

# Women's hockey prepare for Augsburg

By Margaret Aycock & Mike Hartt  
Staff Writers

Following their fifth consecutive ECAC Division III title, the Middlebury women's hockey team has set their sights on something greater.

For the first time ever, there will be a Division III National Championship, sponsored by the American Women's College Hockey Alliance, held at Northeastern University in Boston over spring break on March 24-25. The Panthers will take to the ice to defend the number-one national ranking they have held all season, in a battle against number two Augsburg College, of Minneapolis, MN.

Augsburg comes into the two-game series having won the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference tournament, giving the Auggies a berth in the National Championships. Augsburg swept Gustavus 4-1 and 2-1 to

earn their place against Middlebury, which won the ECAC title a week earlier. The Auggies are led in scoring by the MIAC Player of the Year, Angie Rieger, who tallied 22 goals and 22 assists on the season.

According to Middlebury head coach Bill Mandigo, "Augsburg College has a very good hockey program and they will certainly be one of the best teams we have faced all year. They are well coached and they have several very good players. We will have to have a very good team effort in order to be successful in the tournament."

Sarah Carpenter '00, noted "They beat RPI 6-5 in OT, and we beat [RPI] 7-0, 1-0, and 6-0. But Augsburg did fly here [and might have been worn down from travel], so it is harder to compare. But we're focused, and very serious. We're getting down to business and are working hard for this."

The Middlebury women plan to take full advantage of the first ever chance to win a Division III title, after having performed so well in ECACs.

Said Catherine Pullins '00, "To finish my last time in the Chip with a bang was great. We all came together and played with our hearts. We are ready to prepare for Boston at the end of March. It will be an honor to be part of history."

Catherine Elkins '02 commented on the upcoming series: "The whole team is really excited ...so that we have the opportunity to prove why we are number one in Div. III. I think that the two games that we have left will be close and very exciting."

Mandigo agrees with Elkins, saying, "We are all very excited to be playing in Boston. The team is happy and proud to be representing Middlebury College. The team took a week off to rest and re-energize before the championship. We had our first practice [Monday] afternoon and it was a good one. I hope the momentum and excitement will build as we get closer to the games next week. I expect us to be prepared to play and I am confident we will give Augsburg our best effort."

The games will be held at Northeastern University's Matthews Arena, with tickets being \$25 for the Division I/Division III package that gains admissions to both the DI semifinals and finals and the DIII two game series. Middlebury will play at 2 p.m. Friday, March 24, and 12 noon on Saturday, March 25.



Peter Huoppi

Sarah Carpenter '00 and the women's hockey team have their sights set on the first ever Division III Women's Hockey National Championship.

The Men's Hockey Team  
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