

# Mason City may have edge on Olympic ice

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**WATERLOO** — Away from home ice, the Mason City Hockey Club may find itself with a road advantage other clubs don't have.

This weekend's state hockey tournament will be played at the Young Ice Arena, which has an Olympic-sized rink. Young is bigger than most of the ice sheets in the Iowa High School Hockey League.

The Mohawks have built a reputation as a speedy, skilled team that can roll with three good lines. So how will they fare with more room to move?

"It's a lot of fun," said Cole Despenas. "You think you would get tired on the big ice, but when your adrenaline is

pumping you don't get tired that much."

A guess is that Mason City's speed and depth will show through. Covering more ice will wear out teams with less depth.

Slow teams will be busy playing catch up.

State tourney games are physical.

But teams trying to play too physical might hit themselves right out of the title hunt.

"It will be physical," Hicks said. "I'm sure they will try to come out and smack us around. We can play physical, too. But if they go out of their way to be physical, we'll just skate the puck around the outside."

If that happens, Mason City might skate all the way to a state title.