

# On campus today

## SPORTS AT NMU



### U.S. OLYMPIC EDUCATION CENTER

NORTHERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY  
MARQUETTE, MICHIGAN

## Discussions Continue on USOEC's Future

### *Kleinschmidt Retires, Gaudreau Named Interim Director*

With the loss of federal funding, the future of the United States Olympic Education Center, which has been on the NMU campus since 1985, continues to be discussed by Northern and the U.S. Olympic Committee.

"As the USOC has been reshaping itself, it is moving away from the model of multi-sport Olympic Centers to more one-sport, multiple-level elite training sites," says NMU President Les Wong. "For instance, Oklahoma City built state-of-the-art facilities to accommodate elite canoe and kayak training, and that is where all levels of American canoe and kayak training now take place. The athletes and the teams still receive funding from the USOC, but the facility itself is owned by the city."

Wong, along with various NMU contingents, have met with USOC officials in a series of meetings that began last fall to discuss the USOEC's future and the contract for the center, which expires Dec. 31. On average, the USOEC has about 100 students in its residential programs each year. Currently, it is home to four residential programs in the sports of short-track speedskating, freestyle wrestling, Greco-Roman



*Boxer Jesse Hart has qualified for the Olympic Trials*

wrestling and weightlifting. At the start of the fall, USA Boxing suspended its USOEC residential program due to financial constraints within that sport's national governing body. Just prior to the program's suspension, USOEC middleweight fighter Jesse Hart of Philadelphia, Pa., qualified for the Olympic Trials.

Another major change to the center this summer came when long-time USOEC director **Jeff Kleinschmidt '83 BS, '86 MA** retired. Kleinschmidt was named the



*In the wake of Jeff Kleinschmidt's retirement, Brian Gaudreau is named interim director of the USOEC*

center's assistant director in

1989 and

director in 1991.

**Brian Gaudreau '83 BS**, the athletic department's associate director-programming, took on the additional duties as the center's interim director.

Gaudreau said while the USOEC and NMU athletic departments have been officially part of the same unit for decades, each has always operated separately. This summer, the USOEC sports were more formally integrated into the athletic department in a way that enabled better sharing of resources. In addition, several positions were restructured and two eliminated as cost-cutting measures of the reorganization.

Wong said that integrating the USOEC sports into the athletic department is one way to bring the Olympic Center's operational costs down and, thus, increase its chances of being funded by the USOC.

"Northern Michigan University and the Marquette community value having the USOEC on our campus and our goal is to see it continue here for a long time to come, but we're not clear at all right now on where the USOC stands related to its future," says Wong. "Everyone has serious funding issues to deal with right now, including the USOC and NMU—that's just the economic landscape that we live in. As the USOC reinvents itself, we'll have to see what role, if any, it wants the USOEC to play in the American Olympic movement."



## NMU Hockey Moves to WCHA in 2013-14

**College hockey league membership** in the western conferences was completely rearranged in an explosion of movement set off by the announcement of the creation of a Big 10 hockey conference last spring.

Then there was the news of a second new conference called the National Collegiate Hockey Conference, created by several members of the current Western Collegiate Hockey Association. Both will begin play in 2013-14.

The creation of the new conferences left a depleted Central Collegiate Hockey Association, of which NMU is a member, as well as openings in the WCHA. One of the first teams the WCHA reached out to was Northern. NMU made the decision to leave the CCHA and join the WCHA as of the 2013-14 season.

"We share many natural rivalries with the new WCHA programs and the league offers geographical balance for us," says Steve Reed, NMU interim athletic director. "Having our hockey team travel west also complements the university's overall recruiting footprint. The schools offer similar academic programs and have similar student bodies. Also, many of the teams in the new WCHA have hometowns much like Marquette in that they are smaller but very supportive of their hockey programs."

The league alignments for 2013-14 are as follows: WCHA – Alaska, Alaska-Anchorage, Bemidji State, Bowling Green, Ferris State, Lake Superior State, Michigan Tech, Minnesota State and NMU; Big Ten – Michigan, Michigan State, Minnesota, Ohio State, Penn State and Wisconsin; NCHC – Colorado College, Denver, Miami, Minnesota-Duluth, Nebraska-Omaha, North

Dakota, St. Cloud State and Western Michigan. Notre Dame will play in Hockey East. The unchanged leagues include the 12-team Atlantic Hockey Conference and the 12-team Eastern College Athletic Conference.

"Right now 2013-14 seems like a long way off and we're not thinking about it much," said Wildcat coach **Walt Kyle '81 BS**. "Our focus is on 2011-12 and doing as well as we possibly can in this year's CCHA race."

# WILDCAT NIGHT Across the Country



Last year's party in Nahma

**Saturday,  
February 18  
5:05 p.m. (EST)  
NMU vs. Michigan!**

**televised live on Fox Sports Detroit.**

Now is the time to plan a Wildcat Night Across the Country party for your area. All you have to do is find a local sports bar or restaurant that gets Fox Sports.

We'll publicize the location and details of your event, send invitations to local alumni and send you a "party package" that includes green and gold decorations and prizes.

Party locations need to be determined by January 1 to get postcards in the mail.



Contact the  
Alumni Association  
with your details.

**1-877-GRAD NMU or  
alumni@nmu.edu**