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Letter to the Editor From UNH Athletic Director

Kim Billings

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Letter to the Editor From UNH Athletic Director Marty Scarano

If you need letter confirmation, please contact Marty Scarano's assistant, Merry Jennison, at 862-2013, or Kim Billings, UNH Media Relations, at 862-1558. Thanks.

April 1, 2004

To the Editor:

As so many fans and residents of the state know, UNH and the City of Manchester recently hosted the NCAA Northeast Men's Ice Hockey Regional on the weekend of March 27-28. This event in the world of intercollegiate athletics is a highly coveted one which many cities annually compete to gain the ability to host.

The event held in the Verizon Wireless Arena could not have gone better. The collaboration between the University of New Hampshire, the City of Manchester and the Verizon Arena's management team was simply outstanding, which culminated in a seamless operation. Everyone was engaged and committed to doing the very best job to bring positive recognition to the State of New Hampshire.

This NCAA northeast regional was fortunate to have Boston College, the University of Michigan and Niagara University join our own Wildcats as the four participants. Michigan and Boston College brought much national media attention. Additionally all of the games were produced by ESPN and carried both regionally and nationally. This event was clearly a "moment in the sun" for both the university and Manchester, and due to the efforts of many this event will forever be remembered as a success for all concerned.

UNH is compelled to thank so many for their contributions, but the following are just a few who cannot go unrecognized:

- First and foremost, the hockey fans of New Hampshire. The support and commitment exhibited by our state's fans was second to none...not only did the regional event sell out in advance (the first NCAA Regional ever to do so), the fans conducted themselves in a classy, sophisticated and supportive manner. Those of us associated with collegiate hockey cannot remember a show of support such as exhibited by the 8400 who returned Sunday after UNH had been eliminated. I hope each and every fan who returned realizes how much that meant to the student-athletes from BC and Michigan. Both institutions, student-athletes and coaches alike, noted the fabulous support of UNH fans. Furthermore, the New Hampshire fans exhibited a class and appreciation for the sport which was priceless...they are a testament to the sport of ice hockey.
- The management team of the Verizon Wireless Arena, Tim Bechert, General Manager, and his talented team are second to none in the field of facility operations. Tim and the Verizon

Arena are a significant asset to the City of Manchester and one which all should be justifiably proud of.

- The City of Manchester's administration. For the past 18 months ongoing meetings have regularly taken place among various constituencies from UNH Athletics, the Mayor's Office, the Convention & Visitors Bureau, the Union Leader, In-Town Manchester and UNH Manchester. Everyone dedicated themselves to the philosophy that this event would be done right and bring unqualified recognition to the city and state. UNH cannot thank Manchester enough for its cooperation and assistance helping this event set a "new standard" for NCAA post-season tournaments." I would like to especially recognize Mike Hickey, CEO of Verizon Wireless, for his role as chair of the committee that facilitated the planning and facilitating of events and the partnering with various corporate entities.
- All of the corporate entities that assisted us in doing the "extra special" things which distinguished this event. UNH Athletics is very fortunate to have such generous and loyal corporate partners who time and again "step up" to assist us in our varying causes.
- The media of New Hampshire. This regional set an NCAA record for media coverage with more than 150 national media credentials distributed. New Hampshire's own print and electronic media were fabulous to work with and covered all nuances of the event. UNH is very appreciative of the attention it received from our media outlets. This continuing coverage is vital for our department as we attempt to gain more national prominence and compete at higher levels.

While we will have the privilege of hosting future events such as this NCAA Hockey Regional (ice hockey returns to the Verizon in 2007), never again will the city, state and university engage in the first such affair. To have successfully collaborated with one another, in combination with the fabulous fan support, this exceptional showing is truly something to be cherished and celebrated.

And to our fans, thank you for your unyielding support...someday that coveted national championship will indeed reside in New Hampshire.

Marty Scarano
UNH Athletics Director