

# City hockey teams face big weekend

Both the Mason City high school and North Iowa Huskies hockey clubs have a big weekend coming up.

## Mason City

The high school team will take its best regular-season record ever into the state tournament, set for today, Saturday and Sunday at Waterloo's McElroy Auditorium.

The Mohawks were 11-9 overall and 9-7 in Iowa High School Hockey League play, good for a third-place tie with Ames, Urbandale and West Des Moines Valley-Dowling.

Mason City's first-round opponent at 2 p.m. today is Ames. In regular-season action, Mason City posted 1-0 and 2-1 victories.

"I think if we win our first game, we have a good chance at the championship," said Mason City coach John Lloyd.

He said that despite knowing Des Moines Public, the regular-season champ, would be the Mohawks' likely second-round opponent at 8 p.m. Saturday should both schools win their openers.

"They (Des Moines) beat us twice but the thing is I know we won't have any trouble getting up for them," said Lloyd.

Ames "is a well balanced team, very young, but very fast. We'll be on a small rink, though, and if we hustle back and plug things up, we can beat them."

Lloyd said his club is injury free but "we're worried about sickness. We've had a number of players with colds and flu this week but none will be out Friday I hope. It's taken its toll in practice but today we had one of our best practices of the season."

The Mohawks are led by goaltender John Rosenfeld, one of the best in the league; David Despenas, team point leader with 20 on 13 goals and seven assists; Eric Held, with 19 points; and Dana Despenas, with 18 points.

Waterloo is the defending state tourney champ and finished second in the regular-season standings.

## Friday pairings

- Noon — Sioux City vs. Dubuque.
  - 2 p.m. — Mason City vs. