

## Class AA



Eden Prairie

THE COMPLETE

# State Tournament Guidebook

MARCH 9-12, 2011



St. Thomas Academy

## Class A



Rochester Lourdes

Breck

New Ulm

Hermantown

Alexandria

Hibbing/Chisholm

Thief River Falls

## Welcome to the 2011 State High School Hockey Tournament!

Sixteen teams hit the X this week attempting to win state titles; Eden Prairie and St. Thomas Academy earn top seeds

You hold in your hands the most comprehensive guide to the teams involved in this year's tournament. It was published through the efforts of the Minnesota Hockey Hub's editors, writers and contributors, all of whom are partners with the Minnesota Hockey Coaches Association (MHCA).

Class AA team capsules are located in the first half of the guide, followed by both the Class AA and Class A brackets in the guide's center and the Class A team capsules in the last half of the guide. Each team capsule includes basic information about the program, statistics of each team's leading scorers and goaltenders, full rosters, coach's corner, the "Road to the X," and a scouting report on each team with pictures.

Minnesota Hockey Hub editor Loren Nelson wrote roughly one third of the Class AA and Class A capsules. You'll recognize his style as the man with his finger on the pulse of Minnesota high school hockey.

Another third was tackled by

Minnesota Hockey Hub contributor Michael Murakami, who brings his unique brand of knowledge and analysis to the Metro area.

Tim Kolehmainen, editor of Breakdown Sports USA and a frequent Minnesota Hockey Hub contributor, compiled the other third of the Class A and AA capsules, as well as teaming with Helen Nelson and Adam Crane to provide all the photos in the guide.

There are plenty of old favorites in this year's tournament, with defending champions from Edina in Class AA and Breck in Class A teaming for numerous appearances -- and titles. But there are also unfamiliar faces, programs that have been to St. Paul before, but aren't nearly as frequent guests such as Eagan and Thief River Falls.

Class A action begins the four-day celebration at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul. Second-seeded Hermantown (23-3-2) plays Alexandria (12-15-1) at 11 a.m. Wednesday, March 9, followed by No. 3 Rochester Lourdes (24-3-1) against Hibbing/Chisholm (17-9-2). The evening session kicks off at 6 p.m. with No. 1 St. Thomas Academy (22-6-0) taking on New Ulm (21-4-2), followed by two-time defending champion and No. 4 Breck (20-8-0) against Thief River Falls (19-8-1).

The Class AA tournament opens the next morning (Thursday, March 10) at 11 a.m. with defending champion and No. 2 Edina (18-7-2) against Blaine (20-4-4). At 1 p.m., No. 3 Duluth East (22-5-0) faces White Bear Lake (21-5-2). In the evening, top-seeded Eden Prairie (21-5-2) gets its tournament underway against Lakeville North (13-14-1) at 6 p.m.

The 8 p.m. game features No. 4

Eagan (17-6-2) and Moorhead (18-7-2) squaring off.

The Minnesota Hockey Hub will be your complete home of the Minnesota High School Hockey tournament. We are pleased to announce that we will feature our live in-game scoring and will also offer audio play-by-play throughout the tournament, featuring Pete Waggoner and the great crew at the Overtime Sports Network.

Please accept this invitation to join us this week as along with our partners we will bring you the most up-to-date and professional coverage of the greatest event in high school sports from the Xcel Energy Center.

Thank you for viewing our site this season, as it has been a success. We look forward to seeing you all back next winter!

-- Tim Kolehmainen, Editor, Breakdown Sports USA

-- Loren Nelson, Editor, Minnesota Hockey Hub



St. Thomas Academy's  
Grant Sattler



Eden Prairie's  
Dan Molenaar







PROGRAM INFO

**Nickname:** Panthers  
**Conference:** South Suburban  
**Section:** 1AA  
**Record:** 13-14-1  
**State trips:** 2002, 03, 04 (as Lakeville), 2006, 10, 11  
**Coach:** Randy Schmitz

STAT LEADERS

Scorers	G	A	Pts
Blake Winiecki	25	25	50
Charlie Hayes	15	12	27
Ben Counters	18	8	26
Gordon Kappers	8	17	25
Johnny Domina	10	13	23
Shaun Reinhardt	2	13	15
Evan Peterson	6	9	15
Conner Hyden	4	6	10
Tristan Hazlett	6	5	11
Jack Diercks	2	9	11

Goalies	W-L-T	GA	SV
Chas Lindgren	11-9-1	2.85	.914
Jake Anderson	2-5-0	4.23	.862

PLAYOFF ROSTER

#	Name	Pos	Gr
1	Charlie Lindgren	G	11
4	Jack Diercks	F	10
5	Tristan Hazlett	F	9
7	Tory Merz	D	12
8	Charlie Hayes	F	11
9	Gordon Kappers	F	12
10	Erik Rutt	D	10
11	Mitch Erdman	F	11
12	Conner Hyden	F	9
15	Sam Petrick	F	10
16	Alex Wood	D	10
17	Johnny Domina	F	12
19	Ben Counters	F	12
22	Shaun Reinhardt	D	12
23	Ramsey Skjei	F	12
24	Blake Winiecki	F	11
26	Evan Peterson	F	11
31	Jake Anderson	G	10
32	Connor Eichmann	D	10

CAN THEY WIN?

Look no farther than the man in-between the pipes for Lakeville North to be the game changer. Junior goaltender Charlie Lindgren has shown throughout his high school career that he can shut down -- and even shut out - - some of the state's most powerful offenses. The Panthers will need three big games out of Lindgren if they want the 2011 title.

-- Michael Murakami

# LAKEVILLE NORTH

## Panthers



Charlie Lindgren

By Michael Murakami

Lakeville North continues to prove that anything is possible with great goaltending -- including advancing to the state tournament.

For the second consecutive year in the Section 1AA championship game, the Panthers upset Lakeville South thanks to another stellar performance by junior goaltender Charlie Lindgren.

"It was a game where everything went my way and it was probably the most fun game I've ever played in," Lindgren said following Lakeville North's 2-1, triple overtime victory.

During 76 minutes, 25 seconds of nerve-wracking game time, Lindgren made 51 saves for the Panthers.

"It was great," Lakeville North coach Randy Schmitz said. "It was exciting, tense, dramatic -- it was a roller coaster of emotion."

Not necessarily a high-scoring team, Lakeville North netted a total of 100 goals in the regular season and section tournament. However, the Panthers have shown their offense kicks things up a notch when their goaltender is red hot.

"We were playing better as the game went on," Schmitz said about his team's determination in the title game. "We always say, 'play 51 minutes, plus' -- we needed the 'plus' in that game."

Lakeville North's effort advances the team to its third state tournament appearance -- the Panthers also participated in the 2006 and 2010 tournaments.

"It's one of the premier sporting events in the country," Schmitz said. "It's a dream come true."

While advancing to the state tournament is always a major accomplishment, Lakeville North has historically struggled once there with an all-time record of 0-4-0.

Surrendering a total of 21 goals in those four tournament losses, Lakeville North's fate in 2011 is likely to fall onto the shoulders of Lindgren who has posted an 11-9-1 record (2.85 GAA, .914 save percentage).

"We want to stick around a couple extra days this year," Schmitz said. "We want to play well and win."

Leading the Panthers' offense are junior forwards Blake Winiecki (25-25-50) and Charlie Hayes (15-12-27) as well as senior Ben Counters (18-8-26). Only one defenseman -- senior Shaun Reinhardt (2-13-15) -- is in double digits in points.

Lakeville North will meet top-seeded Eden Prairie in the quarterfinals at 6 p.m. Thursday, March 10, at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul.

Regardless of the game's outcome, Schmitz expressed the main goal of the week is to ensure the players have a positive experience.

"You represent your section and you're community," Schmitz said about playing in the tournament. "We're going to do everything we can to make sure we're prepared."



ROAD TO THE X

Date	Opponent	Score
Dec. 7	Eden Prairie	4-7 L
Dec. 9	at Eastview	3-5 L
Dec. 16	at Prior Lake	8-4 W
Dec. 18	Eagan	2-1 W
Dec. 21	Rochester Century	6-1 W
Dec. 23	at Rochester Mayo	3-1 W
Dec. 28	Virginia (Tourney)	3-4 L
Dec. 29	Grand Rpd's (Tourney)	2-2 T
Dec. 30	Hibbing (Tourney)	6-2 W
Jan. 4	Wayzata	1-5 L
Jan. 6	at Bloom. Kennedy	9-1 W
Jan. 8	at Burnsville	1-6 L
Jan. 10	Bloom. Jefferson	2-7 L
Jan. 13	Lakeville South	2-7 L
Jan. 15	at Rosemount	2-3 L
Jan. 20	Eastview	3-1 W
Jan. 22	at Bloom. Jefferson	5-8 L
Jan. 27	Prior Lake	9-2 W
Jan. 29	at Eagan	2-5 L
Feb. 3	at Apple Valley	3-4 L
Feb. 5	Bloom. Kennedy	1-0 W
Feb. 10	Burnsville	0-6 L
Feb. 12	at Lakeville South	1-6 L
Feb. 17	Apple Valley	1-4 L
Feb. 19	Rosemount	5-0 W

Section 1AA playoffs

Feb. 24	Owatonna	7-1 W
Feb. 26	Rochester Century	7-0 W
Mar. 4	Lakeville South	2-1 W



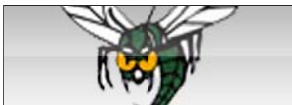
Junior forward Blake Winiecki



COACH'S CORNER

Randy Schmitz is in his 23rd year of coaching at Lakeville North -- previously Lakeville HS before the school split in 2005 with the establishment of Lakeville South. Schmitz has had a memorable tenure with the Panthers, but perhaps nothing is more special than the past nine years with the program as he makes his sixth state tournament appearance -- his third with North -- since 2002.





PROGRAM INFO

**Nickname:** Hornets  
**Conference:** Lake  
**Section:** 2AA  
**Record:** 18-7-2  
**State trips:** 1973, 74 Champs, 77, 78 Champs, 79 Champs (as East), 81 (as West), 1955, 56, 57, 60, 62, 67, 68, 69 Champs, 70, 71 Champs, 72, 82 Champs, 83, 84 Champs, 87, 88 Champs, 89, 95, 96, 97 Champs, 98, 2000, 07, 08, 09, 10 Champs, 11  
**Coach:** Curt Giles

STAT LEADERS

Scorers	G	A	Pts
Steven Fogarty	25	22	47
Michael Sit	13	25	38
Ben Walker	18	14	32
Jake Sampson	11	16	27
Lou Nanne	12	13	25
Max Everson	4	19	23
Jon Cote	8	8	16

Goalies	W-L-T	GA	SV
Connor Girard	12-6-2	2.60	.894
Alex Nelson	6-1-0	1.57	.910

PLAYOFF ROSTER

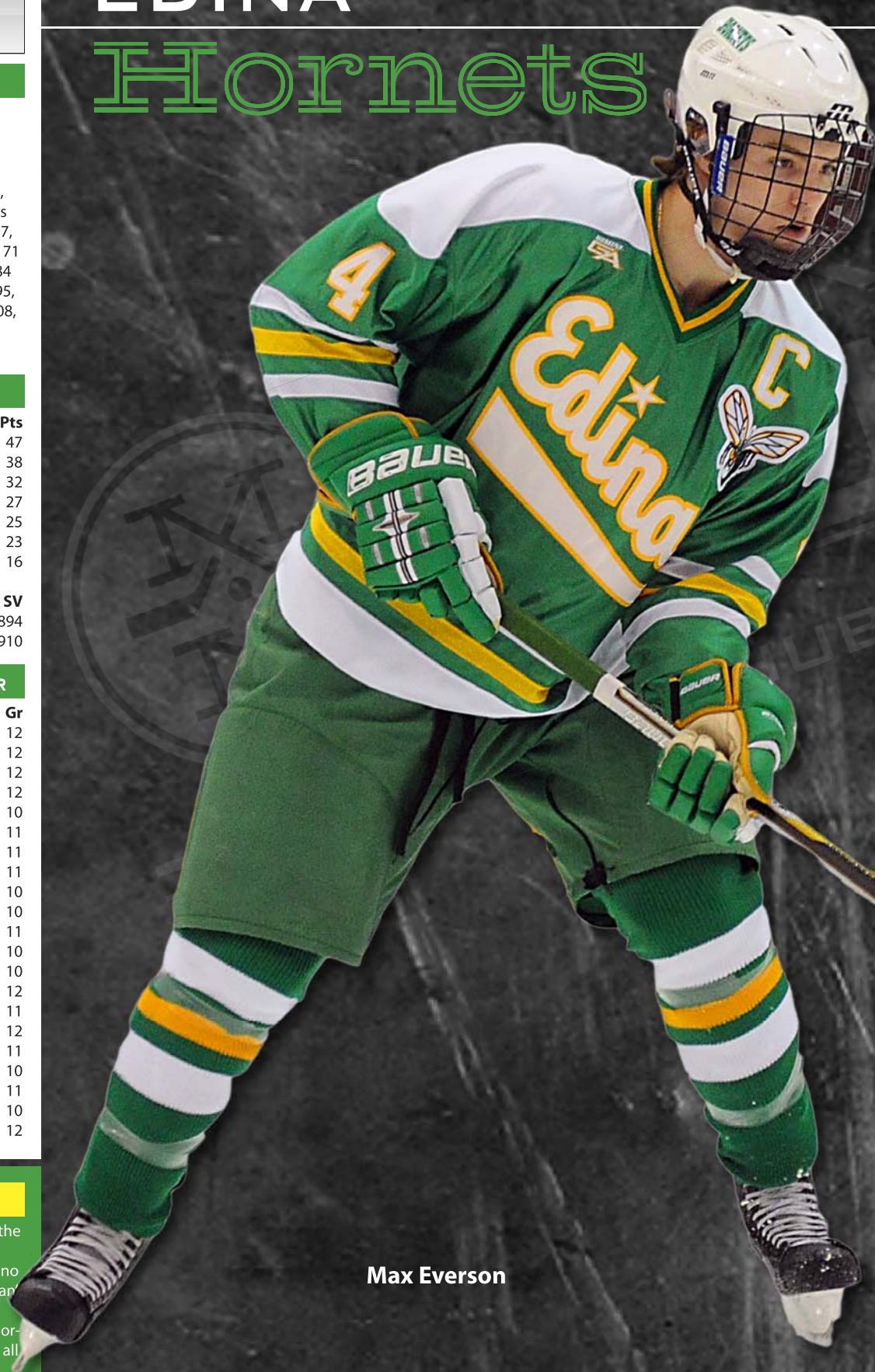
#	Name	Pos	Gr
1	Connor Girard	G	12
3	Ben Ostlie	D	12
4	Max Everson	D	12
5	Joey Kopp	F	12
6	Matt Nelson	D	10
7	Chris Dietzler	F	11
8	Jake Sampson	F	11
9	Jon Cote	F	11
10	Andy Jordahl	F	10
11	Lou Nanne	F	10
14	Ben Walker	F	11
15	Ryan Hatch	D	10
16	Bo Brauer	F	10
17	Michael Sit	F	12
18	Nick Leer	F	11
19	Steven Fogarty	F	12
20	Mitch Pederson	D	11
20	Hayden Anderson	F	10
21	Brian Baker	D	11
24	Anthony Walsh	F	10
30	Alex Nelson	G	12

