

Metros tackle DM Oak Leafs in state hockey meet opener

By Jerry Giese

Journal sports writer

Brian Who?

During the regular season, the Sioux City Metros did a great job of controlling Brian Spring, one of the Iowa High School Hockey League's most prolific scorers.

Spring, a 5-foot-10, 170-pound forward from the Des Moines Oak Leafs, finished fourth in the IHSHL's scoring race with 59 points (33 goals, 26 assists). However, in three games against the defending state tournament champion Metros, Spring was limited to just one goal and three assists.

"We did a good job shutting him down in Des Moines," said Metros co-head coach Jeff Gray, whose team will take a 20-8-1 record and a No. 4 seed into today's 5:30 p.m. IHSHL state tournament match against the fifth-seeded Oak Leafs (20-10-0) at the Metro Sports Ice Arena in Urbandale.

The tournament starts at 1 p.m. when third-seeded Mason City (22-5-1) meets No. 6 seed Waterloo (12-15-2). Second-seeded Omaha (25-5-0) will follow with a 3:15 p.m. game against seventh-seeded Kansas City (12-15-3). Following the Metros-Oak Leafs game, the top-seeded Des Moines Capitals (25-5-0) meet eighth-seeded

Five Metros make West All-Star team

The Sioux City Metros have five hockey players selected to play for the West All-Star team that will face the East All-Stars on Saturday, March 6 in Kansas City.

Kevin Lohry, Beau Erickson, Alex Lukehart, Scott Marsh and Brett Swanson will represent the Metros in the All-Star game played during the Iowa High School Hockey League's junior varsity state tournament in Kansas City.

As coaches of the IHSHL's defending state champions, Metros co-head coaches Jeff Gray and Jim Peck will coach the West All-Stars.

In addition, Lohry and Erickson were first-team West all-state selections, which makes them eligible for the all-league team, where six forwards, two defensemen and one goalie were picked. It's the second straight year that both Lohry and Erickson made the all-state team.

Ames (10-16-1) at 7:45.

The Metros were 5-4 winners over the Oak Leafs in triple overtime in last year's state championship match in Waterloo.

This season, the Metros won two of three matches against the Oak Leafs, thanks in part to Spring's ineffectiveness. Still, Gray feels that Spring is a quality player. "He's their big gun," said Gray, who shares coaching duties with Jim Peck.

Not too far down the scoring list are Metros Kevin Lohry and Alex Lukehart, who rank sixth and seventh, respectively, with 56 and 53 points. Lukehart, who got his first career hat trick during Sunday's regular-season-ending 10-0 rout over Dubuque at the IBP Ice Center, has 21 goals and 32 assists.

Lohry, who added two goals against the IHSHL's last-place team, has 24 goals and 32 assists. Defenseman Scott Marsh is the team's only other player with double-digit goals at 16 and he also has 16 assists for 32 points.

Lohry will have a new partner on the Metros' front line, right wing Kyle Bennett. Bennett replaces Chad Corbett, who ruptured his spleen against Dubuque.

"That was kind of a freak injury," said Gray. "It messed up everything on our front line. So we'll move Kyle up front with Kevin and they've practiced fantastic all week. Kyle will mow people down and when Kevin has the puck, we more than likely will score."

An injury sustained against Dubuque to left wing Ben Kambach isn't as serious as the Metros' coaching staff once thought. Kambach chipped a bone in his wrist, but has practiced throughout the week.

The Metros' defense is also strong, led by defenseman Brett Swanson and goalkeeper Beau Erickson. In fact, during a 7-1 stretch that concluded the regular season, Sioux City allowed just one goal or less six times.