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For Immediate Release

High School Hockey Season Opens with Full Slate of Games

The Midwest High School Hockey League launches its 2016-17 season this weekend with all 12 teams playing inter-divisional contests. The six matchups face off against each other Saturday and Sunday: Des Moines Oak Leafs hosts Cedar Rapids, Omaha hosts Quad City, Waterloo is at Sioux City, Mason City hosts Lincoln, and Dubuque travels to Ames. The featured matchup will be the Des Moines Capitals at Kansas City. The Capitals were last year's regular-season Varsity champion, but were toppled by Kansas City in the championship game at the year-end tournament. Kansas City earned a sweep in the Jr. Varsity division winning both last year's regular-season and year-end tournament championships.

The Omaha Jr. Lancers were last season's representative at the USA Hockey sponsored High School National Championships in Ashburn, Virginia, where they advanced to the semifinals before being eliminated by a team from Colorado.

The League will see some major changes during the upcoming season. Jr. Varsity regular-season games will no longer end in a tie. At the end of regulation, tie games will be decided by a three-player shootout, followed by a one-player, sudden-death shootout if needed.

The three division champions will no longer be seeded first, second or third for the year-end tournaments. Each division champion is guaranteed a spot in the tournament, but will be ranked among the top eight according to points earned during the regular season.

The Varsity and Jr. Varsity year-end tournaments will share the same weekend in Ames, Iowa. The Varsity tournament will run from Friday, March 3 to Sunday, March 5, while the Jr. Varsity tournament will begin Thursday, March 2, and run through Saturday, March 4. The first day of quarterfinal games for both tournaments will now be single-elimination.

The 12-team Midwest High School Hockey League is divided into three divisions. Kansas City, Lincoln, Omaha and Sioux City in the West; Ames, Des Moines Capitals, Des Moines Oak Leafs and Mason City in the Central; and Cedar Rapids, Dubuque, Quad City and Waterloo in the East.

Each team plays division rivals four times and teams outside the division twice to make up a 28-game schedule. All teams compete at the Varsity and Jr. Varsity levels. The season ends with the Varsity Championship Tournament and Jr. Varsity Year-End Tournament at the Ames/ISU Ice Arena. Nearly 400 high school student athletes compete in the League that covers three states. This year marks the 41st year of the Midwest High School Hockey League, formerly known as the Iowa High School Hockey League.

The MHSHL is a member of the Pointstreak Scoring Network. For scores, standings and statistics go to: <http://www.midwesthighschoolhockey.com>