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## Class 2A Quarters: Spuds Coach Comes Full Circle



By [Heather Rule](#) - March 10, 2017

The spirit of the Spuds would not be smashed.

In a state hockey tournament that had already seen a bunch of upsets, any team with a seed number next to its name would be understandably worried. Moorhead was the lone seed that survived the

afternoon session in two days of quarterfinal action in the two classes at the boys' state hockey tournament in St. Paul.

Moorhead, the No. 3 seed in Class 2A, beat tournament mainstay Hill-Murray 4-2 Thursday with a goal-filled second period and tallies from four different players. They dazzled with plenty of top-shelf goals, including the sports definition of a back-breaker with 31.3 seconds left in the second period. Junior Jack Stetz was part of a short-handed, 2-on-1 chance and buried the puck.

That was all they needed.

The Spuds are no strangers to the state tournament; this marks the 15th appearance. Their coach, Jon Ammerman, is back again. This time though, he's behind the bench.

"My career here in a short time has kind of come full circle," Ammerman said.

*They dazzled with plenty of top-shelf goals, including the sports definition of a back-breaker with 31.3 seconds left in the second period.*

With so much tradition behind the state hockey tournament, it's not hard to find connections. The hockey world can turn into a small world very quickly. Former players coaching hockey, players with relatives playing for the NHL, a whole family tree of well-known hockey players. There's always some kind of connection. After all, this is the state of hockey.

Take Ammerman, a 29-year-old head coach in his fourth season with the Spuds. Coaches might come through the tournament recalling their own state tourney memories as a player, but often for a different school than the one they're coaching.

Ammerman is still a Spud.

He had the chance to play at the Xcel Energy Center with Moorhead in the state tournament. He went on to play hockey for St. Cloud State.

"My phone is going crazy right now with guys that I played with and kind of reminiscing about our opportunity to play," Ammerman said.

He's led his team to 10 straight victories, including six shutouts, completely shutting out opponents in their three Section 8 games. They're also unbeaten in the past 19 games, with a couple ties thrown in.

*After all, this is the state of hockey.*

There's one thing missing for the Spuds: A state title. They've finished as the runner-up six times, most recently in 2009.

### **No. 1 seed Eden Prairie mounts comeback**

In a rematch of last year's Class 2A championship, top-seeded Eden Prairie faced Wayzata, a team that came into the tournament with just 10 wins on the season.

This looked like another upset brewing. Wayzata held a 1-0 lead until late in the third period, when Noah Deraney tied the game 1-1 with 6:29 remaining in regulation, setting up a possible overtime finish for the other top seed (Hermantown won in OT in Class 1A.). Instead, the Eagles finished it off with a goal from Nic Leivermann with only 1:22 left on the clock. The empty-netter made it a 3-1 victory.

A star for Wayzata's team, goaltender Reid Waszczenko, made 35 saves.

### **Goals and more goals for Grand Rapids, Maple Grove**

In the most goal-filled game so far, No. 5 seed pulled off the small upset of 4-seed Maple Grove by a 6-4 margin. It was the Crimson that went up 2-0 in the first period. That's when Grand Rapids turned on the jets and pumped in five unanswered goals including four in the second period. Blake McLaughlin scored two for the Thunderhawks. They also scored two on the power play.

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## HEATHER RULE



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