CAN THEY WIN?

Most of the top players from the Edina's state title team a year ago have returned, so there's no reason to think the Hornets can't make a run. Few teams can match Edina's depth, as the Hornets' have scorers stashed on all three of their forward lines.

-- Loren Nelson

# EDINA Hornets



Max Everson

By Loren Nelson

**A** Edina coach Curt Giles typically doesn't show a lot of emotion.

Regular season win? Ho hum.

Regular season loss? Same reaction.

Giles' even-keel demeanor is reflected in his team, which typically turns in a consistent, workmanlike performance night after night.

Then comes the playoffs.

After the Hornets beat Burnsville for the Section 2AA title and a fifth straight trip to the state tournament, Giles was asked if the excitement ever diminishes for a team that goes to the state tournament year after year.

Giles, in his response, lit up with emotion. At least by Giles' standards.

"This time of the year is unbelievable in high school hockey," Giles said with a big smile. "If you don't get excited at this time of the year, you don't have a pulse."

A year ago, after a ho-hum regular season, the Hornets found another gear in the section playoffs, then downshifted again at the state tournament. They won the state Class 2A title with a 4-2 triumph over Minnetonka, the state's No. 1-ranked team for most of the season.

The Hornets could very well be on the same trajectory this year. No. 2-seeded Edina (18-7-2) plays unseeded Blaine (20-4-4) at 11 a.m. on Thursday, March 10, in the opening round of the state Class 2A tournament at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul.

Edina suffered three straight losses in what has become an annual January swoon. The Hornets then finished fourth in the five-team Lake Conference with a 4-4-0 record.



Junior forward Ben Walker

Not to worry. It's the postseason that matters for a program that has won seven state titles, 10 if you include the three won by Edina East when the town had two high schools.

"You don't want to let the city down," said Hornets senior Jake Sampson, who scored the winner in the closing minutes against Burnsville. "Every practice, every day you look at (the championship banners at Edina's Braemar Arena). And you just say you want to be a part of it."

"Last year was great, and we just want to do it again."

The Hornets return most of the key components from last year's championship team.

Senior goaltender Connor Girard, who was outstanding during last year's stretch run, has a 12-6-2 record, 2.60 goals-against average and .894 save percentage heading into the state tournament.

Senior defenseman Max Everson, who both dislocated and broke a bone in his wrist in a

Feb. 10 triumph over Minnetonka, isn't at full strength but is back in the Hornets' lineup and fully capable of playing a shutdown role. Everson, one of 10 Mr. Hockey finalists, has committed to play at Harvard next season.

Another Mr. Hockey finalist, senior forward Steven Fogarty, gives the Hornets a game-breaking offensive threat. He has 25 goals and 47 points, both team highs.

Edina's players, like their coach, are eager for what lies ahead.

"I've played with these guys for 12 years, and you don't want it to be your last game," Sampson said. "You love them to death and would do anything for them. You just want to keep playing with them."

Defending  
champs!

2  
AA

ROAD TO THE X

Date	Opponent	Score
Nov. 26	Buffalo	6-1 W
Nov. 27	Wayzata	2-3 L
Dec. 2	Burnsville	5-4 W
Dec. 4	Eagan	7-6 W
Dec. 16	Grand Rapids	1-2 L
Dec. 17	Elk River	4-1 W
Dec. 18	Eden Prairie	3-2 W
Dec. 29	Duluth East (Schwan)	4-3 W
Dec. 30	Hill-Murray (Schwan)	3-3 T
Dec. 31	Blaine (Schwan)	2-2 T
Jan. 4	St. Louis Park	14-2 W
Jan. 7	at Holy Angels	5-4 W
Jan. 11	at Benilde-SM	5-4 W
Jan. 20	Wayzata	4-5 L
Jan. 22	Minnetonka	1-4 L
Jan. 25	at Cretin-DH	2-3 L
Jan. 27	Hopkins	10-1 W
Jan. 29	Totino-Grace	5-0 W
Feb. 3	at Eden Prairie	3-0 W
Feb. 5	at Wayzata	1-2 L
Feb. 10	at Minnetonka	4-2 W
Feb. 12	at Hopkins	2-0 W
Feb. 17	at Buffalo	8-2 W
Feb. 19	Eden Prairie	5-4 W

Section 2AA playoffs		
Feb. 24	Bloom. Kennedy	8-1 W
Feb. 26	Prior Lake	5-0 W
Mar. 2	Burnsville	3-2 W



COACH'S CORNER

Curt Giles, a former defenseman with the Minnesota North Stars, has two other former NHLers on his staff in Dave Langevin, who won four Stanley Cups with the New York Islanders, and Don Beaupre, a former North Stars goaltender. That's a lot of experience behind the bench for the Hornets, who won the Class AA title a year ago.





PROGRAM INFO

**Nickname:** Wildcats  
**Conference:** South Suburban  
**Section:** 3AA  
**Record:** 20-6-2  
**State trips:** 2006, 11  
**Coach:** Mike Taylor

STAT LEADERS

Scorers	G	A	Pts
Michael Zajac	24	32	56
Will Merchant	31	22	53
Nick Kuchera	12	30	42
Sam Wolfe	10	21	31
Eli May	10	17	27
John Carroll	14	15	29
Brady Loew	8	15	23
Kyle Bonstrom	7	14	21
Cody Mason	2	15	17
Connor McGovern	4	11	15
Derick Kuchera	5	6	11
Ryan Nelson	7	3	10
Eric Peterson	4	5	9
Cullen Willox	2	4	6

Goalies	W-L-T	GA	SV
Tom Bodeker	14-6-2	2.01	.894
Al Cimochoowski	6-0-0	1.23	.919

PLAYOFF ROSTER

#	Name	Pos	Gr
3	Nick Kuchera	F	11
4	Derick Kuchera	D	11
5	Cody Mason	F	11
6	Matt Yetzer	D	12
7	Cullen Willox	F	10
8	John Carroll	F	12
9	Connor McGovern	F	11
10	Sam Wolfe	D	11
12	Ryan Nelson	F	12
14	Eli May	D	11
15	Kyle Bonstrom	F	12
16	Michael Zajac	F	11
19	Brady Loew	F	12
20	Tommy Nowariak	F	11
22	Eric Peterson	F	11
23	Will Peterson	D	10
24	Will Merchant	F	11
27	Zach Glienke	F	10
30	Alex Cimochoowski	G	12
33	Tommy Bodeker	G	12

CAN THEY WIN?

Eagan has the top-end talent to compete with anyone, as it proved during the regular season with a win over Eden Prairie. A deep run, however, usually requires depth and big-game experience, two areas where the Wildcats could fall short.

-- Loren Nelson

EAGAN

Wildcats



Will Merchant

By Loren Nelson

Eagan is all set up for the commonplace -- and deadly -- “just happy to be there” trip to the state tournament.

The Wildcats spent an entire year prepping for one night, then turned in a performance for the ages as they beat Apple Valley 1-0 in the Section 3AA championship game.

“The last year?” said Eagan coach, Mike Taylor, taking exception to the 12-month timeframe that went into the Wildcats’ win over Apple Valley. “They didn’t just lose to Apple Valley (in the section semifinals) last year, they lost to them in Bantams, they lost to them in Pee wees. ...”

The Wildcats now find themselves in the state Class 2A tournament for the first time since 2006, Eagan’s only other appearance.

No. 4-seeded Eagan (20-6-2) opens against unseeded Moorhead (18-7-2) in an 8 p.m. quarterfinal on Thursday, March 10, at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul.

The singular-focused Wildcats, admittedly, hadn’t thought much about what they would do if they got past Apple Valley.

“Yes,” Taylor said when asked about a post-section championship hangover extending all the way to St. Paul. “First give them a day to have fun with it, then we’ll give them a day off. Then we’ll crack the whip and let them know we ain’t going there just to eat at Cossetta’s.

“We’re not going down there just for the garlic.”

For the uninitiated, Cossetta’s is the Italian market and pizzeria just across 7th Street from the Xcel Energy Center. While the Wildcats might very well do



Junior forward Nick Kuchera

some carbo-loading there during the tournament, Taylor’s point is well taken.

Moorhead must become the new singular focus. Instead of seeing everything as Apple Valley brown, the view now becomes Moorhead orange.

Most of the Eagan’s top players, including leading scorers Michael Zajac and Will Merchant, are juniors.

“They are juniors who played all their sophomore year,” Taylor said. “More than anything, they have a passion for the game and very tight bond for each other. That’s what sets them apart.”

Zajac, Eagan’s leading scorer with 24 goals and 32 assists in 28 games, embraced a defensive role against Apple Valley. He clamped down on Eagles sophomore star Hudson Fasching and was one of the reasons the quality chances allowed on Wildcats senior goaltender Tommy Bodeker was limited to a mere handful.

“That’s probably the best game I’ve seen our team play all year,” Bodeker said.

Eagan, ranked No. 10 in the state in Class 2A for most of the final month of the season, beat Section 6AA champion Eden Prairie 4-2, lost to Section 2AA champion Edina in a 7-6 shootout and split with Section 1AA champion Lakeville North, losing the first meeting 2-1 and winning the rematch 5-2.

“They have as good a chance as anybody,” Apple Valley coach Jerry Hayes said. “They are big, they are strong, they have good D who are mobile and can move the puck. They have forwards who can finish.

“I wouldn’t be shocked to see them playing on Saturday night.”



ROAD TO THE X

Date	Opponent	Score
Dec. 2	Prior Lake	9-1 W
Dec. 4	at Edina	6-7 L
Dec. 9	at Burnsville	2-2 T
Dec. 16	Lakeville South	4-0 W
Dec. 18	at Lakeville North	1-2 L
Dec. 22	Eden Prairie	4-2 W
Dec. 27	North St. Paul (SSP)	7-0 W
Dec. 28	Woodbury (SSP)	5-1 W
Dec. 29	South St. Paul (SSP)	4-1 W
Jan. 4	Minnetonka	2-4 L
Jan. 6	Apple Valley	4-2 W
Jan. 8	Eastview	7-0 W
Jan. 11	at Hastings	7-3 W
Jan. 13	Bloom. Kennedy	10-0 W
Jan. 15	at Bloom. Jefferson	2-3 L
Jan. 20	Burnsville	6-7 L
Jan. 22	at Prior Lake	3-1 W
Jan. 27	at Lakeville South	10-0 W
Jan. 29	Lakeville North	5-2 W
Feb. 3	Rosemount	7-0 W
Feb. 5	at Apple Valley	3-3 T
Feb. 10	at Eastview	4-2 W
Feb. 12	at Bloom. Kennedy	12-1 W
Feb. 17	at Rosemount	11-3 W
Feb. 19	Bloom. Jefferson	2-3 L

Section 3AA playoffs

Feb. 24	Park of Cottage Grv	5-0 W
Feb. 26	Hastings	5-2 W
Mar. 3	Apple Valley	1-0 W



COACH’S CORNER

Mike Taylor sold the Wildcats on a defense-first scheme against Apple Valley, and the strategy paid off in the form of a 1-0 triumph in the section titlegame. Now he must find a way to ramp up his players for the rigors of the state tournament, not allowing them to get awestruck by the state’s biggest stage.





