


CE STAR TRIBUNE \*\*\*\*\* SATURDAY, MARCH 12, 2022

SPORTS

**PREPS**  
BOYS' HOCKEY STATE TOURNAMENT

CLASS 2A SEMIFINALS ANDOVER 4, HILL-MURRAY 2

# Andover upends top seed



Andover forward Gavyn Thoreson celebrated his third-period, empty-net goal in the Huskies' victory over Hill-Murray on Friday at Xcel Energy Center.

**Gavyn Thoreson scored twice as an encore to OT goal in the quarterfinals.**

By DAVID LA VAGUE  
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Andover's Gavyn Thoreson isn't an easy teammate to always love. "I hate the kid but at the same time I love him," Huskies defenseman Weston Knox said. "He's always the kid under your skin, but what he does on the ice is just amazing."

Thoreson, who scored in double overtime to beat Mouthoun on Thursday, tallied two goals, including an empty-net goal to seal the 4-2 semifinal upset of No. 1 seed Hill-Murray (2:46-5).

Andover showed veteran poise in the program's first state tournament semifinal. No. 2 seed Andover (24-5-4) faces No. 3 seed Maple Grove in the Class 2A state championship game at 7 p.m. Saturday.

In the first period, Thoreson picked up his team-leading 27th goal of the season. And for the second consecutive tournament game, the Pioneers faced an early deficit. Caden Sampson evened things up in the second period.

"The Huskies regained a 2-1 lead on Logan Corvick's goal," Thoreson said. "With 10 seconds remaining in the second period, Thoreson found teammate Caden Casey, a Star Tribune all-metro first-team selection, for a 3-1 lead."

Hill-Murray's McHockey finalist Dylan Godbout closed the gap with a goal at 2:54 of the third period. But Thoreson later hit the empty net.

"We didn't play our game in the first period," Pioneers coach Bill Lechner said. "We were prepared, but we didn't play together. Sometimes the best play is working with your teammates."

**FRIDAY'S RECAP**

**THREE STARS**

**1. Joshua Giuliani, Maple Grove:** The top-line senior scored his third hat trick of the season, giving him five goals for the tournament. He also defended Prior Lake's Alex Bump, who had scored five goals Thursday but got one Friday.

**2. Ty Hanson, Hermantown:** The junior defenseman scored what he'd call the winning goal against Alexandria's No. 15th goal this season helped earn him the team's MVP award, a kids bible helmet.

**3. Matt Haal, Warroad:** The senior scored the overtime winner to send his team to the Class 1A title game. He has 23 goals and 44 assists this season.

**BY THE NUMBERS**

**11** Class 1A championship game appearances by Hermantown. The Hawks won three titles, none since 2017.

**6** Losses for Mahomet in the state semifinals, including five in overtime. Mahomet is 1-4 in semifinals in its 13 state tournament trips.

**3** Maple Grove's even-strength goals, special team goals, number of goals by Joshua Giuliani. The Crimson went 2 for 3 on the power play and scored a shorthanded goal.

**ATTENDANCE**  
Wednesday day: 6,485  
Wed. night: 16,593  
Thursday day: 19,641  
Thurs. night: 18,446  
Friday day: 9,178  
Friday night: 20,520

**SCHEDULE**

**CLASS 1A**  
Thursday: 6:45 p.m. Mahomet vs. Warroad (TV: 12)  
Friday: 6:45 p.m. Alexandria vs. Warroad (TV: 12)  
Saturday: 6:45 p.m. Warroad vs. Hermantown (TV: 12)

**CLASS 2A**  
Friday: 7 p.m. Andover vs. Hill-Murray (TV: 12)  
Saturday: 7 p.m. Maple Grove vs. Andover (TV: 12)

**CLASS 1A SEMIFINALS**  
Warroad 5, Mahomet 4 (OT)  
Hermantown 7, Alexandria 1

**CLASS 2A SEMIFINALS**  
Maple Grove 6, Prior Lake 2

# Maple Grove rolls to its first title game

By HEATHER RULE  
Special to the Star Tribune

Maple Grove advanced to its first state championship game with a 6-2 victory over unseeded Prior Lake. Senior Joshua Giuliani put the Crimson (24-6-1) up 3-0 early in the first period and completed a hat trick by the second intermission in Friday's first Class 2A boys' hockey state tournament semifinal at Xcel Energy Center.

