

# Sioux City Metros advance to MHSHL finals

## JOURNAL STAFF

AMES, Iowa — There have been four multi-overtime games contested on the first two days of the Midwest High School Hockey League Tournament and the Sioux City Metros have been involved in half.

It all began late Friday night when Connor Sand scored the game-winning goal in a 2-1 double-overtime win in first-round action against Waterloo. Saturday afternoon, Walter Werden scored the lone goal in a 1-0 semifinal win over the Des Moines Capitals.

Goals may have been hard to come by for the league's highest-scoring team (120 goals) at Ames/ISU Arena, but nevertheless, Coach Dave LeGree's Metros reached the MHSHL Tournament finals for the second consecutive year. Sioux City will take a 27-2-1 record into Sunday 11 a.m. game against third-seeded Mason City (20-8-2).

The Metros will be looking for the program's seventh title and first since 2003. Mason City avenged a

4-2 loss to Sioux City on Nov. 11 with a 2-1 overtime victory the next day at North Iowa Arena.

Prior to this weekend, Sioux City had played just two overtime games and one shootout. However, getting to the start of the game was nerve-racking enough.

Sioux City's first-round game against Waterloo was delayed for about 2 1/2 hours because of the Des Moines Oak Leafs' 5-4 two-overtime win over second-seeded Kansas City on Friday. Saturday, Mason City played the longest game of the varsity tournament, a 2-1 triple-overtime win over the seventh-seeded Oak Leafs.

Sioux City's win on Fri-



**Sand**



**Werden**



**B. Beller**

day, no matter how long it took, avenged last season's 2-1 loss to Waterloo in the MHSHL championship game.

Reece McDonald and Werden assisted on Sand's game-winner, a minute and 24 seconds into the second overtime. Sioux City had taken a 1-0 lead when the league's leading scorer, Drake Beller (26 goals, 43 assists), scored at the 9:11 mark of the second period on assists from James Page and Grant Newman.

Waterloo, which went 0-3 against the Metros this season, knotted the game on Tyler Starbeck's unassisted goal at the 7:07 mark of the third period.

Winning goaltender Blake Beller recorded 26

saves.

Beller registered his sixth shutout of the season Saturday afternoon, recording 26 saves.

Werden's game-winning goal, a minute and five seconds into overtime, was unassisted. Partnered on the blue line by four-year veteran Grant Newman, Werden and Newman are among 13 Metros who experienced last year's trip to the MHSHL championship game.

Sand and Drake Beller have each recorded four career goals in MHSHL Tournament play. They of course, are paired up with Page on a line that during the regular season, combined for 70 goals.

A win Sunday over Mason City would continue the program's progression at the tournament since LeGree, a former Sioux City Musketeers' goaltender, became the head coach four years ago. In his first season, the Metros took sixth and followed up by taking third the following season.