PROGRAM INFO

**Nickname:** Bears  
**Conference:** Suburban East  
**Section:** 4AA  
**Record:** 21-5-2  
**State trips:** 1945, 46, 49, 51, 56, 66, 67, 70, 82, 89, 90, 94, 95, 96, 98, 2001, 03, 05, 11  
**Coach:** Tim Sager

STAT LEADERS

Scorers	G	A	Pts
Brandon Wahlin	29	29	58
Mac Jansen	35	15	50
Max Birkinbine	18	18	36
Mitch Morrisette	6	12	18
R.J. Majkozak	0	15	15
Jack Morrisette	3	12	15
Garen David	7	7	14
Mike Abrahamson	7	4	11
Sam Basich	5	6	11
Matt Glasgow	3	7	10

Goalies	W-L-T	GA	SV
Jared Schletty	16-3-2	1.91	.909
Michael Jordan	5-2-0	2.38	.887

PLAYOFF ROSTER

#	Name	Pos	Gr
3	Ben Clark	D	12
6	Mike Abrahamson	F	11
8	Lance Carney	D	10
9	Garen David	F	12
11	Jon Predergast	F	12
12	Jack Morrisette	D	11
13	Mac Jansen	F	12
15	Sam Basich	F	12
16	Ben Wilke	F	10
19	Mitch Morrisette	F	11
20	Brandon Wahlin	F	12
21	Max Birkinbine	F	12
22	R.J. Majkozak	D	11
23	Matt Glasgow	F	12
24	Brandon Baker	D	12
28	Austin McDonald	F	11
29	Gavin Dehnert	D	12
31	Jared Schletty	G	11
33	Michael Jordan	G	12
40	Josh Bartness	F	11

CAN THEY WIN?

The Bears won the Suburban East Conference championship, have 21 victories and a confidence-boosting win over No. 1-ranked Hill-Murray notched in their sticks. This is a quality team that can beat anyone on any given night, as they proved in the Section 4AA title game.

-- Loren Nelson

# WHITE BEAR LAKE

## Bears

Garen David



By Loren Nelson

Brandon Wahlin was first out of the locker room. He had his hockey bag slung over his shoulder and immense satisfaction on his face.

Happy, but exhausted.

The White Bear Lake senior co-captain had, after all, just played into double overtime against arch rival and No. 1-ranked Hill-Murray in the Section 4AA championship game at the State Fairgrounds Coliseum.

The Bears beat the Pioneers 5-4, ending a 14-game winless skid to their northeast suburban rivals dating to 2004.

As Wahlin talked to reporters in the Coliseum concourse, White Bear Lake fans cheered in the background. The chaotic scene set up perfectly for Wahlin to yell, post Super Bowl style, "I'm going to Disney World!"

Except this is Minnesota high school hockey, and there's no better March destination than the state tournament at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul.

"It was just like a burden has been taken off our shoulders," Wahlin said about the victory, which also snapped Hill-Murray's six-game playoff win streak over the Bears. "It means the world to our whole town. People are going to be going nuts tonight."

The party won't last long. As Wahlin pointed out, White Bear Lake has yet another gorilla sitting squarely atop its shoulder.

The Bears, amazingly, have gone 0-for-17 in the opening round of the state tournament going back to their first appearance in 1945.

Unseeded White Bear Lake (21-5-2)

plays No. 3 Duluth East in (22-5-0) in a 1 p.m. state Class 2A quarterfinal matchup on Thursday, March, 10, at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul.

Duluth East beat White Bear Lake 5-2 on Friday, Dec. 10, at the Vadnais Heights Sports Center.

"We have got to look forward," Wahlin said. "We have to get past that 17 first-round losses in the state tournament."

It's an encouraging sign for the Bears that Wahlin, one of their inspirational leaders, wasn't merely satisfied with

pulling off one of the biggest upsets in recent section playoff history. After all, it's easy to forget the 1980 "Miracle" USA hockey team still had to beat Finland for the gold medal after stunning the great Soviet Union juggernaut.

Before heading into the second overtime against Hill-Murray, the Bears were sprawled on their locker room floor.

"We lifted our legs in the air to get the lactic acid out," said Wahlin, who leads the Bears

with 58 points.

How much can White Bear Lake have left, physically and emotionally, in the tank? How many more tricks do they have stuffed in their jerseys? How many more streaks can they end?

To re-energize for the state tournament, the plan is to try another go-to technique.

"Our coach always makes us drink chocolate milk," senior Mac Jansen, the Bears' goal-scoring leader with 35 in 28 games.

Beyond the beverages, there's no substitute for hard work.

"We'll come back Monday and have a nice hard practice, sweat a little ... and go from there," Jansen said.



ROAD TO THE X

Date	Opponent	Score
Nov. 27	Rochester Century	11-0 W
Nov. 30	Hastings	2-1 W
Dec. 7	at Woodbury	8-1 W
Dec. 10	Duluth East	2-5 L
Dec. 16	East Ridge	5-2 W
Dec. 18	Cretin-Derham Hall	7-1 W
Dec. 23	Hill-Murray	0-3 L
Dec. 29	Blaine (Schwan)	0-3 L
Dec. 30	St. Thomas (Schwan)	1-2 L
Dec. 31	Breck (Schwan)	2-1 W
Jan. 6	at Stillwater	5-1 W
Jan. 8	at Mounds View	3-3 T
Jan. 13	Forest Lake	7-3 W
Jan. 15	at Roseville	5-3 W
Jan. 20	at Hastings	4-3 W
Jan. 22	Woodbury	4-2 W
Jan. 27	at Park	4-1 W
Jan. 29	at East Ridge	3-2 W
Feb. 3	Mounds View	6-0 W
Feb. 5	Stillwater	3-4 L
Feb. 10	at Cretin-Derham Hall	4-4 T
Feb. 12	at Forest Lake	4-3 W
Feb. 15	Park	7-0 W
Feb. 17	Roseville	1-0 W
Feb. 18	Cloquet-E-C	7-2 W

Section 4AA playoffs

Feb. 26	Mounds View	4-1 W
Mar. 2	Stillwater	3-2 W
Mar. 4	Hill-Murray	5-4 W



COACH'S CORNER

Tim Sager, who has a 172-70-12 record in nine years at White Bear Lake, made all the right moves in the Bears' stirring upset against Hill-Murray, employing a five-man neutral zone trap that at times befuddled the top-ranked Pioneers. In the locker room, he kept the mood light and loose by inserting a set of gag false teeth before giving his "inspirational" speeches.





PROGRAM INFO

**Nickname:** Bengals  
**Conference:** NW Suburban  
**Section:** 5AA  
**Record:** 20-4-4  
**State trips:** 1992, 96, 99, 2000  
Champs, 06, 07, 08, 09, 10, 11  
**Coach:** Dave Aus

STAT LEADERS

Scorers	G	A	Pts
Jonny Brodzinski	28	29	57
Dylan Lambert	13	29	42
Michael Brodzinski	13	17	30
Jesse Norling	12	15	27
Briggs Fussy	12	14	26
Gunnar Meger	6	10	16
Tyler Cline	5	8	13
Mikey Cameron	3	9	12
Drew Mezzano	5	5	10
Scott LeMire	3	7	10
Joey Vegel	6	3	9
Dalton Nowicki	2	5	7
Ian Scheid	0	6	6
Alex Copa	1	5	6

Goalies	W-L-T	GA	SV
Nick Malvin	17-4-4	1.87	.931

PLAYOFF ROSTER

#	Name	Pos	Gr
2	Mac Nadeau	F	10
5	Dan Kremer	F	12
6	Scott LeMire	F	11
9	Zach Stevens	D	12
11	Alex Copa	D	9
12	Dalton Nowicki	D	11
13	Gunnar Meger	F	12
16	Joey Vegel	F	11
20	Michael Brodzinski	D/F	10
21	Mikey Cameron	D	12
22	Jonny Brodzinski	F	12
23	Jesse Norling	F	10
25	Dylan Lambert	F	11
26	Tyler Cline	F	9
30	Mitch Swanson	G	12
32	Nick Malvin	G	11
33	Briggs Fussy	F	12
38	Forrest Callahan	F	12
39	Ian Scheid	D	9

CAN THEY WIN?

The Bengals have a hot goalie in Nick Malvin, two game-changers in the Brodzinski brothers, Michael and Jonny, and a solid supporting cast. That was enough to get through the section playoffs, and with a few breaks Blaine might push all the way to the championship.

-- Loren Nelson

# BLAINE

# Bengals



Jonny Brodzinski

By Loren Nelson

Mr. Hockey Nick Bjugstad is gone. This is Jonny Brodzinski's team now.

Sure, Blaine has other go-to guys. Briggs Fussy scored some clutch goals in the section playoffs. Nick Malvin might as well carry a trowel and mortar bucket rather than a goalie stick the way he's stonewalled opposing teams all season. Sophomore defenseman Michael Brodzinski has much of the same game-changing ability as his older brother.

But the Bengals go as Jonny goes, and the Bengals are going to the state Class 2A tournament for the sixth consecutive season.

Unseeded Blaine (20-4-4) plays No. 2 seed Edina (18-7-2) at 11 a.m. on Thursday, March 10, in the state tournament quarterfinals at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul.

"It was supposed to be Maple Grove's year," Jonny Brodzinski said after the Bengals upended the top-seeded Crimson in overtime in the Section 5AA final. "We stripped it from them. Nice."

Brodzinski, a senior forward and Mr. Hockey finalist receiving heavy Division I interest, has scored 28 goals and added 29 assists for 57 points in 28 games. He put up those numbers despite receiving extra attention from most every opponent, much like Bjugstad, now starring for the University of Minnesota, did last season.

As a right wing on a line centered by Bjugstad last season, there weren't a lot of layers to Brodzinski's role.

"My job was to get Bjugstad the puck," he said.

This year Brodzinski knows much

more will be expected of him at the state tournament. No one expects more out of Brodzinski than Brodzinski.

"I have to compete more," he said. "I have to put up a bunch of points because I know I'm the go-to guy. I need to start playing more physical, and I need to be more of a key guy out there."

During Blaine's section title game victory, a Maple Grove player was ruled to have closed his hand on the puck in the Crimson crease. The Bengals were awarded a penalty shot. Blaine coach

Dave Aus had his pick of players to send on the ice.

Brodzinski, naturally, was the selection.

Brodzinski tried to fire the puck between Ryan Coyne's leg pads, but the Crimson goalie calmly turned the puck away.

What could have been an emotional drain for the Bengals was, in fact, no big deal.

"He doesn't really get down when he misses those kinds of things," Michael Brodzinski said

about his brother. "He just gets the next goal and turns the game around."

After riding Bjugstad's scoring through two tough section semifinal and final games last season, the Bengals appeared to be running on empty at the state tournament, when they were upset by Apple Valley 2-0 in the quarterfinals, then lost to Roseau 7-5 in the consolation round.

Aus said he expects most observers will predict a similar fate for Blaine this time around.

"We're not going to be seeded," Aus said after winning the section title. "We're not going to get any respect. I wouldn't count us out against anybody."



ROAD TO THE X

Date	Opponent	Score
Dec. 3	Roseau	6-3 W
Dec. 4	at Willmar	6-4 W
Dec. 9	at Maple Grove	2-2 T
Dec. 16	at Osseo	4-0 W
Dec. 18	North Metro	10-1 W
Dec. 21	at Anoka	4-3 W
Dec. 23	at Minnetonka	3-3 T
Dec. 29	Wht Bear Lk (Schwan)	3-0 W
Dec. 30	Minnetonka (Schwan)	3-4 L
Dec. 31	Edina (Schwan)	2-2 T
Jan. 4	Champlin Park	1-3 L
Jan. 6	Andover	6-0 W
Jan. 13	Robb. Armstrong	4-0 W
Jan. 15	at Centennial	0-5 L
Jan. 17	Elk River	6-1 W
Jan. 20	Coon Rapids	4-2 W
Jan. 22	at Champlin Park	7-0 W
Jan. 27	Maple Grove	2-4 L
Jan. 29	at Elk River	4-3 W
Feb. 3	Osseo	4-1 W
Feb. 5	Duluth East	3-2 W
Feb. 8	at Andover	4-2 W
Feb. 10	Anoka	6-3 W
Feb. 17	at Robb. Armstrong	3-3 T
Feb. 19	Centennial	3-1 W

Section 5AA playoffs			
Feb. 24	Coon Rapids	4-1 W	
Mar. 1	Osseo	4-2 W	
Mar. 4	Maple Grove	4-3 W	



COACH'S CORNER

"For me, personally, this is the biggest win I've ever had at Blaine, bar none," Dave Aus said after the Bengals knocked off No. 4 ranked Maple Grove in the Section 5AA title game. Aus might have had his best season as a coach, considering this was supposed to be a "down" year for Blaine. He's guided the Bengals to six straight section championships, quite an accomplishment with the turnover in high school rosters.





