

BEMIDJI, Minn. - Bemidji State University Director of Intercollegiate Athletics **Dr. Rick Goeb** today announced the hiring of **Shane Veenker** as the assistant women's hockey coach to round out the coaching staff for the 2007-08 women's hockey team.

"Shane is no stranger to the Bemidji State athletic department, being the interim head softball and assistant women's hockey coach last season," commented Goeb. "With the loss of Jim Ingman last season Shane was able to step in and fill a very important role for the women's hockey program last season. He did a tremendous job in helping first year head coach Steve Sertich with the recruiting efforts and other team responsibilities as well."

"We have no doubt that Shane will come in and continue his excellent performance with the women's hockey program," said Goeb.

"Shane has already been recruiting for us since January, so he will continue do that and he has done a great job with that so far," commented head coach Steve Sertich. "He brings a lot of passion and loyalty to the recruiting job and he bleeds BSU green which is nice to have in this position. Shane's work ethic and passion will be a big plus for us."

Veenker was elevated to assistant women's hockey coach after serving as the interim head softball coach and assistant women's ice hockey coach during the winter and spring of 2007. While serving as interim assistant hockey coach, Veenker's duties included recruiting, along with helping out with practices and game day operations. Veenker also served as the interim head softball coach during the 2007 season where he led the Beavers to a 10-28 record.

"I want to thank coach Sertich, Dr. Goeb, and the Bemidji State athletic and physical education department for giving me a coaching opportunity at the Division I level," said Veenker. I am extremely excited about the progress of the Beaver women's hockey program in upcoming years.

Prior to his stint as the interim head softball and assistant women's hockey coach, he was a graduate assistant softball coach during the fall of 2006 and was a volunteer assistant softball coach for three seasons (2004-2006) at BSU, prior to becoming the graduate assistant. Veenker was also a head coach for the Bemidji girls 12U A team from 1999-06, the head coach for the AAA Minnesota Junior Lady Beavers (1999-2006). and is currently the advanced 15 girls instructor (2005-present). In 2002, Veenker became the Bagley-Fosston boys' varsity hockey coach and he attained that position for two seasons. Veenker was also the head softball coach for the Bemidji Blaze 18U/16U/14U from 2000-2006. In 2002, he led the Bemidji Blaze 18 and under girls fastpitch team to a ninth place finish in the 2002 ASA/USA West National Championship.

The Windom, Minn. native also spent time with the Bemidji High School girls hockey program. Veenker served as the assistant girls' varsity hockey coach and the junior varsity head coach from 2005 to 2007. He was responsible for coaching the offensive forwards for the varsity program along with all the coaching duties for the junior varsity team.

Veenker also has extensive camp coaching experience, starting as the hockey camp instructor with the AA Hockey Camp in Fort Francis, Ontario from 2001-2006. He currently is the camp instructor for the Red Lake Falls Hockey Schools which started in 2004.

"Bemidji State University is a great school that I am proud to be an alumni of," commented Veenker. The Bemidji community is a great place to live and the women's hockey program plays in the best league in the world."

In 1995-96 he served as a graduate assistant for the University of Minnesota football program as he was video coordinator for the Golden Gophers. Veenker also served as an assistant in football operations for the NFL Europe in San Antonio, Texas from 1992-94 and was a training camp intern for the Kansas City Chiefs during the summer of 1994. In addition, he was a student manager/equipment manager for the Bemidji State men's ice hockey program under the supervision of BSU Hall of Fame coach R.H. "Bob" Peters from 1989-1993. Veenker was a member of the 1993 Division II National Championship team at Bemidji State University.

Veenker is also a member of the national fastpitch coaches association and has a USA hockey-advanced level 4 coaches certification.

Veenker is a 1993 graduate of Bemidji State University with a bachelor's degree in sports studies and management with an emphasis in sports business and management and a minor in business administration. In 2001, Veenker earned a bachelor's degree in physical education, also from BSU.

Veenker's main responsibilities will be recruiting and he will help out with the defensemen during practice sessions.

Veenker is the final piece of the puzzle for the BSU coaching staff. He joins Heather Farrell as the second assistant women's hockey coach for the 2007-08 season. Farrell was added to the women's hockey coaching staff in the beginning of July.

Bemidji State is coming off a season in which it posted a 11-20-5 overall record going 9-15-4 in the WCHA to finish sixth for the second consecutive season. The Beavers posted 22 points in conference play this last season, which is the most points the Beavers have earned in WCHA play in its nine year Division I era.

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