Women’s ice hockey coach Brian Durocher isn’t one to rest on his laurels. 

After leading the Terriers to their first-ever Hockey East title and an NCAA tournament berth last year, Durocher (SED’78) skated into his sixth season with three decidedly deadly weapons, ones he hopes will help launch the squad back to the national championships.

So what kind of heat is Durocher packing?

How does two Olympic gold medalists and one member of the Canadian National Team sound?

Last fall, defender Catherine Ward (GSM’12) and forwards Marie-Philip Poulin (SED’14) and Jenn Wakefield (CAS’12) laced up their skates, donned red-and-white jerseys, and took to the ice at Walter Brown Arena. Before that, Ward and Poulin were busy breaking American hearts in the 2010 Winter Olympics, in Vancouver. Poulin, in fact, scored both goals in the gold-medal game against Team USA. Wakefield was a member of the Canadian National Team and a 2010 Olympic alternate.

In the span of five years, Durocher has grown a one-time club sport into a Division I national contender.

Bostonia: Tell us about these athletes. What makes them so special?

Durocher: Catherine Ward is a fantastic student. She brings a great deal to the University and to the Graduate School of Management. From a leadership standpoint, she should be at the top of the charts. Not only has she won championships at the university level, but at the Olympic gold level. On the ice, she’s not super big, but she is extremely smart and makes all the right plays.

Marie-Philip Poulin is a 19-year-old who has been through the Olympic wars and multiple battles with the United States, the other preeminent player in the game of women’s hockey. She sees the game.
Erin McLean nosed out competitors from Yale and Southern Adventist to take the College Championship edition of Jeopardy! which was broadcast last November.

McLean wasn’t able to see her victory on TV’s longest-running game show, but she did even better: she was watching the BU men’s hockey Terriers defeat the University of New Hampshire at Agganis Arena when her victory was announced.

“Having 6,000-plus people clap and bow to me was pretty freaking sweet,” says McLean (CAS’13).

The championship game’s final Jeopardy! “question,” posed in answer form, was, “Several species appear in the logo of the U.N.’s International Year of this 12-letter word, vital to the health of life on Earth.”

McLean fumbled that one (the answer-question was “What is biodiversity?”), but still had more money at game’s end than her two opponents.

Taxes will whittle the $100,000 prize money she took home to about $65,000. McLean says she’ll use her winnings to pay off student loans and for “going somewhere sweet for spring break,” with Mexico and London as possibilities.

RICH BARLOW

Who Is Erin McLean?

Jeopardy!’s new college champ, that’s who

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She also plans to get a computer, then save whatever money’s left.

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