PROGRAM INFO

**Nickname:** Eagles  
**Conference:** Lake  
**Section:** 6AA  
**Record:** 21-5-2  
**State trips:** 1992, 99, 2001, 03, 09 Champs, 11  
**Coach:** Lee Smith

STAT LEADERS

Scorers	G	A	Pts
Kyle Rau	36	38	74
Luc Gerdes	27	26	53
David Rath	20	26	46
Nick Seeler	7	30	37
Mark Rath	16	17	33
Des Shavlik	14	13	27
Dan Molenaar	6	20	26
Jack McCartan	5	11	16
Andrew Knudsen	2	9	11
Curt Rau	3	8	11
Joe Kerker	3	8	11
Luke Sudman	0	9	9

Goalies	W-L-T	GA	SV
Andrew Ford	16-4-2	2.49	.893
Patrick Heiller	5-1-0	2.34	.865

PLAYOFF ROSTER

#	Name	Pos	Gr
1	Patrick Heller	G	12
4	Andrew Knudsen	F	10
5	Mark Rath	F	12
6	Brad Boldenow	F	11
7	Kyle Rau	F	12
9	Chad Dahlquist	F	11
10	Curt Rau	D	12
11	Nick Seeler	D	12
12	Des Shavlik	F	12
15	Joe Kerker	D	12
17	Dan Molenaar	D	12
20	Mason Bergh	F	10
21	Jack McCartan	F	12
23	Daniel Thayer	F	11
24	Ben Boldenow	F	12
25	David Rath	F	12
27	Luke Sudman	D	11
28	Luc Gerdes	F	12
29	Andrew Ford	G	12

CAN THEY WIN?

The better question for the Eagles is, "How can they be stopped?" This is a big, strong, fast, veteran team with a natural born sniper in Kyle Rau leading the way. Goaltender Andrew Ford needs to be solid, not spectacular, for the Eagles to win the title.

-- Loren Nelson

# EDEN PRAIRIE

## Eagles



Dan Molenaar

By Loren Nelson

Dan Molenaar remembers sitting in a Target Center locker room, wondering where it all went wrong.

"The disappointment was just unbearable," Molenaar, an Eden Prairie senior, said about last season's loss to Minnetonka in the Section 6AA championship game. "We were going to do whatever it took to win another championship."

Two seasons ago, Eden Prairie won the state Class 2A championship with an astounding 10 sophomores in the lineup.

Molenaar said the idea back then was to make a run at three straight titles, to carve Eden Prairie among the list of the state's great dynasties.

The harsh reality of that humbling 7-2 section title game loss to Minnetonka forced the Eagles to rethink everything. To come up with a new long-range plan.

"This year we opened up our eyes and saw that it is not going to come just because we are an Eagle," senior Mr. Hockey finalist and University of Minnesota recruit Kyle Rau said.

Top-seeded Eden Prairie (21-5-2) plays unseeded Lakeville North (13-14-1) at 6 p.m. on Thursday, March 10, in the state Class 2A quarterfinals at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul.

Eden Prairie finished the regular season ranked No. 2 in the state in Class 2A. The Eagles won the Lake Conference title, outdueling west metro powerhouses Edina, Minnetonka and Wayzata to win the state's toughest league.



Senior forward Kyle Rau

As if their conference schedule wasn't tough enough, Eden Prairie played every team ranked in the Hockey Hub's final top 10 rankings at least once.

"We have a lot of confidence going in," said Molenaar, who is scheduled to have surgery on both his hips two days after the conclusion of the state tournament.

Rau scored the winner in double overtime against Wayzata in the Section 6AA title game and has 36 goals and 38 assists in 28 games. He recently was named the Star Tribune's Metro Player of the Year and is the heavy favorite to be named Mr. Hockey.

He gives the Eagles an element few other teams have, a goal-scorer who thrives in pressure situations.

"Some guys just have that knack," Eden Prairie coach Lee Smith said. "Neal Broten just had that knack of finding the right areas to be in.

"(Rau) is just a great kid. He's a warrior. The guys all rally behind him."

Although 10 players return from Eden Prairie's 2009 state championship squad, that team was led to the title by defenseman Nick Leddy, who went on to be named Mr. Hockey and now plays for the Chicago Blackhawks.

This version of the Eagles plays with an edge. Those sophomores are bigger, stronger and more mature. They have tasted the worst kind of defeat.

"We have the experience now," Molenaar said, looking back to their state tournament experience two years ago. "I think the first game, when we got there, we were kind of in awe a little bit."



ROAD TO THE X

Date	Opponent	Score
Dec. 2	Apple Valley	6-3 W
Dec. 4	at Bloom. Jefferson	8-1 W
Dec. 7	at Lakeville North	7-4 W
Dec. 16	Elk River	7-0 W
Dec. 17	Grand Rapids	9-5 W
Dec. 18	Edina	2-3 L
Dec. 22	at Eagan	2-4 L
Dec. 28	Benilde (Classic)	8-5 W
Dec. 29	Maple Grove (Classic)	6-0 W
Dec. 30	Moorhead (Classic)	4-0 W
Jan. 6	at Hill-Murray	2-1 W
Jan. 11	at Burnsville	4-2 W
Jan. 15	at Duluth East	3-4 L
Jan. 20	Holy Angels	3-5 L
Jan. 22	at Wayzata	3-3 T
Jan. 25	Lakeville South	9-5 W
Jan. 27	Minnetonka	4-2 W
Jan. 29	at Hopkins	12-2 W
Feb. 1	Hermantown	5-4 W
Feb. 3	Edina	0-3 L
Feb. 5	Buffalo	6-0 W
Feb. 10	Wayzata	4-3 W
Feb. 12	at Minnetonka	3-3 T
Feb. 17	Hopkins	9-3 W
Feb. 19	at Edina	5-4 W

Section 6AA playoffs

Feb. 24	Minneapolis	8-1 W
Feb. 26	Minnetonka	4-0 W
Mar. 2	Wayzata	4-3 W



COACH'S CORNER

Lee Smith has a 343-124-25 in 18 seasons. His best work might have come in the offseason, when he loaded up the Eagles' nonconference schedule with traditional state powerhouses such as Duluth East and Hill-Murray in anticipation of a deep playoff run.





PROGRAM INFO

**Nickname:** Greyhounds  
**Conference:** Independent  
**Section:** 7AA  
**Record:** 22-5-0  
**State trips:** 1958, 60 Champs, 61, 64, 75, 91, 94, 95 Champs, 96, 97, 98 Champs, 2000, 03, 04, 05, 09, 10, 11  
**Coach:** Mike Randolph

STAT LEADERS

Scorers	G	A	Pts
Trevor Olson	25	40	65
Jake Randolph	27	35	62
Dom Toninato	27	30	57
Nate Repensky	4	26	30
Meirs Moore	6	22	28
Conner Valesano	13	12	25
Ryan Lundgren	7	12	19
Zac Schendel	8	7	15
Phil Johnson	5	9	14
Luke Renier	6	7	13
Hunter Bergerson	3	7	10
Phil Beaulieu	3	7	10

Goalies	W-L-T	GA	SV
JoJo Jeanetta	16-4-0	1.53	.923
Joel Perlinger	6-1-0	1.57	.909

PLAYOFF ROSTER

#	Name	Pos	Gr
3	Andrew Kerr	D	10
4	Steven Holappa	F	11
6	Kyle Campion	F	11
8	Luke Renier	F	12
9	Zac Schendel	F	12
12	Trevor Olson	F	11
13	Domenick Bergeland	F	11
15	Meiers Moore	D	10
16	Jake Randolph	F	11
19	Dom Toninato	F	11
21	Ryan Lundgren	F	10
23	Alex Toscano	F	10
25	Phil Beaulieu	D	9
26	Conner Valesano	F	10
28	Nate Repensky	D	11
31	JoJo Jeanetta	G	12
32	Beau Hughes	D	10
34	Phil Johnson	F	12
39	Joel Perlinger	G	12
41	Hunter Bergerson	D	12

CAN THEY WIN?

The Greyhounds may be a young team but they have play-off experience, particularly in nets with JoJo Jeanetta. For the ‘Hounds to win it all, the top line of Jake Randolph, Trevor Olson and Dom Toninato needs help.  
-- Tim Kolehmainen

# DULUTH EAST

## Greyhounds



Hunter Bergerson

By Tim Kolehmainen

**M**eirs Moore looks innocent enough. The Duluth East sophomore defenseman still has a hint of youth about him, with eyes that smile when he talks. There’s no weariness or hardness in his face. He seems harmless.

But to Grand Rapids, Moore was deadlier than any assassin.

As the clock wound down the final minutes of the Section 7AA final Thursday night, Moore and top-seeded Duluth East watched their state tournament hopes tick away. For almost 50 minutes, the Greyhounds threw everything they had at Grand Rapids goaltender Dom DeGuisseppi.

Nothing worked.

DeGuisseppi was lightning fast with 27 saves, often flashing a quicker glove than a Michael Jackson dance number. His ‘tending held up a 1-0 Thunderhawks’ lead – and it appeared as if it might be enough to slay the ‘Hounds.

But with just 1:30 remaining, Moore took his best shot. He ripped a rising wrister from the point – over the sliding Thunderhawks’ forward, over DeGuisseppi’s left shoulder and somehow into the top corner.

The Greyhounds had new life.

“We weren’t going to give up, whatever happened,” said Moore.

Twenty-six seconds into overtime, Moore connected again. He found junior Jake Randolph in the corner with a bullet pass. Randolph quickly one-timed it to Trevor Olson in the slot and he slammed it home for the game-winner.

“We just had to keep plugging away and find a way to get the puck in the net,”



Sophomore defenseman Meirs Moore

said East coach Mike Randolph, who has won 454 games in 23 seasons at East. “There’s no quit in them.”

The game – and the game-winner – typified the season for the ‘Hounds. Moore (6-22-28), the son of former Duluth East and UMD fan favorite Skeeter Moore, is one of several solid sophomores who have made significant contributions, including forwards Conner Valesano (13-12-25), Ryan Lundgren (7-12-19) and Alex Toscano. Freshman Phil Beaulieu (3-7-10) is a blue line regular.

But in crunch time, the ‘Hounds have more often that not looked to their high-scoring first line.

Randolph (27-35-62) and Olson (25-40-65) are on the ‘Hounds top unit along with Dom Toninato (27-30-57), who is also the son of a former UMD Bulldog, Jim Toninato from Bemidji. Scariest of all for teams like Grand Rapids – all three are just juniors.

Their puck control is unparalleled and was

on display for much of the third period and overtime against the Thunderhawks. Despite heavy minutes, the ‘Hounds controlled play with the trio on the ice.

East also has a solid defensive corps with Moore, Beaulieu, junior Nate Repensky (4-26-30) and senior Hunter Bergerson (3-7-10).

Between the pipes, JoJo Jeanetta (16-4-0, 1.53, .923) will play in his third straight state tournament when the third-seeded Greyhounds (22-5-0) open play with White Bear Lake (21-5-2) at 1 p.m. Thursday in the Xcel Energy Center.

Jeanetta is an athletic goaltender with a terrific work ethic. He’s been among the state’s best in save percentage and goals against average each of the past two seasons.



ROAD TO THE X

Date	Opponent	Score
Dec. 4	at Wayzata	1-2 L
Dec. 7	Andover	10-1 W
Dec. 9	Cambridge-Isanti	16-0 W
Dec. 10	at White Bear Lake	5-2 W
Dec. 14	at Centennial	5-1 W
Dec. 16	at Cloquet-E-C	4-0 W
Dec. 22	at Moorhead	6-0 W
Dec. 29	Edina (Schwan)	3-4 L
Dec. 30	Breck (Schwan)	5-2 W
Dec. 31	St. Thomas (Schwan)	4-2 W
Jan. 3	at Duluth Central	7-1 W
Jan. 11	at Anoka	5-1 W
Jan. 13	Grand Rapids	2-1 W
Jan. 15	Eden Prairie	4-3 W
Jan. 18	at Apple Valley	3-6 L
Jan. 22	St. Cloud Tech	4-2 W
Jan. 25	Forest Lake	5-0 W
Jan. 29	Maple Grove	1-3 L
Feb. 1	Superior (WI)	8-3 W
Feb. 5	at Blaine	2-3 L
Feb. 8	Cloquet-E-C	8-1 W
Feb. 12	Elk River	2-1 W
Feb. 15	Hastings	12-2 W
Feb. 19	at Tartan	6-0 W

Section 7AA playoffs		
Feb. 22	Cambridge-Isanti	11-0 W
Feb. 26	Elk River	5-1 W
Mar. 3	Grand Rapids	2-1 W



COACH’S CORNER

Winning hasn’t gotten old for Duluth East under Mike Randolph. In 23 seasons as the head coach, Randolph has led the ‘Hounds to 13 state tourney bids and compiled a remarkable 454-128-19 record – including state titles in 1995 and 1998. A Duluth guy, Randolph also coached briefly at the college level (St. Scholastica and Minnesota-Duluth) and at rivals Duluth Denfeld and Duluth Cathedral.





