FOR RELEASE AFTER 11:30 A.M.
September 30, 2008

CONTACT: Fred Pletsch
(248) 888-0600

FIGHTING IRISH AND WOLVERINES SPLIT TOP SPOT
Media and Coaches Disagree Once Again

FARMINGTON HILLS, Mich. – For the third straight year, the coaches and media disagree over who should hold down the No. 1 position in the CCHA's annual preseason polls. The conference's 12 head coaches ranked Notre Dame first while the media voted for defending regular-season and playoff champion Michigan.

In the coaches poll, the Irish took eight of a possible 11 first-place votes, two seconds and one third-place vote. Michigan received three of the remaining first-place votes as well as 43 number-one tallies in the media poll, earning the Wolverines the top ranking. Miami, Michigan State and Northern Michigan filled out the third, fourth and fifth-place slots in both polls. The RedHawks garnered the only other first-place ballot among the coaches while all three teams received first-place votes from the media.

The Irish, coming off their first appearance in an NCAA Championship game, have 18 returning letterwinners including starting goaltender Jordan Pearce along with four defensemen and 11 forwards including impact players Erik Condra, Ryan Thang, Kyle Lawson and Ian Cole. Condra, a 2006 draft pick of the Ottawa Senators, and Lawson, a 2005 draft pick of the Carolina Hurricanes, are CCHA Preseason All-Conference First Team selections, and Pearce was honored as the RBK Best Goaltender award winner last season. Notre Dame is returning eight of its top 10 scorers from last season in coach Jeff Jackson's fourth season behind the bench.

The Wolverines bring back 21 players, tied for most in the CCHA with Bowling Green, including all seven defensemen from a squad that won 33 games last season while capturing CCHA regular-season and tournament titles. Michigan is backstopped by senior goaltender Billy Sauer, who had a 30-4-3 record with a 1.95 goals-against average and .924 save percentage last year. Michigan is led offensively by sophomore Aaron Palushaj, who had 44 points, along with five other returning Wolverines who broke the 20 point barrier.

The RedHawks have 15 lettermen back, including a pair of 40-point scorers from last season, senior forward Justin Mercier and sophomore forward Carter Camper. Michigan State will be led by senior captain and goaltender Jeff Lerg, who has been named to the CCHA Preseason All-Conference First Team for three straight seasons. The Wildcats bring back 10 of their top 12 point producers from last season and look to finish in the top three for the first time since 2004-05.

A record 83 members of the media ranked the 12 CCHA teams in projected order of finish for the regular season. Points were awarded on a 12-11-10-9, etc., basis. League coaches ranked the CCHA teams, excluding their own school, in the order they predicted the regular season will end.

Coaches Poll			Media Poll		
1.	Notre Dame (8)	128	1.	Michigan (43)	945
2.	Michigan (3)	122	2.	Notre Dame (35)	915
3.	Miami (1)	108	3.	Michigan State (2)	776
4.	Northern Michigan	102	4.	Miami (2)	746
5.	Michigan State	96	5.	Northern Michigan (1)	700
6.	Ferris State	84	6.	Ferris State	529
7.	Ohio State	67	7.	Bowling Green	444
8.	Nebraska-Omaha	59	8.	Nebraska-Omaha	415
9.	Bowling Green	56	9.	Ohio State	339
10.	Lake Superior State	46	10.	Lake Superior State	322
T-11.	Alaska	28	11.	Alaska	198
T-11.	Western Michigan	28	12.	Western Michigan	145

Alaska • Bowling Green • Ferris State • Lake Superior • Miami • Michigan • Michigan State • Nebraska Omaha • Northern Michigan • Notre Dame • Ohio State • Western Michigan