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WomensLax.com Announces 2009 NCAA Bracket Analysis

Well the 2009 NCAA Division I women's lacrosse regular season came to a close yesterday with Duke's sound beating of Dartmouth, but there is still a lot of lacrosse to be played in order to name the 2009 Division I Champs! Below are the upcoming matchups that will take place this Sunday, May 10 (don't forget that's also Mother's Day!). Instead of the weekly ranking, we are going to analyze this week's upcoming games, predicting each winner and possible upsets!

1. Northwestern (19-0) vs. UMass (11-7)

Earning the number one seed with a 19-0 record, Northwestern welcome back former asst. coaches Alexis Venechanos and Acacia Walker to Evanston donning UMass maroon and black. Much respect to these former Northwestern coaches who have earned the first UMass tournament bid in 25 years. These two teams met up earlier in the season resulting in a pretty big NU win with a score of 22-5. With only one double overtime loss since succumbing to NU, the Minutewomen are definitely riding a wave of momentum. Expect them to throw anything and everything they can at the Wildcats to try and stay alive in this tournament. I anticipate a very physical and chippy game, but Northwestern is on a serious mission and it's going to take more than a team of Minutewomen to get in their way.

Prediction: NU 20- UMass- 6.

2. Maryland (19-0) vs. Colgate (14-4)

Earning the #2 seed and ACC AQ Maryland is putting together its greatest season since the era of their 7 year Championship run. Maryland welcomes Colgate on Sunday in their first ever match up. Earning the Patriot league AQ this marks Colgate's 4th tournament appearance and second consecutive bid, as they also faced the #2 seed Penn in last year's tournament. With an undefeated 19-0 record Maryland has continually defied skeptics who claimed the Terp's were 'too young', 'lacked experience', and chalked this season up to a 'building year'. Unfortunately for Colgate the Terp's have something to prove and I think this Sunday plan on making that statement loud and clear.

Prediction: Maryland: 22 Colgate- 5.

3. North Carolina (13-4) vs. Towson (13-5)



After a Penn loss, UNC bumps up to secure the #3 seed, and is scheduled to take on Towson this Sunday in Chapel Hill. Meeting up for the first time this season, this game may not be as much of a walk in the park as UNC imagines. Riding a wave of momentum with 7 straight wins, Towson the 4th seed in the CAA upset both William & Mary and Delaware to win the CAA tournament and secure the CAA AQ. UNC on the other hand received a pasting at the hands of Duke in the ACC semi-finals, and holds a 2-2 record in their last 4 games. I'm certainly not underestimating the Heels, but an upset would not be shocking. Regardless this is going to be a tougher battle than expected, but I think in the end the Heels will emerge with the W.

Prediction: UNC 12- Towson 9

4. Penn (13-2) vs. Fairfield (17-2)

Penn concedes a shocking loss on Saturday as they fall to the Cardinals for the second season in a row. With that loss the Quakers drop to the #4 seed and end up in a very top heavy bracket. Fairfield on the other hand has earned their first ever NCAA tournament bid after beating Sacred Heart in the play-in game between the MAAC Champ and Northeast Champ. The Stags are in the midst of their best season in the team's history with an impressive record of 17-2, riding an 11 game win streak. Regardless of Fairfield's wave of success, they will unfortunately meet the wrath of the Quaker (an oxymoron?). Penn will be looking to avenge their loss and the Stags will be the unfortunate victim. Despite their successful season I don't think the Stags are prepared for the storm brewing in Philly.

Prediction: Penn 15- Fairfield 3

5. Duke (14-5) vs. Virginia (11-7)

I must sympathize with Duke on this draw; earning Virginia in the first round is definitely no gift from the selection committee. After avenging their UNC loss in the ACC tournament and soundly beating Dartmouth the #5 seed came as a slight surprise but the determining factor came down to the numbers. These two teams met earlier in the season with Duke emerging victorious, but not by much with a score of 13-12. Since then a lot has happened, Virginia lost to Old Dominion, but also challenged Northwestern to their closest game of the season. Duke likewise lost to Northwestern and UNC but redeemed themselves with a big win against the Heels in the ACC semis, but conceded a loss to the Terp's. This game on Sunday is dependant on the Virginia team that shows up Sunday. If they put on a similar performance to their game against NU, then I think UVA will pull off the upset. Expect a high scoring thriller.

Prediction: Virginia 17- Duke 16 (OT)

6. Notre Dame vs. Vanderbilt



An interesting match-up as these two have already faced each other earlier in the season with an overwhelming win by Vanderbilt with a score of 18-11. True, that game occurred a little over two weeks ago but a lot of lax has been played since with the tables completely turning. Since then Vanderbilt has lost two of their last three games including a huge upset by Cornell, and a tough battle against Northwestern in the ALC tournament. Notre Dame on the other hand rallied big to go 4-0 in the last four games of their season, upsetting Syracuse and Georgetown to secure the Big East AQ and a seeded spot in the tournament. Don't expect a similar result to the one in Nashville just a few weeks ago, look to Byers to lead this Notre Dame team over Vanderbilt and beyond.

Prediction: Notre Dame 16- Vanderbilt 9

7. Syracuse (13-4) vs. Boston University (15-3)

Syracuse edges out Georgetown and Princeton to secure the #7 seed in the tourney and another match up with Boston University. Their previous game earlier in the season was the tale of two halves. In the first half BU held a 7-5 advantage, but Syracuse surged back in the second outscoring the Terriers 12-1 and handing them a stunning defeat of 17-8. Entering this game BU has a 13 game win streak at stake, however enduring little challenge with the exception of a one goal victory over New Hampshire during the regular season. Syracuse on the other hand has since battled four top 10 ranked opponents, to Boston's one. I don't think BU has enough experience to pull off this upset; Syracuse will rely on the leadership of Rowan, Quillinan, and Dove to defeat the Terriers.

Prediction: Syracuse 15- BU 8

8. Princeton (13-3) vs. Georgetown (13-5)

Princeton secures the #8 seed and gets to host the Hoyas of Georgetown on Sunday. This meeting will mark the first of the season for these two squads, but the 15th matchup between the two elite programs. Princeton holds the edge overall, with an 8-6 advantage with two of those victories coming in the NCAA tournament. However Georgetown holds the most recent bragging rights with a 9-8 win over Princeton during last year's regular season. I am going to chalk this victory up to experience and while both teams had a difficult schedule this season, the Hoyas faced seven top 10 opponents compared to Princeton's meager three. Both teams seem pretty comparable and it will be a hard fought evenly matched battle but I think Georgetown will be better prepared to pull off this win.

Prediction: Georgetown 13- Princeton 12

Will these predictions be correct? Come Sunday we will find out! Make sure to check in next week with the breakdown and analysis of the Quarter Final matchups on the road to crowning the 2009 Women's Division I NCAA Champs!