PROGRAM INFO

**Nickname:** Spuds  
**Conference:** Mariucci  
**Section:** 8AA  
**Record:** 18-7-2  
**State trips:** 1992, 93, 94, 95, 97, 2001, 02, 03, 04, 05, 09, 11  
**Coach:** Dave Morinville

STAT LEADERS

Scorers	G	A	Pts
Bryant Christian	13	20	33
Eric Brenk	13	14	27
Logan Ness	15	11	26
Jacob Uglem	1	18	19
Terry Leabo	4	14	18
Brendan Johnson	8	9	17
Tony Uglem	9	7	16
Ben Doda	5	9	14
Noah Julin	1	11	12
Nicholas Uglem	4	7	11
Nic Oxtan	3	8	11

Goalies	W-L-T	GA	SV
Michael Bitzer	18-7-2	1.94	.932

PLAYOFF ROSTER

#	Name	Pos	Gr
2	Ben Welle	D	11
3	Simon Selberg	F	11
4	Nic Oxtan	D	12
5	Jacob Uglem	D	11
6	Terry Leabo	D	11
7	Evan Cook	F	12
8	Noah Julin	D	12
10	Tony Uglem	F	10
11	Bryant Christian	F	11
12	Brendan Johnson	F	12
14	Eric Barker	D	10
15	Ben Doda	F	12
17	Nicholas Uglem	F	10
19	Cody Rahman	F	11
20	Crosby Steen	F	11
21	Jesse Doschadis	F	11
22	Eric Brenk	F	11
23	Sean Kunkel	D	12
24	Nate Johnson	F	11
25	Zach Quaife	F	11
26	Logan Ness	F	11
27	Thomas Carey	F	10
31	Evan Cochran	G	11
33	Michael Bitzer	G	11

# MOORHEAD Spuds



Michael Bitzer

CAN THEY WIN?

Moorhead isn't a high-scoring team, so it must not get into shootouts. But the Spuds have the experienced defensive corps and top goaltender (Michael Bitzer) to win three grind-it-out games at state.

-- Tim Kolehmainen

By Tim Kolehmainen

As a former goaltender, Moorhead coach Dave Morinville sees the ice from the net outward. It's no surprise his team plays much the same way.

Strong defense and one of the state's best goaltenders in junior Michael Bitzer helped the Spuds (18-7-2) return to the state tournament for the seventh time in Morinville's 14-year tenure at the school. Moorhead faces fourth-seeded Eagan in the state quarterfinals at 8 p.m. Thursday, March 10 at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul.

"We have guys who are pretty conscientious back there," said Morinville of his team, which allows just 1.94 goals per game. "I'm very critical of everything they do away from the puck as an old goalie."

That style was apparent in the Section 8AA final, as the Spuds completely stymied the offense of top-seeded Bemidji, 2-0. Moorhead allowed just 18 shots on net – almost none from prime scoring locations.

Senior forward Brendan Johnson sealed the victory by giving up his body to block two shots from the point. On the second, he bounced back to his feet, chased the puck down and dumped it in the empty net.

When they're playing at their best, the Spuds play well away from the puck and allow Bitzer (18-7-2, 1.94, .932) to swallow up shots from the perimeter. The junior is a great athlete with a quick glove hand,

but his strongest trait is his ability to limit rebounds.

"(The defense) relies on him to make that first save," said Morinville, who added that Bitzer is rarely beat clean on the first shot.

Defensively, juniors Jacob Uglem (1-18-19) and Terry Leabo (4-14-18) lead the way along with seniors Noah Julin (1-11-12) and Nic Oxtan (3-8-11).

It's a veteran crew that moves the puck well, helping jump start the Spuds' offense. Julin also plays with an edge and his toughness is key to keeping the slot clear of forwards.

Offensively, Moorhead's top line of Johnson (8-9-17) and juniors Bryant Christian (13-20-33) and Logan Ness (15-11-26) has been on a roll since early January. Junior power forward Eric Brenk (13-14-27), Tony Uglem (9-7-16), Ben Doda (5-9-14) and Nicholas Uglem (4-7-11) add scoring depth, although it truly is a team that will rely on play in its own zone to make a deep state tournament run.

The Spuds have been defending against more than just opposing offenses this winter. Controversy off the ice -- including the suspension of four players for two weeks in January and the rehashing of old eligibility questions of a key player -- has resulted in an us-against-the-world mentality.

"This team has been through a lot, but they've hung in there," said Morinville. "It's been a good learning experience for this team in a lot of ways."



ROAD TO THE X

Date	Opponent	Score
Dec. 2	at Fargo South (ND)	3-0 W
Dec. 9	Bemidji	1-1 T
Dec. 14	at Roseau	1-2 L
Dec. 18	Brainerd	3-2 W
Dec. 22	Duluth East	0-6 L
Dec. 28	Jefferson (Classic)	4-2 W
Dec. 29	Wayzata (Classic)	2-1 W
Dec. 30	Eden Prairie (Classic)	0-4 L
Jan. 4	East Grand Forks	5-2 W
Jan. 6	at Thief River Falls	8-0 W
Jan. 8	at Minnetonka	1-3 L
Jan. 11	at St. Cloud Tech	5-1 W
Jan. 15	at Wayzata	4-1 W
Jan. 18	Buffalo	6-0 W
Jan. 20	at East Grand Forks	3-1 W
Jan. 22	Warroad	4-1 W
Jan. 25	Roseau	6-1 W
Jan. 27	at Brainerd	6-5 W
Jan. 29	Centennial	4-3 W
Feb. 3	Benilde-SM	1-6 L
Feb. 5	Grand Rapids	3-4 L
Feb. 8	at Bemidji	2-2 T
Feb. 12	Hill-Murray	2-3 L
Feb. 18	at Alexandria	8-0 W

Section 8AA playoffs		
Feb. 22	Buffalo	5-1 W
Feb. 26	Roseau	3-2 W
Mar. 2	Bemidji	2-0 W

COACH'S CORNER

It's been quite a run for the Spuds under 14-year coach Dave Morinville. During his tenure, Moorhead has qualified for seven state tournaments and finished second four times (2001, 04, 05 and 09). Morinville began coaching as an assistant with the Spuds in the mid-1970s. He's also been an assistant at the college and pro levels.



Celebrating 25 Years of Hockey Excellence

1.877.447.1987

DETROIT LAKES, MN | FARGO, ND | ST. LOUIS, MO

CHICAGO, IL | KANSAS CITY, KS | FAIRVIEW HEIGHTS, IL

Mite through High School, Goalies and Outskaters!

INCAMPS.COM



# CLASS AA

## BRACKET



# CLASS A

## BRACKET







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 nonconference schedule in which they played most of the state's top-ranked Class 1A teams.

-- Loren Nelson

# ROCH. LOURDES

## Eagles



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

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.





PROGRAM INFO

**Nickname:** Mustangs  
**Conference:** Tri-Metro  
**Section:** 2A  
**Record:** 20-8-0  
**State trips:** 1994, 96, 97, 2000  
Champs, 04 Champs, 09  
Champs, 10 Champs, 11  
**Coach:** Les Larson

STAT LEADERS

Scorers	G	A	Pts
Conor Andrle	19	43	62
Grant Opperman	25	33	58
Wesley Iverson	28	20	48
Thomas Lindstrom	22	28	50
Matt Colford	14	32	46
Austin Rudnick	12	19	31
David Zosel	10	18	28
Keegan Iverson	11	12	23

Goalies	W-L-T	GA	SV
Jack Kenney	9-4-0	2.42	.901
Coop Stainbrook	5-0-0	1.29	.919
Max McCormick	6-4-0	3.01	.843

PLAYOFF ROSTER

#	Name	Pos	Gr
1	Max McCormick	G	12
5	Conor Andrle	F	11
7	Nate Breitenfeldt	F	11
8	Keegan O'Connor	F	11
9	Keegan Iverson	D	8
11	Duffy Fallon	F	10
12	Andrew Headrick	F	11
14	Grant Opperman	F	11
16	Thomas Lindstrom	F	10
17	Jack O'Connor	F	10
18	Derek Wiitala	D	9
20	Shayne Ciernia	D	12
21	Max Oppenheimer	F	12
22	Ben Tegtmeier	D	11
23	Matt Colford	F	10
24	Austin Rudnick	D	11
25	Ben Gleekel	F	10
26	Wesley Iverson	F	11
27	David Zosel	F	12
33	Joe Oesterle	D	11
37	Jack Kenney	G	11
38	Mitch Ritz	F	11
44	Trae Vaillant	D	11
55	Cooper Stainbrook	G	12

CAN THEY WIN?

Experienced senior leadership and impressive underclassmen will most likely advance Breck into the semifinals but the Mustangs will need a big game in goal from junior Jack Kenney to upset top-ranked St. Thomas Academy.

-- Michael Murakami

# BRECK Mustangs



Grant Opperman

By Michael Murakami

After a thrilling 4-3 victory over Orono in double overtime of the Section 2A championship, Breck heads into its eighth Class 1A tournament appearance in search of its third consecutive title.

“How ‘bout that?” Breck coach Les Larson said. “It’s an unbelievable dream to go there. Unless you’ve been there, you think you know what it’s like. It’s just the best thing in the world.”

Breck graduated 12 letter winners from last year’s state championship team forcing some to think this was a rebuilding year for the younger Mustangs.

“We had to work very hard,” Larson said. “We knew we had talented kids but we also knew that they were very young. The maturity level, age-wise, from last year to this year is just like a different level of hockey mentally.”

Larson dealt with lesser experienced players before with positive results.

“Last year wasn’t easy, either,” Larson said. “Everybody thinks you got all these guys returning from a state championship team. There are other challenges with a veteran club but these kids did everything that we asked them to. We kept getting better.

“We’re a lot better team now than we were at the start of the year. After these last two victories (in the Section 2A playoffs), they’re believers in the system and in the work ethic.”

The top five scorers for the Mustangs this year are all underclassmen – junior forwards Conor Andrle (19-43-62), Grant Opperman (25-34-59) and Wesley Iverson (28-20-48) as well as sophomores Thomas Lindstrom (22-28-50) and Matt Colford (14-32-46).

“It feels amazing,” Colford said about heading to the state tournament. “It’s the first time for a bunch of our guys on the team -- should be a great trip for all of us.”

## Defending champs!



ROAD TO THE X

Date	Opponent	Score
Nov. 30	Mahtomedi	8-0 W
Dec. 4	Red Wing	7-0 W
Dec. 7	Providence Academy	5-3 W
Dec. 18	St. Paul Academy	6-0 W
Dec. 23	St. Paul Johnson	7-0 W
Dec. 29	Hill-Murray (Schwan)	0-8 L
Dec. 30	Duluth East (Schwan)	2-5 L
Dec. 31	Wht Bear Lk (Schwan)	1-2 L
Jan. 4	at St. Paul Saints	14-1 W
Jan. 11	St. Cloud Cathedral	6-4 W
Jan. 13	at Minnehaha Acad	19-0 W
Jan. 17	Delbarton Acad (NJ)	2-3 L
Jan. 18	St. Paul Como Park	12-2 W
Jan. 22	at St. Thomas Acad	4-5 L
Jan. 25	at Totino-Grace	3-6 L
Jan. 27	at Blake	2-4 L
Jan. 29	St. Paul Saints	13-3 W
Feb. 1	at Providence Acad	6-1 W
Feb. 3	at St. Paul Johnson	8-4 W
Feb. 5	at Rochester Lourdes	3-5 L
Feb. 8	Minnehaha Acad	10-2 W
Feb. 10	at St. Paul Como Pk	13-0 W
Feb. 12	at Faribault	6-0 W
Feb. 15	at St. Paul Academy	4-1 W
Feb. 19	Blake	5-1 W

Section 2A playoffs

Feb. 25	Mound-Westonka	6-2 W
Mar. 1	Delano	5-4 W
Mar. 3	Orono	4-3 W



COACH'S CORNER

Breck must have known it was hiring someone special when Les Larson was given the head coaching position in 2008. In his three years at the helm Larson has led the Mustangs to a 76-13-1 record (as of March 3) as well as three state tournament appearances -- with Breck winning the Class 1A title the past two years. Talk about making a positive first impression.

Not all Mustangs will be participating in their first state tournament -- including senior forwards David Zosel (10-18-28) and Max Oppenheimer (8-14-22) -- but that doesn’t take away the glamour or determination for another title.

“It’s a dream come true,” Zosel said. “I’ve been there twice but this time it will be a little bit more special because this is my last shot at it.”

Not to be forgotten is the Breck defense that poses a threat at both ends of the ice.

Junior defensemen Austin Rudnick (12-19-31) and Ben Tegtmeier (5-14-19) lead a feisty Mustang blue line that also features eighth grader Keegan Iverson (11-12-23) who has a nose for hard hits and the scorer’s column.

One potential question mark for Breck is the goaltending. Three players have split time at the position.

The Mustangs seem to have placed their trust in junior netminder Jack Kenney who played all three games during the Section 2A playoffs. Kenney has a combined 9-4-0 record while allowing an average of 2.42 goals per game and boasting a .901 save percentage.

Despite their senior’s experience and impressive performance by underclassmen, Breck enters the 2011 state tournament as the No. 4 seed.

“We’re going to come in maybe as an underdog,” Larson said. “We’ve been there before, we know what it takes -- this is our third year in a row. We’re going to take one game at a time, we got almost a whole week to prepare so we’re very, very excited.

