

Metros prepare for nat'l tourney

Sioux City at USA
high school meet
for first time

ANNOUNCE

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SIoux CITY — The Sioux City Metros are sending retiring coach Dave LeGree out in a blaze of glory.

Two weeks following a 7-2 win over Mason City in the championship game of the Midwest High School Hockey League Tournament, the Metros are participating in the USA Hockey High School National Championships for the first time in the program's history.

"We're the only team representing Iowa," said LeGree, whose squad will face the Mustangs of Florida at 9:30 Tuesday morning in the first of three Group F games at Plymouth Arena in Plymouth, Minn.

The Metros, who will play in a facility that has three rinks, will play a 3 p.m. game Friday against the Colorado Monarchs. Group F play concludes Saturday with a 1 p.m. game against the Newark Chief Generals.

"We applied for this tournament because it was so close," said LeGree. "We thought we'd have a good chance to qualify. Then we won the regular season championship and we were accepted. It means a lot. This is a big tournament where you play teams from other states."

"The first three games are preliminary games, then the following Sunday you play in the quarterfinal round, then the semifinals and the finals are the 28th. With that being said, we need to keep our eyes open. We can't afford to lose two games. You might slip in the finals with a 2-1 record."

LeGree is confident of the competition that the Metros faced while winning the MHSHL regular-season title for the first time ever will prepare them for the tournament. Since 2013, which

goal. Reece McDonald, who had eight goals and seven assists in the regular season, led the way with two goals, both coming in the title game win over Mason City.

Metros

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Connor Sand (13, 20) scored the game-winning goal, a minute and 24 seconds into the second overtime in a 2-1 first-round win over Waterloo. Walter Werden (4, 27) scored the game-winning goal, 65 seconds into the second overtime of a 1-0 semi-

final win over the Des Moines Capitals.

LeGree said before the tournament he had a feeling some squad members who weren't among the leading scorers would come through with offense at the Ames/ISU Arena. His prophecy came true as Taylor Frerichs (2 assists) scored the first goal in the championship game.

Chase Lewison (10, 11) also scored a goal at the MHSHL Tournament. Teammate and

goaltender Blake Beller (25-2-1, 1.45 goals-against-average) was named the tournament's most valuable player.

"Everybody stepped up at that tournament," said the Metros' regular-season scoring leader, Drake Beller (26, 43), who was held to just one goal after entering the event riding a six-game scoring streak where he had five goals and 15 assists.

"This was a championship tournament. Everybody knew what needed to be done. Everybody produced and it ended up working in our favor. (LeGree) told us at

practice it was a great season, but it's not over. We have to take it one at a time and hope we keep rolling. We won the regular season, we won state, but it's not over yet. If we won nationals, it would be a lot bigger. We're not done yet."

In each of LeGree's four years as head coach, the Metros made the MHSHL Tournament. It was a steady progression to the top, as the 2015 squad was sixth, followed by third, second and championship finishes.

Omaha will also represent the MHSHL at the tournament.



Beller



McDonald

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■ **Coaching Wednesday:** Coach LeGree further analyzes his team as they prepare for the USA Hockey High School National Championships.