them 21-3 across the four contests.