“There’s some teams in there that beat us this year that we’ll have a chance to play again so we’ll see if we improved and how much they improved. We’re very much so looking forward to it.”



**PROGRAM INFO**

**Nickname:** Eagles  
**Conference:** South Central  
**Section:** 3A  
**Record:** 21-4-2  
**State trips:** 1992, 2010, 11  
**Coach:** Erik Setterholm

**STAT LEADERS**

Scorers	G	A	Pts
Kaleb Juntunen	20	26	46
Brody Peterson	18	27	45
Adam Loose	10	18	28
Aaron Pfaff	17	11	28
Zach Hoffmann	9	16	25
Dyl Schreckenber	8	16	24
Jeff Banal	7	13	20
Blake Neumann	7	12	19
Shane Traulich	10	7	17
Brent Schiller	8	6	14
Drew Pfaff	5	8	13
Tyler Traulich	2	7	9
Tim Kehren	2	5	7
Judd Davis	1	2	3

Goalies	W-L-T	GA	SV
Blake Burgau	21-4-2	1.87	.920

**PLAYOFF ROSTER**

#	Name	Pos	Gr
1	Willie Osborne	G	11
2	Tim Kehren	D/F	11
3	Kaleb Juntunen	F	12
4	Conner Stark	D	11
5	Brody Peterson	F	11
6	Aaron DuChene	F	11
7	Troy Altmann	F	
8	Drew Pfaff	F	11
9	Aaron Pfaff	F	12
10	Jeff Banal	F	11
11	Zach Hoffmann	D	12
12	Adam Loose	F	12
13	Dylan Schreckenber	F	11
14	Blake Neumann	F	10
15	Brad Portner	D	12
16	Tyler Traulich	D	12
17	Judd Davis	F	9
18	Shane Traulich	D	12
19	Brent Schiller	F	12
33	Blake Burgau	G	12

**CAN THEY WIN?**

An underdog New Ulm team would need a near flawless performance, some lucky bounces and the game of goaltender Blake Burgau's life to KO the No. 1-ranked Cadets. Possible, but not likely.

-- Loren Nelson



Brody Peterson

By Loren Nelson

Last year New Ulm made the state tournament, then made ESPN's SportsCenter for all the wrong reasons.

The Eagles gained nationwide notoriety as Breck scored four goals in 52 seconds in the second period of the teams' Class 1A quarterfinal matchup. The Mustangs rolled to an 11-1 victory en route to their second straight state title.

"I expect a lot better," New Ulm coach Erik Setterholm said about his team's opening performance in this year's state tournament.

Unseeded New Ulm (23-4-2) again will be the heavy underdog when it opens with a 6 p.m. quarterfinal matchup against No. 1-seed and No. 1 ranked St. Thomas Academy (22-6-0) at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul.

"We are facing the same type of same scenario," Setterholm said. "But I'm not going to tell you I see us getting blown out like that again.

"I think we were a much better team than we were last year."

New Ulm beat Section 1A runner-up New Prague and tied Prior Lake, a Class 2A program, early in the regular season. The Eagles then won a holiday tournament in Rochester with an impressive 2-0 victory over Wisconsin powerhouse Eau Claire Memorial in the championship game.

New Ulm reached the state tournament with another shutout victory, this one by a 1-0 margin over Litchfield/Dassel-Cokato in the Section 3A title game.

"We've got a pretty good goaltender,



Junior forward Jeff Banal

and that is key to playing those kinds of games," Setterholm said about senior Blake Burgau. "He keeps us in a lot of games."

Burgau allowed just one goal in three section tournament games, posting a .033 goals-against average and .978 save percentage. His regular-season numbers (2.06 goals-against average, .916 save percentage) although not as spectacular, also were impressive.

The 6-foot Burgau is a big presence in the net and in the locker room. He also serves as a co-captain.

"And I don't like having a goaltender being a captain," Setterholm said. "In this case I couldn't not have him be a captain."

New Ulm's roster is dotted with players who return from that humbling loss to Breck. Setterholm recently replayed video of that loss, although his editing was selective. The Mustangs' amazing four-goal outburst didn't make the final cut.

"We didn't want to watch anything but the first period," Setterholm said. "We didn't hardly have a forecheck going in that game. We're going to have to try to get out and come after (St. Thomas Academy).

"We have to play it to win."

That's not a foreign concept for the Eagles. New Ulm's junior and seniors were highly successful at the youth levels, where they typically went deep in the playoffs before running into metro powerhouses such as Edina and Burnsville in regional play.

"Those are two teams we will never have to play," Setterholm said.

**ROAD TO THE X**

Date	Opponent	Score
Dec. 2	at New Prague	7-5 W
Dec. 4	at Prior Lake	2-2 T
Dec. 7	Fairmont	12-1 W
Dec. 9	at Marshall	5-2 W
Dec. 14	Hutchinson	1-0 W
Dec. 18	Delano/Rockford	2-8 L
Dec. 21	at LeSueur-Hend/StP	8-1 W
Dec. 28	Sioux FIs, SD (Kiwanis)	2-2 T
Dec. 29	Richfield (Kiwanis)	3-2 W
Dec. 30	EC Mem, WI (Kiwanis)	2-0 W
Jan. 4	at Dodge County	5-2 W
Jan. 6	Litchfield/D-C	4-1 W
Jan. 11	Austin	5-2 W
Jan. 14	Faribault	4-2 W
Jan. 18	at Fairmont	9-1 W
Jan. 22	at Litchfield/D-C	1-2 L
Jan. 25	at Chaska	6-7 L
Jan. 27	Rochester Lourdes	1-5 L
Feb. 3	Marshall	3-0 W
Feb. 7	at Waseca	5-0 W
Feb. 8	LeSueur-Hend/StP	5-3 W
Feb. 10	at Northfield	3-2 W
Feb. 14	at Windom Area	11-0 W
Feb. 17	Waseca	5-1 W

Section 3A playoffs	
Feb. 24	Fairmont 11-0 W
Feb. 26	Marshall 3-1 W
Mar. 4	Litchfield/D-C 1-0 W



**COACH'S CORNER**

Erik Setterholm has guided the Eagles to back-to-back state tournaments after an 18-year drought -- and played on the Eagles' first state team in 1992. After last year's quarterfinal loss to Breck, Setterholm should have a better handle on how to prepare his team for the wild momentum swings and goal-scoring rushes that are commonplace in state tournament games.





PROGRAM INFO

**Nickname:** Cadets  
**Conference:** Classic Suburban  
**Section:** 4A  
**Record:** 22-6-0  
**State trips:** 1999, 2005, 06  
Champs, 07, 08 Champs, 11  
**Coach:** Tom and Greg Vannelli

STAT LEADERS

Scorers	G	A	Pts
Zach Schroeder	24	33	57
A.J. Reid	24	32	56
Matt Kroska	25	24	49
Taylor Fleming	8	33	41
Peter Krieger	8	24	32
Eric Schurhamer	8	21	29
Andrew Commers	17	13	30
Alex Johnson	12	15	27

Goalies	W-L-T	GA	SV
David Zevnik	15-4-0	1.89	.911
Ian West	7-2-0	2.37	.876

PLAYOFF ROSTER

#	Name	Pos	Gr
1	Ian West	G	11
2	Matt Raiola	D	12
3	Gunnar Regan	D	10
4	Wyatt Schmidt	D	10
5	Eric Schurhamer	D	11
6	Tony Bretzman	D	10
7	Grant Sattler	D	11
8	Mike Ferriera	F	12
9	Zach Schroeder	F	12
10	Austin Sattler	F	10
11	Tom Abbott	F	11
12	John Gerhan	D	12
14	Henry Hart	F	10
15	Matt Kroska	F	12
16	Taylor Fleming	D	12
17	A.J. Reid	F	12
18	Adam Peterson	F	12
19	Alex Johnson	F	10
20	Peter Krieger	F	11
21	Andrew Commers	F	11
22	Grant Eichstadt	F	12
23	Matt Perry	F	10
30	David Zevnik	G	10

CAN THEY WIN?

Waiting two years to head to the state tournament may not seem long for some teams. For St. Thomas Academy it's an eternity. With continued standout performance from the top line and sophomore goaltender David Zevnik, St. Thomas Academy has a good chance to win its third Class A trophy in six years.

-- Michael Murakami

# ST. THOMAS ACADEMY

## Cadets



Grant Sattler

By Michael Murakami

After four-straight state tournament appearances spanning from 2005-2008 -- including two Class A championships in 2006 and 2008 -- St. Thomas Academy found itself in the midst of another streak.

A losing one.

Despite top rankings in Class 1A and the top seeding in Section 4A, the Cadets failed to reach the state tournament in 2009 and 2010.

St. Thomas Academy ended its two-year tournament drought on March 4 with a 5-3 victory over Totino-Grace.

"We're so relieved," St. Thomas Academy coach Greg Vannelli said after the championship game. "To be in the (section) final three years in a row and lose two of them, this is great."

For the past two years, the Cadets' season preview included the words "hungry" and "ravenous". Senior forward Zach Schroeder had a different phrase.

"We were dedicated to get back and I'm really excited," Schroeder said.

Though many thought St. Thomas Academy would suffer a drop back to the pack due to graduation losses, this year's upperclassmen have led a talented Cadets team to its fifth state tournament appearance in six years.

"I've been there once before and it's the greatest feeling in the world," St. Thomas Academy senior forward A.J. Reid said.

"I think we have a lot more confidence going into the games at the X."

Schroeder (24-33-57) centers the Cadets' top line featuring Reid (24-32-56) and fellow senior Matt Kroska (25-24-49) that fuels an electric offense including juniors Andrew Commers

(17-13-30) and Peter Krieger (8-24-32) as well as sophomore Alex Johnson (12-15-27).

St. Thomas Academy scored 135 goals during the regular season and added 18 goals in the section playoffs.

Defensive play for the Cadets has been headed by contributions at both ends of the ice from senior Taylor Fleming (8-33-41) and junior Eric Schurhamer (8-18-26).

One of the questions St. Thomas Academy had to answer during the 2010-2011 season was play in-between the pipes after the Cadets lost starting goaltender Kurt Altrichter (13-4-0, 2.45) and backup Zach Wynne (9-2-0, 1.84) to graduation.

Sophomore goaltender David Zevnik has provided an answer and stepped into the starting position, posting a record of 15-4-0 while allowing an average of 1.89 goals per game with a .911 save percentage.

The combination of talented upperclassmen and youth helped the Cadets to a 22-6-0 record while playing one of the team's toughest schedules in recent history.

St. Thomas Academy played 13 of its 25 games against Class 2A teams, going 8-5-0 in those matchups. The Cadets also played and defeated No. 3 seed Rochester Lourdes (6-5, OT) and No. 4 seed Breck (5-4) during the regular season.

As for the game plan heading into state, St. Thomas Academy isn't planning any surprises.

"(We're not going to) change anything," Vannelli said. "We've had a good year and hopefully we can continue.

"You just take it one shift, one period at a time. If it's meant to be, it's meant to be."



ROAD TO THE X

Date	Opponent	Score
Dec. 4	at Duluth Marshall	5-1 W
Dec. 7	Minnetonka	3-4 L
Dec. 14	Cretin-Derham Hall	5-4 W
Dec. 18	at Henry Sibley	5-0 W
Dec. 29	Minnetonka (Schwan)	4-5 L
Dec. 30	Wht Bear Lk (Schwan)	2-1 W
Dec. 31	Duluth East (Schwan)	2-4 L
Jan. 6	South St. Paul	4-2 W
Jan. 8	Mahtomedi	6-1 W
Jan. 13	Tartan	4-0 W
Jan. 15	Delbarton Acad (NJ)	2-1 W
Jan. 18	at Shattuck Prep	4-6 L
Jan. 20	at North St. Paul	7-1 W
Jan. 22	Breck	5-4 W
Jan. 27	at Hill-Murray	3-4 L
Jan. 29	Richfield	14-1 W
Feb. 1	Totino-Grace	6-0 W
Feb. 3	Henry Sibley	10-1 W
Feb. 5	at South St. Paul	5-0 W
Feb. 8	Rochester Lourdes	6-5 W
Feb. 10	at Mahtomedi	5-1 W
Feb. 12	at Tartan	8-4 W
Feb. 15	at Simley	11-1 W
Feb. 17	North St. Paul	7-1 W
Feb. 19	Hill-Murray	2-4 L

Section 4A playoffs		
Feb. 24	Simley	9-0 W
Mar. 1	Mahtomedi	4-0 W
Mar. 4	Totino-Grace	5-3 W



COACH'S CORNER

Tom and Greg Vannelli (pictured above) have had their ups and downs as head coaches at St. Thomas Academy. Low points were the past two years with top-ranked and top-seeded Cadets' teams that never made it out of Section 4A. However, since being hired in 2003, the Vannellis have led St. Thomas Academy to state tournament appearances in 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008 and now 2011 with the Cadets winning the Class 1A title in '06 and '08.





