

# ROCH. LOURDES

## Eagles



### PROGRAM INFO

**Nickname:** Eagles  
**Conference:** Independent  
**Section:** 1A  
**Record:** 24-3-1  
**State trips:** 2000, 01, 02, 03, 09, 10, 11  
**Coach:** Josh Spaniol

### STAT LEADERS

Scorers	G	A	Pts
Jason Samuelson	26	14	40
Alex Funk	14	23	37
Landon Farrell	15	18	33
Rory Vesel	13	15	28
Alec Brandrup	8	17	25
Ryan Nicolay	8	11	19
Brian Wasz	8	6	14
Andy Benner	6	7	13
Connor Nellans	5	8	13

Goalies	W-L-T	GA	SV
Nick Heimer	24-3-1	1.72	.915

### PLAYOFF ROSTER

#	Name	Pos	Gr
1	Jesse Neumann	G	11
2	Connor Nellans	F	11
3	Ryan Nicolay	F	11
4	Ben Weir	F	10
5	Alec Brandrup	D	12
6	Andy Benner	F	12
7	Jason Samuelson	F	10
8	Landon Farrell	F	11
9	Justin Dewitz	F	11
10	Griff Slightam	D	8
11	Nathan Roth	D	10
12	Karl Krecke	D	10
14	Louis Hanson	D	12
15	James Armstead	F	11
17	Brian Williamson	F	11
18	Eric Potvin	F	11
19	Sam Slightam	D	12
20	Alex Funk	F	10
21	Rory Vesel	D	12
23	Brian Wasz	F	12
24	Dan Rossman	D	12
30	Nick Heimer	G	12

### CAN THEY WIN?

Strong goaltending and solid defense can take a team great distances in the postseason, and Lourdes has all the ingredients required. The Eagles also should benefit from a rugged non-conference schedule in which they played most of the state's top-ranked Class 1A teams.

-- Loren Nelson



Jason Samuelson

By Loren Nelson

Rochester Lourdes seemed on the verge of bumping off No. 1-ranked St. Thomas Academy, but Eagles coach Josh Spaniol wasn't altogether comfortable with what he was watching.

"I'm not a run-and-gun kind of guy," Spaniol said.

No, Spaniol is the sort of guy who sprinkles the word defense into most every sentence at this time of the year.

"I'm a D-first kind of guy," he said. "If you have good defense and good goaltending, I figure the offense will take care of itself."

During that Feb. 8 game against the Cadets late in the regular season in Mendota Heights, the Eagles showed some surprising offensive might. Meanwhile, St. Thomas Academy exploited some gaping holes in the usually airtight Lourdes defense.

The Cadets, who had trailed 3-1 after the first period and 5-3 late in the second, eventually prevailed 6-5 in overtime.

No. 3 seed Rochester Lourdes (24-3-1) faces another potentially explosive offense when it opens the state Class 1A tournament at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, March 9, against unseeded Hibbing/Chisholm (17-9-2).

"This matchup is very intriguing," Spaniol said. "We don't know much about them, they don't know much about us. We're trying to get a little scoring report on them from a couple of different guys."

"We just have to come out and play physical and play our game."

Rochester Lourdes' defensive

philosophy centers around senior goaltender Nick Heimer, who has started all 28 games and has a 1.72 goals-against average and .915 save percentage.

Heimer was in goal last year when the Eagles were blown out by Warroad 9-0 in a quarterfinal matchup.

"I expect us to show up first of all," Spaniol said about what he believes will be different about the Eagles' opening game this year after first-round losses each of the previous two seasons. "We've been going down the



Sophomore forward Alex Funk

left side and not the right side of the bracket.

"That won't happen again if we really play the game we are supposed to play."

All four of Rochester Lourdes' top defenseman also return from last season. Senior Rory Vesel (10 goals, 13 assists) is the most dynamic player in the group, but seniors Sam Slightman and Alec Brandrup and

sophomore Karl Krecke all have the experience of logging extensive ice time in pressure situations.

After Heimer and his defensive corps, Spaniol will rely on yet another gritty group to shut down Hibbing's high-scoring forward duo of Adam Johnson and Nick DeCenzo. Spaniol's "grinder" line of senior Brian Wasz and juniors Ryan Nicolay and Connor Nellans likely will have the honors of matching up against the Bluejackets' top unit.

"It took us about half a year to get it through their skulls that if we don't have a (shutdown) line like that, we aren't going to do much," Spaniol said.



### ROAD TO THE X

Date	Opponent	Score
Nov. 26	New Richmond (WI)	5-1 W
Nov. 27	Superior (WI)	3-2 W
Dec. 4	at Tartan	3-1 W
Dec. 7	New Prague	3-1 W
Dec. 9	at Red Wing	6-5 W
Dec. 14	Chanhassen	4-0 W
Dec. 18	St. Cloud Cathedral	4-3 W
Dec. 21	Northfield	7-2 W
Dec. 23	at Holy Family	3-2 W
Dec. 28	Dodge Co (Kiwanis)	6-1 W
Dec. 29	Eau Claire (Kiwanis)	0-2 L
Dec. 30	Richfield (Kiwanis)	5-2 W
Jan. 4	at Albert Lea	4-0 W
Jan. 8	at Duluth Marshall	1-5 L
Jan. 11	Mankato West	3-2 W
Jan. 22	at Delano	5-1 W
Jan. 25	at New Prague	3-1 W
Jan. 27	at New Ulm	5-1 W
Jan. 29	at Faribault	5-2 W
Feb. 1	Monti/A/ML	4-1 W
Feb. 5	Breck	5-3 W
Feb. 8	at St. Thomas Acad	5-6 L
Feb. 10	Owatonna	10-1 W
Feb. 15	at Rogers	4-1 W
Feb. 19	at Totino-Grace	3-3 T

### Section 1A playoffs

Feb. 24	LeSueur-Hend/St.P	11-0 W
Feb. 26	Red Wing	4-2 W
Mar. 3	New Prague	2-0 W



### COACH'S CORNER

Josh Spaniol, in his second season as the Eagles head coach, is 2-for-2 in reaching the state tournament but 0-for-2 in the state quarterfinals. Spaniol has surrounded himself with two of southern Minnesota's most respected veteran coaches in assistants Kirk Gill and Todd Lampman.