

HIGH SCHOOLS

Warroad stops Orono in second OT, reaches 1A boys hockey final

Erick Comstock's goal only 16 seconds into the period kept the Warriors undefeated.

By Heather Rule, Special to the Star Tribune | MARCH 10, 2023 — 5:28PM

Senior defenseman Erick Comstock was at center ice just after the second overtime period started, and his teammate Jayson Shaugabay had the puck. Decision time: Does Comstock break for the Orono net? Absolutely.

"I saw Jayson looking, like he usually does with his great vision," Comstock said. "And then I said, 'Yup, I think he can find me.'

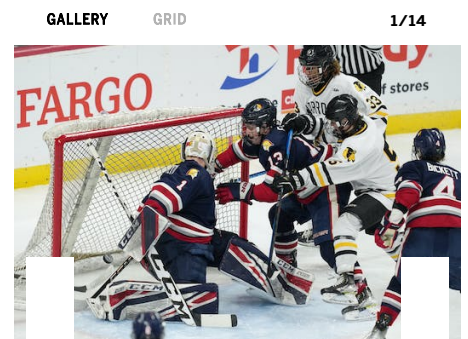
"I just went straight to the net, and he did."

Comstock accepted the cross-ice pass and sent the puck into the net 16 seconds into the period, giving top seed Warroad a 4-3 victory over fourth seed Orono in Friday's Class 1A semifinals of the boys hockey state tournament at Xcel Energy Center.

Warroad (28-0-1) remained unbeaten and preserved its chance to compete for its first state title since 2005. But it was close. Orono (24-6-0) tied the score 3-3 on goals from Avery Anderson and Brooks Fegers during a 1:57 span in the middle of the third period.

In the latter stages of the game, Comstock kept saying "want to win" on the bench. It was fitting, coach Jay Hardwick said, that Comstock scored the winner and kept the second overtime "short and sweet."

"I think that intermission definitely helped Warroad," Orono coach Sean Fish said. "I think their top guys were definitely gassed, and our guys were rolling and feeling pretty good."



ANTHONY SOUFFLE, STAR TRIBUNE
Gallery: Orono goaltender Brock Peyton (1) looks back after Warroad forward Peyton Sunderland (33) scored in the first period of a MSHSL Class 1A state