PROGRAM INFO

**Nickname:** Hawks  
**Conference:** Lake Superior  
**Section:** 5A  
**Record:** 23-3-2  
**State trips:** 1994, 98, 99, 2001, 06, 07 Champs, 10, 11  
**Coach:** Bruce Plante

STAT LEADERS

Scorers	G	A	Pts
Garrett Skrbich	39	29	68
Jared Thomas	28	37	65
Brian LeBlanc	7	22	29
Andrew Mattson	9	18	27
Jared Kolquist	6	18	24
Jake Zeleznikar	5	16	21
Bo Gronseth	12	8	20
Chris Benson	7	12	19
Jesse Dyson	7	5	12
Owen Stauber	3	8	11
Travis Koepeke	4	7	11
Billy Grillo	4	5	9
Jeremy Amys	3	4	7
Joe Hicks	1	5	6

Goalies	W-L-T	GA	SV
Connor Lucas	19-3-2	2.15	.908

PLAYOFF ROSTER

#	Name	Pos	Gr
4	Jake Zeleznikar	D	10
5	Bo Gronseth	F	10
6	Jake Knowles	D	12
7	Jeremy Amys	F	11
9	Andrew Mattson	F	11
10	Jared Thomas	F	11
13	Hazen Elmgren	F	12
14	Brian LeBlanc	D	11
16	Jared Kolquist	D	11
17	Garrett Skrbich	F	12
19	Billy Grillo	F	11
20	Chris Benson	F	10
21	Owen Stauber	D	11
22	Joe Hicks	F	12
23	Jesse Dyson	F	12
26	Mike Robertson	D	11
27	Travis Kopeke	F	10
29	Grant Sega	F	10
35	Matt Mensinger	G	11
36	Chad Illikainen	G	10
39	Connor Lucas	G	12

CAN THEY WIN?

The Hawks are one of the favorites, with the high-scoring duo of Garrett Skrbich and Jared Thomas, veteran defensemen such as Jared Kolquist and Brian LeBlanc and the surprise goaltending of Connor Lucas.

-- Tim Kolehmainen

# HERMANTOWN Hawks



Garrett Skrbich

By Tim Kolehmainen

While the rest of Hermantown was celebrating the Hawks' second-place finish in the Class A state tournament last March, a question kept nagging at longtime coach Bruce Plante.

"We were kind of wondering where we were going to get our players from (this year)," Plante jokingly recalled Monday.

Such is the life of a hockey coach.

Always plan ahead.

Never get caught unprepared.

Hermantown graduated 14 seniors from a squad that came one bad bounce away from winning a state title. The Hawks were deadlocked in a tie game with Breck in last year's championship game until with 1:40 remaining, a puck ricocheted off the Mustangs' Mike Morin and into the Hermantown net.

It was a bitter end for the talented Hawks, perhaps even more so when it appeared a rebuilding year was on the horizon. Just a handful of veterans returned this winter, forcing Plante to rely on junior varsity graduates and youngsters moving up from Bantams.

"We hoped we would just get better as we go and be a playoff team by the end of the year," Plante admitted.

Instead, the Hawks came out of the gates on fire.

Hermantown outscored Sauk Rapids-Rice and Two Harbors in its first two games by a combined 18-2 and never looked back. The Hawks were the state's last unbeaten team, going 15-0-1 before finally losing to Bemidji on Jan. 22.

It's been a great mix of youth and veterans such as forwards Garrett Skrbich (39-29-68) and Jared Thomas (28-37-65) and defensemen Brian

LeBlanc (7-22-29) and Jared Kolquist (6-18-24) that have led the way.

"We knew there would be questions," Skrbich said after the Hawks' 5-0 victory over Rogers in the Section 5A final. "Our veterans really stepped up and we knew they would."

Skrbich in particular has really responded. After playing third line center and second power play for part of last winter, he's just one goal shy of the school record (40 by B.J. Radovich in 2001).

"He's as good a senior as we've ever had," said Plante, high praise for a school that has produced plenty of talented players, including Adam Krause, a finalist for Mr. Hockey last winter.

Plante and the Hawks also got a huge lift with the play of senior goaltender Connor Lucas (19-3-2, 2.15, .908), who had played the last two years at the JV level.

"He's just been lights out," said Plante, who likes to point out that Lucas stands just 5-

foot-6 (on a good day) and has a pretty thin margin for error because of his size. "He's a very good athlete who plays football and baseball. He's also tactically good and fundamentally sound. He makes guys shoot first and keeps his patience."

LeBlanc and Kolquist are both in their third years as starters on the blue line, bringing stability and a veteran influence on youngsters Jake Knowles and Jake Zeleznikar. Plante calls his defensive corps his team's strength, but even he seems stunned by the success the Hawks' have experienced.

"This wasn't really expected," shrugged Plante. "I thought we'd have some growing pains. I just know that we're a better team than I thought we'd be."



ROAD TO THE X

Date	Opponent	Score
Dec. 3	Sauk Rapids-Rice	7-1 W
Dec. 7	at Two Harbors	11-1 W
Dec. 10	Hopkins	6-4 W
Dec. 14	at Superior (WI)	5-3 W
Dec. 18	Rogers	4-0 W
Dec. 21	at Virginia/MIB	5-2 W
Dec. 23	at Duluth Central	3-2 W
Dec. 28	Crookston (Tourney)	9-4 W
Dec. 29	Thief Rv Fls (Tourney)	2-2 T
Dec. 30	E Grnd Frks (Tourney)	4-3 W
Jan. 4	Duluth Marshall	7-2 W
Jan. 8	International Falls	3-1 W
Jan. 11	Grand Rapids	5-1 W
Jan. 14	at St. Cld Cathedral	6-4 W
Jan. 18	Superior (WI)	5-0 W
Jan. 20	Ashland (WI)	11-0 W
Jan. 22	at Bemidji	2-6 L
Jan. 25	at Proctor	5-1 W
Jan. 29	at New Prague	2-0 W
Feb. 1	at Eden Prairie	4-5 L
Feb. 3	Cloquet-E-C	5-7 L
Feb. 5	Monticello/A/ML	2-1 W
Feb. 8	Duluth Central	5-2 W
Feb. 12	at Red Wing	8-1 W
Feb. 18	at Hibbing/Chisholm	2-2 T

Section 5A playoffs

Feb. 24	Sauk Rapids-Rice	5-2 W
Feb. 26	St. Cloud Cathedral	7-1 W
Mar. 4	Rogers	5-0 W



COACH'S CORNER

Bruce Plante began his coaching career in Cloquet in the late 1960s and early 1970s at the Bantam A level, then was hired for the Hermantown varsity when it opened in 1983. After six years, he took a six-year hiatus to scout for the NHL's Minnesota North Stars before returning in 1995. Since his return, the Hawks have been to seven state tournaments, winning it all in 2007.





PROGRAM INFO

Nickname: Cardinals  
Conference: Central Lakes  
Section: 6A  
Record: 12-15-1  
State trips: 1992, 96, 2010, 11  
Coach: Scott Woods

STAT LEADERS

Scorers	G	A	Pts
Jordan Domine	17	15	32
Tom Schmidt	10	13	23
Scott Hennen	6	14	20
Jack Wensman	5	14	19
Nick Swanson	11	8	19
Garrett Skinner	5	11	16
Andrew Hittle	4	5	9
Brock Wood	4	3	7
Jacob Bigger	2	4	6
Jacob Smith	4	2	6
Bryce Miller	3	2	5
Zach Van Orsdel	2	3	5
Charlie Wensman	2	2	4

Goalies	W-L-T	GA	SV
Ben Allen	7-3-0	2.64	.911
Erich Murphy	2-6-1	4.59	.877
Dom Wysocki	3-6-0	3.06	.889

PLAYOFF ROSTER

#	Name	Pos	Gr
3	Bryce Miller	F	11
4	Logan Hochsprung	D	10
5	Jacob Bigger	F	12
7	Nick Swanson	F	12
8	Jack Wensman	F	10
11	Myles Bjelland	F	12
14	Scott Hennen	D	12
15	Andrew Hittle	D	12
19	Tom Schmidt	F	10
20	Jacob Smith	F	11
21	Brock Wood	F	11
22	Zach Van Orsdel	D	12
27	Jordan Domine	F	11
28	Jacob Hennessy	F	11
30	Domonic Wysocki	G	12
34	Chase Porter	F	10
35	Ben Allen	G	10
36	Charlie Wensman	D	11
37	Garrett Skinner	F	11
39	Jacob Rusch	F	12

CAN THEY WIN?

Make no mistake, Alexandria is a huge underdog as it was a No. 5-seed in Section 6A for a reason. That said, the defense and goalie Ben Allen are on fire, allowing just one goal in the last two games. That gives the Cardinals hope.

-- Tim Kolehmainen

# ALEXANDRIA

## Cardinals



Garrett Skinner

By Tim Kolehmainen

Scott Woods stayed patient. It wasn't easy, but the fourth-year Alexandria coach knew championships aren't won in December. He realized it might take time for his team to reload.

That's not to say his patience wasn't tested.

Through an early losing streak that sent the Cardinals -- the defending Section 6A champions -- into the holidays with a 2-5-0 record, Woods continued to tinker with line combinations. He searched for players on whom he could rely. He tried to find motivation for his players, many of whom weren't used to the losing.

"We have some skilled players, but we lost a lot of talent off that team last year," said Woods of the team that won 21 games and ended Little Falls' Section 6A domination last winter.

"A lot of guys realized they need to come out there and work really hard," said Woods of his team, which doesn't boast of any 20-goal scorers, Division I defensive recruits or 10-win goaltenders. "It took a long time to juggle things around and find line combinations."

Even as the regular season wound down, Woods wasn't sure he had turned the right keys and opened the right doors. The Cardinals didn't have a single multi-game winning streak against Minnesota high school teams and won only nine games in total. They were just a fifth-seed in the section playoffs and had to travel to No. 4 Fergus Falls in the quarterfinals.

That's when the pieces fell into place. Just like that.

Click.

"We surprised everybody a little bit,"

smiled Woods.

Did they ever. The Cardinals toppled Fergus Falls (4-3) in the opener, then received a boost when No. 1 Little Falls was upset by No. 9 St. Cloud Apollo. Alexandria took care of the Eagles (4-0) and edged third-seeded Willmar in the Section 6A final (2-1) on the first varsity goal by Jacob Hennessy.

"All year, we had so many close games and we just couldn't quite pull them out," said Woods. "We kind of found it at the end of the year."

Woods described the team's playoff effort as 51 minutes of grit and hard work, something that is reflected in the play of his veterans, such as third-year defenseman Scott Hennen (6-14-20) and second-year grinders Nick Swanson (11-8-19), Jordan Domine (17-15-32) and Zach Van Orsdel.

Sophomore goaltender Ben Allen (7-3-0, 2.64, .911) also came up big, starting all three playoff games and allowing just four goals. Allen, who played at the

Bantam level last winter, began the year behind two incumbent goalies, but has played his way into a starting -- and starring -- role.

"He's one of our hardest workers," said Woods. "He does all the extra things he needs to do to get better. As the year wore on, he wanted that spot."

Allen will be tested at state, as the Cardinals (12-15-1) drew No. 2 Hermantown in the quarterfinals at 11 a.m. Wednesday at the Xcel Energy Center. But even as the only sub-.500 team left in Class A, Alexandria wouldn't want to be anywhere else.

"You always have to believe you're going to win," said Woods. "But as much as you believe it, there's still that sense of awe that we're going to go back."



ROAD TO THE X

Date	Opponent	Score
Dec. 3	Prairie Centre	5-4 W
Dec. 7	at St. Cloud Cathedral	2-4 L
Dec. 9	Willmar	3-2 W
Dec. 14	at Brainerd	2-5 L
Dec. 16	Little Falls	2-3 L
Dec. 21	St. Cloud Apollo	1-3 L
Dec. 23	St. Cloud Tech	0-5 L
Dec. 28	Lk of Wds (Tourney)	4-3 W
Dec. 29	Mandn, ND (Tourney)	8-1 W
Dec. 30	Roseau (Tourney)	1-2 L
Jan. 4	Brainerd	3-5 L
Jan. 6	at Sartell-St. Stephen	3-6 L
Jan. 11	at Sauk Rapids-Rice	5-2 W
Jan. 13	Fergus Falls	4-4 T
Jan. 18	River Lakes	4-2 W
Jan. 20	at St. Cloud Tech	0-5 L
Jan. 25	at Willmar	2-4 L
Jan. 29	Bemidji	2-7 L
Feb. 3	at St. Cloud Apollo	4-3 W
Feb. 8	Sartell-St. Stephen	0-3 L
Feb. 10	Sauk Rapids-Rice	5-0 W
Feb. 11	at Little Falls	1-7 L
Feb. 14	at Fergus Falls	2-4 L
Feb. 17	at River Lakes	5-4 W
Feb. 18	Moorhead	0-8 L

Section 6A playoffs

Feb. 22	Fergus Falls	4-3 W
Feb. 26	St. Cloud Apollo	4-0 W
Mar. 3	Willmar	2-1 W



COACH'S CORNER

Scott Woods is in his fourth year as the head coach of the Cardinals and has led them to back-to-back state tournament appearances, doubling the school's total. Prior to his time in Alexandria, Woods coached six years at Wadena-Deer Creek, bringing the Wolverines to their only state tournament appearance in school history in 2004. In 10 seasons overall, Woods has a 173-86-13 record.





