



Hockey Commissioners Association

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St. Lawrence Goaltender Kyle Hayton Wins National College Hockey Player of the Month Penn State's Denis Smirnov Earns Rookie of the Month Honors

WAKEFIELD, Mass. – St. Lawrence junior goaltender **Kyle Hayton** (Denver, Colo.) who led the Saints to a 5-0-3 record and a No. 19 national ranking last month was named the Hockey Commissioners' Association National Division I Player of the Month for November.

The 6-foot, 160-pound netminder finished the month tied among all of his Division I counterparts in games started (8) posting a 5-0-3 record. He began the first weekend of the month by recording back-to-back shutout home wins in league-play over Princeton, 4-0 and then No. 6/7 ranked Quinnipiac, 2-0. In doing so he broke Bill Sloan's 60-year old St. Lawrence program record for career shutouts with 10. He became the first Saints goaltender to post back-to-back shutouts since current volunteer goaltender coach Alex Petizian did it on Feb. 27-28, 2009 at RPI and Union.

Hayton continued to backbone the Saints throughout the month logging 494:36 minutes between the pipes, which was the most among all men's Division I goaltenders. In eight games during the month he only allowed a total of nine goals, while making 232 saves for a .963 save percentage, which was fourth-best in the nation. He allowed two goals or fewer in all games posting a 1.09 goals-against average, which was also fourth-best among his counterparts during November.

The native of Denver, Colo. capped-off the month by recording 37 saves in blanking Quinnipiac in the Friendship Four Tournament in Belfast, Northern Ireland on Friday, November 25 as the two teams skated to a scoreless overtime tie. He followed it up with a 35 save performance the following evening in a 2-2 overtime tie versus Massachusetts.

Hayton is now on a personal nine-game unbeaten streak (5-0-4), improving his overall winning percentage to .667, which has helped the Saints gain the top spot in league-play with 12 points and a 5-0-2 record.

The HCA National Rookie of the Month for November is **Denis Smirnov** (Moscow, Russia) from Penn State. Smirnov led the Big Ten in scoring during the month of November as he registered six goals and seven assists for 13 points. He registered multiple points in five of his six games during the month while averaging a nation-leading 2.17 points per game. His 13 points and six goals on the month were also good for second in the nation.

Smirnov opened the month with a career-high three-point performance against Niagara on Nov. 3, scoring a pair of goals and adding an assist. The following night, he capped off a six-point weekend with a trio of assists in the series finale. For his efforts, Smirnov was named the Big Ten Second Star for the week.

The freshman began his career on a 10-game point streak before having it snapped against Alaska-Anchorage on November 12th. Smirnov wasted little time, making Penn State program history and setting a new career-best the following weekend in a home series against Arizona State.

On Nov. 18, he netted his first collegiate hat trick, including the game-winning goal, in an 7-4 victory for the Nittany Lions. The hat trick was only the fourth in Penn State's program history. The following night, Smirnov tallied the game-winner, securing the weekend sweep and extending the team's unbeaten streak to 11 games. For his efforts, Smirnov earned his second career conference honor, securing the Big Ten First Star for the week.

For the season, Smirnov leads the nation's freshmen in points per game (1.69), assists (13) and points (22).

HCA Commissioners' Choice Awards November 2016

National Player of the Month

Kyle Hayton, St. Lawrence, ECAC Hockey

National Rookie of the Month

Denis Smirnov, Penn State, Big Ten

Honorable Mention Player of the Month

Daniel Leavens, Robert Morris, Atlantic Hockey
Matheson Iacopelli, Western Michigan, NCHC
Mitch McLain, Bowling Green, WCHA
Zach Aston-Reese, Northeastern, Hockey East

Honorable Mention Rookie of the Month

Stefanos Lekkas, Vermont, Hockey East
Dominic Franco, Army West Point, Atlantic Hockey
Jake Kielly, Clarkson, ECAC Hockey
Joey Anderson, Minnesota Duluth, NCHC
Angus Redmond, Michigan Tech, WCHA



**Bob DeGregorio, Atlantic Hockey • Jim Delany, Big Ten
Steve Hagwell, ECAC Hockey • Joe Bertagna, Hockey East
Josh Fenton, NCHC • Bill Robertson, WCHA**