Maple Grove coach Todd Berglund said his team's defense played well, and so did the power play (2:46-3).

"Across the board, I think that was one of our most complete games all year," Berglund said.

Maple Grove used its physical play to not only score six goals but also shut down Prior Lake's Alex Bump. He scored one goal Friday after pumping in five in the quarterfinals. Giuliani was the main contributor to that defensive role for the Crimson, to go along with his hat trick.

"I love to play defense. I love to play offense," Giuliani said. "I like to do defense first."

Prior Lake DP 4D got within a goal in the first period, but Maple Grove's top line came through again. Finn Bruk grabbed a Labret turnover at center ice and went in for a shorthanded goal with 6:14 seconds left in the opening period for a 3-1 lead.

Prior Lake coach Joe Pedrazzi saw that as the backbreaker for his team. That, and the physical and fast play of Maple Grove.

"They snatched us pretty good tonight," he said. "We couldn't bounce back from it."

**Warroad's Hard does it all, with overtime winner to boot**

By HEATHER RULE  
Special to the Star Tribune

Warroad senior Matt Hard dishes the puck, wins battles and brings physicality, according to his teammate Dalton Gardner. Hard also brought something else in Friday's first Class 1A semifinal: an overtime winner.

His 23rd goal of the season came 2 minutes, 21 seconds into overtime, helping Warroad defeat Mahomet 4-1 in the boys' hockey state tournament at Xcel Energy Center.

"I just kept it low," Hard said. "I think it bounced off his glove and went in."

His power-play goal broke a tie that had been in place since about midway through the second period of the back-and-forth game.

It was 2-2 after one period, until third-seeded Mahomet (27-2-3) grabbed a 4-2 lead by the 35-minute mark of the second period when Brent Gulachyn and Charlie Drage each scored his second goal of the game.

"We were reeling a little bit," Warroad coach Jay Hancock said. "I just told them we had to relax and play hockey, just keep going to the net, keep shooting the puck."

With plenty of time left, the top line for second-seeded Warroad (26-3-2) went to work. First, Gardner finished off his second hat trick in as many games with a power-play goal. Then Jayson Shangaby tied it up with a solo effort goal, taking the initial shot from his knees before burying his rebound. Shangaby also had three assists.

"It was a game of highs and lows, for both teams," Mahomet coach Jeff Poeschl said. "I guess that's what makes it such a great game."

**Hermantown emphatically prevents history from repeating**

By DAVID LA VAGUE  
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Falling behind a little more than two minutes into Friday's semifinal against Alexandria was Hermantown's desired start.

The Hawks' marks recognized for a remarkable finish. They scored seven unanswered goals and transformed a one-goal deficit into a 7-1 running-time romp.

"I thought we played a pretty complete game after the first five minutes," Hawks coach Patrick Andrews said. "They punched us in the mouth, and I loved how we responded."

Tyler Kluff scored just 2 minutes, 9 seconds into the game, and for a moment the 2018 Cardinals' semifinal upset of Hermantown came to mind.

Good thing the Hawks aren't history majors. No. 1 seed Hermantown (28-2) returns to its 11th state title game. The Hawks face Warroad at noon Saturday.

"It's going to be a good one," said senior forward Dominic Thomas, who scored the final goal Friday. "We have the Hanson and Frantz, and they have Shangaby and Gardner. So, we'll see what happens. Who's better team has more depth will hopefully pull ahead."

Hermantown's depth shined against No. 5 Alexandria (28-5-2). Seven players scored.

Josh Knappien tied the game at 9:44, followed by power-play goals from Ty Hanson and Kade Kobanick.

The Hawks did not relent. Gavin Biondabb, Matt Pante and Dallas Visser made the lead 6-1 after the second period. Shots on goal through two periods were 34-3.

"We have tremendous confidence in our depth," Andrews said. "They've always come through for us, and we needed them to come through today."