



SARAH SCHULTZ/The Globe Gazette

Mason City Hockey Club goaltender Tyler Brown dives to stop the puck as Kansas City's Jermarcus Best (97) and Jesse Hart (55) move in. The Mohawks won the semifinal matchup, 8-2, Saturday to advance to today's state title game.

SCORING BARRAGE

Mohawks tag Junior Blades for 8 goals, advance to title game

By KIRK HARDCASTLE
Of The Globe Gazette

DES MOINES — What will the Mason City Hockey Club do for an encore today?

Mason City, which scored six goals in its opening round win over Waterloo, routed the Kansas City Junior Blades, 8-2, on Saturday in the semifinals of the Iowa High School Hockey League tournament.

"I always knew that we had a good offense," said Mason City's Gilberto Solivan, who had two goals and an assist against the Junior Blades. "Now it's just starting to come together."

Third-seeded Mason City received a hat trick and an assist from leading scorer Cole Despenas, two goals and an assist from Mike Murtaugh and three assists from Alex Maginnis.

And that was all with second-leading scorer Carter Angell sitting out because of a game misconduct in Friday's opener against Waterloo.



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Mason City's Mike Murtaugh approaches the net as he scores the Mohawks' fifth goal against Kansas City in a semifinal matchup at the state hockey tournament Saturday.

"We've proved it the last two nights that we can score goals," Despenas

said. "When we get three lines clicking like that, nothing can stop us."

Mason City coach Mark Hicks, whose team faces the top-seeded Des Moines Capitals in today's title game, said his team wasn't even clicking on all cylinders on Saturday.

"I thought we didn't have our best stuff (Saturday)," Mason City coach Mark Hicks said. "The ice was bad, and we were kind of playing sloppy. But we didn't panic, and we buried some chances."

Mason City was outshot in the first period, 13-11, but made the most of its opportunities to take a 3-1 lead. The Mohawks received goals from Brad Bissig and a pair from Despenas.

The second period was all Mason City as the Mohawks scored three more goals on 10 shots to push their lead to 6-1. The Junior Stars managed five shots but no goals.

Mason City scored two insurance goals in the final period to push the final margin of victory to six goals. Hicks said the eight goals in the semifinals surprised him.

"You'd expect more of a tighter checking game," he said of the Junior Blades, who upset second-seeded Omaha on Friday, "but we get some

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Mason City wins with balanced scoring, defense

Mohawks

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odd-man rushes, we have guys that can put the puck in the net."

While five of the eight goals were scored by Despenas and Murtaugh (two of the team's top three scorers), Hicks said other Mohawks played at a high level, as well.

"Gilberto Solivan played the best game of anyone in the tournament," the coach said. "I think he was just unbelievable. He's doing a great job, and it helps out when you get those guys going."

"Brad Bissig, Gilberto Solivan and Spencer Neuberger were key. They're just work horses and give our guys a chance to win."

Another key was the play of Mohawk goalie

Tyler Brown, who stopped 22 of 24 Junior Blade shots.

"They (the Junior Blades) had some shots early on where they could have been up by a goal or two," Hicks said. "He saved us."

And the eight goals helped as well.

MASON CITY 8, KANSAS CITY 2

Kansas City 1 0 1 — 2
Mason City 3 3 2 — 8

SCORING

FIRST PERIOD
MC — Brad Bissig (Gilberto Solivan), 6:41. MC — Cole Despenas (Zach

Buss), 13:16. MC — Despenas (Buss), 13:52. KC — Jake Oiah (Bryan Beaman), 14:58.

SECOND PERIOD

MC — Solivan (Mike Murtaugh, Alex Maginnis), 4:51 (Power play). MC — Murtaugh (Maginnis), 11:07. MC — Murtaugh (Jarrod Lindsay), 14:58 (Short handed).

THIRD PERIOD

KC — Beaman (Tyler Featherstone), 6:25 (Power play). MC — Solivan (Despenas, Kyle Burgmeier), 10:58. MC — Despenas (Maginnis), 13:10 (Power play).

Shots on goal — Kansas City 13-5-6 — 24; Mason City 11-10-9 — 30.

Goalies — Kansas City, Nate Laster; Mason City, Tyler Brown.

Penalties—minutes — Kansas City 8-

16; Mason City 9-18.