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CU Faces Northern Arizona in First Round of Regionals Friday

LOGAN, Utah – The University of Colorado men's hockey team will head to the 2011 American Collegiate Hockey Association West Regional Tournament on a three game win streak.

No. 4 Colorado will begin their run for a second national championship on Friday Feb. 25 at 4 p.m. against the No. 8 Northern Arizona Ice Jacks at the George S. Eccles Ice Center. If the Buffaloes beat the Ice Jacks, they will likely face either No. 3 Colorado State, No. 5 Nevada-Las Vegas or No. 6 San Diego State on Saturday with a spot to the national tournament up for grabs.

The No. 2 seed, the Utah State University Aggies will be hosting the West Regional Tournament.

The Buffs finished the regular season with a 15-10-1-2 record and two wins over Northern Colorado and one over CSU. The Ice Jacks are 17-12-0-4 this year and finished their season with two shootout losses to UNLV on Feb. 11-12.

CU defeated NAU earlier in the year in a 5-0 shutout on Dec. 4 in the Western Classic Tournament in Boulder. In that game, goaltender and 2010 All-American **Kevin Litinsky** made 25 saves while forward **Mark Viau** led the Buffs in scoring with a hat trick.

Coming into the season, Colorado was one of the frontrunners to win the national championship after finishing third last year and having 10 seniors on their 2010-11 roster. The Buffs struggled to find consistency in the first half of the season, but the team has played better since the beginning of 2011, going 5-3-0-1 since January.

If CU and CSU both win their first round games, it will be a Buffs-Rams matchup on Saturday with only one Centennial State team able to go the national tournament. CSU won the season series over CU, but the Buffs have the momentum on their side after getting a dominate 5-1 win over the Rams on Feb. 11.

Colorado State is playing No. 9 Denver in the first round at regionals, but that game won't necessarily be an easy win for the Rams as CSU and DU have played in two one-goal contests the last two weeks.

No. 1 Eastern Washington and No. 7 San Jose State earned the automatic bids from the West Region to the Mar. 15-19 ACHA National Championships. Usually it is the top two seeds from the each region that earn the automatics bids, but SJSU earned their bid because they are hosting the national tournament.

Live audio of Colorado's games at regionals will be available on the CU Buffs Hockey Network at <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/cubuffshockey>.