



PRESS RELEASE: Kunitz Excited About the Success of Ferris Hockey as it Heads to Frozen Four

Sandy C Gholston to: Archive

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Included below is a press release featuring former Ferris State University hockey All-American Chris Kunitz, currently a member of Pittsburgh Penguins of the National Hockey League. Kunitz talks about the success of the Bulldogs this year as the team has earned a trip to the Frozen Four. A video link also is provided below to view this comments via YouTube. Any questions about this release can be directed to Sandy Gholston, News Services and Social Media Manager.

This story can be viewed online, here:

<http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/news/archive/2012/april/kunitz.htm>

This video can be accessed here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=buYPkbGbPhI&feature=youtu.be>

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Sandy Gholston
Ferris State University
News Services and Social Media Manager
sandygholston@ferris.edu, (231) 591-2021

Kunitz Excited About the Success of Ferris Hockey as it Heads to Frozen Four

PITTSBURGH – Chris Kunitz is gearing up for the National Hockey League playoffs while keeping an eye on the historic success of his alma mater, Ferris State University, as the Bulldogs prepare to make the school’s first appearance in the NCAA Frozen Four on Thursday, April 5 in Tampa, Fla.

Kunitz, who came into Tuesday (April 3) with 56 points on 24 goals with 32 assists for the Pittsburgh Penguins, maintains close ties with the Bulldog hockey program, including two coaches who played key roles in his development as a collegiate player, head coach Bob Daniels and associate head coach Drew Famulak. A Regina, Saskatchewan native, Kunitz sees the program’s stability and current success as part of a building process that has been years in the making.

“I think every year is another phase as you bring in kids and you have a little more success and the school gets a little more notoriety and you pick up one or two more scholarship kids from somewhere else or take one away from another program,” Kunitz said. “To achieve this kind of success, for the first time in the school’s history, makes everybody proud. It’s fun to talk about, and now more people know where you went to school and how well the team is doing.”

At Ferris, Kunitz was a two-time All-Central Collegiate Hockey Association First-Team selection and became the first Bulldog player named CCHA Player of the Year after he led the league in points, goals, assists and plus/minus during his 2002-03 senior season. He was an American Hockey Coaches Association All-America First Team pick and one of three finalists

for the Hobey Baker Memorial Award, presented annually to the nation's top collegiate hockey player. Kunitz also led the Bulldogs to their first-ever CCHA regular season championship and first-ever trip to the NCAA Tournament.

Kunitz, 32, is a two-time Stanley Cup champion as he won it with the 2007 Anaheim Ducks and the 2009 Penguins. His strong connection with Ferris and the Big Rapids community gave him additional motivation to bring the Stanley Cup back to Ferris in July 2007.

This year's success, and the positive attention it has generated for the hockey program and the university, has Kunitz especially excited. He believes that fellow alumni from many different eras are enthusiastic as well about the current team's run to the Frozen Four.

"Coach Daniels and Coach Famulak are winning awards and the players are receiving individual honors, but right now, it's about the school and about the team taking them to a level of success that they've never had before and it's exciting for everyone whether you're a freshman or someone who graduated 25 years ago," said Kunitz, who has been in contact with the Ferris coaches at times throughout the season. "It's something we can all look back on and realize that we share that special bond."

The 2011-12 team's run to the Frozen Four has generated a lot of media attention that Kunitz believes is creating greater awareness of Ferris, as a university, and for Bulldog hockey, as a program.

"The success is great and it creates awareness for our school," he said. "We've had so much press that it really makes it a lot of fun to talk about and you can always catch up with old friends when there's something like this that you have in common. It's a great thing."

On Thursday, April 5, the Bulldogs play Union at 4:30 p.m. in the first national semi-final before Minnesota faces Boston College at 8 p.m. in the second at the Frozen Four. The two winners play for the national championship at 7 p.m. Saturday, April 7. All games will be played in the Tampa Bay Times Forum.

For more on the Ferris hockey team's Frozen Four run, visit:

<http://www.ferrisstatebulldogs.com/sports/mice/2011-12/releases/201203253e2guq>

Read more about Chris Kunitz, here:

<http://penguins.nhl.com/club/player.htm?id=8470543>

Phone: (231) 591-2021

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