PROGRAM INFO

**Nickname:** Bluejackets  
**Conference:** Iron Range  
**Section:** 7A  
**Record:** 17-9-2  
**State trips:** 1952 Champs, 67, 70, 73 Champs, 74, 82, 84, 85, 86, 94, 2003, 04, 11  
**Coach:** Mark DeCenzo

STAT LEADERS

Scorers	G	A	Pts
Adam Johnson	38	42	80
Nick DeCenzo	23	55	78
Joe Anderson	20	30	50
Mike Pechovnik	10	28	38
Jake Doherty	10	20	30
Cole Schafer	4	13	17
Derek Abrahamson	8	5	13
Billy Wherland	4	7	11
Josh Bestul	5	6	11
Eric Gooden	4	6	10
Dylan Pechovnik	0	7	7
Tom Newbauer	2	5	7

Goalies	W-L-T	GA	SV
Nathan Tromp	12-9-2	2.60	.907
Tyler Rajkovich	5-0-0	2.63	.897

PLAYOFF ROSTER

#	Name	Pos	Gr
1	Nathan Tromp	G	12
3	Dylan Pechovnik	F/D	9
4	Ryan Hoag	F	
5	Derek Abrahamson	F	10
6	Nick DeCenzo	F	12
7	Adam Johnson	F	10
8	Eric Gooden	F	9
9	Cole Schafer	F	10
12	Billy Wherland	F	10
13	Taylor Persson	F	
15	Mke Pechovnik	F	11
16	Tom Newbauer	F	11
17	Ian Kritz	D	12
18	Max Butler	D	
19	Austin Rohwer	D	11
23	Josh Bestul	D	10
24	Sage Hopke	F	
26	Cole Maki	F	10
27	Joe Anderson	D	11
29	Tyler Rajkovich	G	12
35	Tyler Carlson	G	

CAN THEY WIN?

The Bluejackets will need to get plenty of scoring out of its top line, which hasn't been a problem this season. Adam Johnson, Nick DeCenzo and Joe Anderson have combined for 81 goals and 208 points. That has to continue.  
-- Tim Kolehmainen

# HIBBING/CHISHOLM

## Bluejackets



Adam Johnson

By Tim Kolehmainen

It's an experience to sit back and watch Adam Johnson wheel and wind his way through a defense. It's easy to marvel at the crisp passing and smart play of Nick DeCenzo. It's inspiring to watch the toughness and hard work of Joe Anderson.

Hibbing/Chisholm's top line just might be most prolific offensive unit in the state, with both Johnson (38-42-80) and DeCenzo (23-55-78) among the top-10 scorers and Anderson (20-30-50) not that far behind.

The only problem is the show should be only for fans to enjoy. On too many occasions earlier this year, the Bluejackets (17-9-2) found themselves doing exactly the same.

Watching that trio produce.

Counting on them to produce.

No, needing them to produce.

"Any team has those kind of kids," downplayed longtime Hibbing/Chisholm coach Mark DeCenzo. "But I think that's part of the reason we had a bump in the road is that we relied too heavily on them."

A late-January swoon in which the Bluejackets lost four of five had Hibbing wondering if this might not be the year to break their unfortunate playoff streak. The program has played in nine straight Section 7A finals and had lost the last six in a row (three to Virginia, two to Hermantown and one to Duluth Marshall).

Yet DeCenzo found comfort in the Bluejackets' final regular season game, a 2-2 tie against powerful Hermantown. He began to see the team take charge of its own destiny – and not just watch that top line.

"Now we're starting to get some more from other kids who grow and mature," said DeCenzo. "If we rely on

them too much, we're going to be in trouble. We need the goalie to play well, our D to play well and all three lines to play well."

Hibbing/Chisholm got all three elements in an impressive run through the Section 7A tournament, in which they totally stymied Silver Bay (9-0 on Feb. 24), Duluth Central (5-1 on Feb. 26) and rival Virginia/Mt. Iron-Buhl (5-0 on Mar. 2), the team that knocked the Bluejackets out in the previous two section title games.

"It feels great because we came here two years in a row and we just didn't have it," senior goaltender Nate Tromp said after the game. "Then in the third year we came out and gave it everything we had and got it."

Tromp was magnificent in the playoff run and leads the state with a .983 save percentage in the postseason (57 saves on 58 shots in three games). Defensively, Mike Pechovnik (10-28-38) is an anchor who is often overlooked, but scored double-digit goals and plays a stout defensive game.

"He's a solid kid who doesn't get much credit," agreed DeCenzo.

The top line did score 10 of the team's 19 section playoff goals, but there were additional contributions from up and down the lineup, as Jake Doherty (10-20-30) and Josh Bestul added big efforts.

"I like this group of kids," said DeCenzo. "If we play well, we do the things we're doing, we have the ability to skate with anybody. The last few games of the year, we started to get back on track.

"Now we need to stay on the tracks and don't get derailed."



ROAD TO THE X

Date	Opponent	Score
Nov. 26	Little Falls	1-6 L
Nov. 27	at Mound-Westonka	4-1 W
Nov. 30	International Falls	3-2 W
Dec. 3	at Minnetonka	2-3 L
Dec. 4	at Chisago Lakes	8-3 W
Dec. 10	Warroad	3-1 W
Dec. 11	Roseau	8-7 W
Dec. 16	Duluth Marshall	3-3 T
Dec. 20	at Two Harbors	11-1 W
Dec. 22	at Greenway	9-0 W
Dec. 28	Mahtmedi (Tourney)	9-3 W
Dec. 29	Spr Lk Pk (Tourney)	7-4 W
Dec. 30	Lakeville N (Tourney)	2-6 L
Jan. 7	at Rochester Mayo	6-5 W
Jan. 8	at Albert Lea	9-2 W
Jan. 11	at Cloquet-E-C	3-4 L
Jan. 15	Virginia/MIB	4-3 W
Jan. 18	at Duluth Central	2-4 L
Jan. 21	at Grand Rapids	0-2 L
Jan. 31	at Proctor	1-4 L
Feb. 3	at International Falls	7-0 W
Feb. 8	Grand Rapids	1-5 L
Feb. 11	Eveleth-Gilbert	10-1 W
Feb. 15	at Virginia/MIB	0-4 L
Feb. 18	Hermantown	2-2 T

Section 7A playoffs		
Feb. 24	Silver Bay	9-0 W
Feb. 26	Duluth Central	5-1 W
Mar. 2	Virginia/MIB	5-0 W



COACH'S CORNER

Mark DeCenzo has been coaching in Hibbing for 30 years at some level, shortly after finishing his playing career at Michigan State University (1974-78). It's been a good run, as he's led the team to several state berths -- as well as nine straight Section 7A finals. In 1997, DeCenzo was recognized by the Minnesota Hockey Coaches Association as its John Mariucci award winner (Class AA coach of the year).





PROGRAM INFO

**Nickname:** Prowlers  
**Conference:** Mariucci  
**Section:** 8A  
**Record:** 19-8-1  
**State trips:** 1945, 51, 52, 54 Champs, 55, 56 Champs, 59, 60, 65, 2006, 11  
**Coach:** Tim Bergland

STAT LEADERS

Scorers	G	A	Pts
Micah Ranum	21	21	42
Ryan Crosson	9	27	36
Brady Meunier	9	14	23
Chris Forney	9	14	23
Beezer Skime	14	8	22
Evan Ose	10	8	18
Derek Kayser	4	14	18
Riley Soderstrom	10	7	17
Austin Odberg	3	14	17

Goalies	W-L-T	GA	SV
Tanner Holmes	3-0-0	1.66	.898
Josh Koop	9-4-0	2.25	.895
Jon Narverud	7-4-1	2.23	.897

PLAYOFF ROSTER

#	Name	Pos	Gr
2	Andrew Lansing	D	11
3	Matt Audette	D	12
4	Derek Kayser	D	12
6	Drew Erickson	D	12
7	Logan Kennedy	F	12
8	Chris Forney	F	10
9	Brady Meunier	F	12
10	Evan Ose	F	11
11	Hans Harder	F	10
14	Riley Soderstrom	F	11
15	Austin Odberg	F	11
16	Kael Fontaine	F	10
17	Logan Engelstad	F	10
19	Tanner Nessen	F	11
21	Micah Ranum	F	12
22	Matt Ortloff	F	12
23	Grady Pederson	D	10
26	Riley Olson	D	11
27	Connor Doherty	F	11
29	Beezer Skime	F	12
30	Tanner Holmes	G	9
31	Josh Koop	G	12
35	Jon Narverud	G	11
66	Ryan Crosson	D	12

CAN THEY WIN?

The Prowlers finally broke Warroad's playoff hold on them to get to state, but don't expect them to be happy just to get to the X. Thief River Falls isn't star-studded, but can pitch a solid all-around team effort.

-- Tim Kolehmainen

# THIEF RIVER FALLS

## Prowlers



Austin Odberg

by Tim Kolehmainen

There has been an unofficial catalog of accomplishments for Micah Ranum this winter. Call it his high school hockey bucket list.

The Thief River Falls senior forward may not even be aware he's keeping tally, but his words belie that notion. After the second-seeded Prowlers upset Warroad in the Section 8A final Thursday night, 4-1 to advance to the state tournament for the first time since 2006, Ranum let it slip.

"We can celebrate for 12 hours, then we're right back at it," he said in anticipation of the Prowlers' state quarterfinal game at 8 p.m. Wednesday night against two-time defending champion Breck (20-8-0).

"That's the next check mark for us."

It's been a season of hitting goals and knocking down barriers for Ranum and Thief River Falls (19-8-1).

The biggest to this point was getting out of their own back yard. The Prowlers have played Warroad in the section playoffs in each of the last 10 years – and until Thursday night, had lost all but one of them.

"It's been a lot of close calls," said coach Tim Bergland, who is in his fourth year at the helm of the Prowlers. Bergland is a former Thief River Falls star who went on to captain the University of Minnesota and play in the NHL with the Washington Capitals and Tampa Bay Lightning.



Senior forward Beezer Skime

Bergland has seen the Prowlers get agonizingly close to state (and was an assistant on the 2006 team that was the first state qualifier since 1965), only to fall shy to Warroad. It made Thursday's victory especially sweet.

While his players skated victory laps and saluted the standing room only crowd at the "Little Ralph," Bergland soaked up the atmosphere and enjoyed the town's joy.

He fully expects it to be the clichéd "last one out of Thief River Falls, turn out the lights" when the Prowlers play Breck on Wednesday in St. Paul.

So can Thief River Falls slay another giant?

"We're ready to go," said Bergland. "We'll just keep doing the same thing we've been doing and try to get better at it."

Ranum (21-21-42) is key as the team's most formidable offensive weapon. He's a physical player who isn't afraid to throw his weight round – the epitome of a "Northern hockey" player.

Senior Beezer Skime (14-8-22) and juniors Evan Ose (10-8-18) and Riley Soderstrom (10-7-17) are the team's other double-digit goal scorers and each had big efforts in the playoffs.

Junior Jon Narverud (7-4-1, 2.23, .897) has taken over the goaltending duties in the playoffs and responded by allowing just one goal in each of the three section victories.

He's on top of his game at the right time, although there is plenty of help from a rugged defensive corps that includes seniors Ryan Crosson (9-27-36), Matt Audette (1-13-14) and Derek Kayser (4-14-18).



ROAD TO THE X

Date	Opponent	Score
Nov. 30	at Roseau	3-1 W
Dec. 3	at Totino-Grace	2-3 L
Dec. 4	at Blake	1-5 L
Dec. 10	Tartan	4-2 W
Dec. 11	St. Paul Johnson	7-6 W
Dec. 16	at Bemidji	2-5 L
Dec. 18	International Falls	10-2 W
Dec. 21	Warroad	2-5 L
Dec. 28	Marcus, TX (Tourney)	9-1 W
Dec. 29	Hermantn (Tourney)	2-2 T
Dec. 30	Hutchinsn (Tourney)	5-0 W
Jan. 4	Kittson Central	17-1 W
Jan. 6	Moorhead	0-8 L
Jan. 11	Park Rapids Area	10-1 W
Jan. 13	Crookston	4-1 W
Jan. 20	at Warroad	2-1 W
Jan. 25	at East Grand Forks	4-1 W
Jan. 28	Duluth Central	5-1 W
Jan. 29	Duluth Marshall	2-4 L
Feb. 1	at Lake of the Woods	1-2 L
Feb. 4	at Crookston	4-1 W
Feb. 5	at Red Lake Falls	4-1 W
Feb. 8	Roseau	1-0 W
Feb. 15	East Grand Forks	3-2 W
Feb. 17	Bemidji	1-5 L

Section 8A playoffs

Feb. 25	Park Rapids Area	10-1 W
Feb. 28	Lake of the Woods	3-1 W
Mar. 3	Warroad	4-1 W



COACH'S CORNER

After beginning as an assistant coach at Thief River Falls in 2004, Tim Bergland has led the Prowlers for the past four years. Prior to coming back home to Thief River Falls, he coached in Fergus Falls from 1999-2004. The former Prowlers' star was a captain at the University of Minnesota from 1983-87 and played in the NHL for Washington (1987-92) and Tampa Bay (1992-95).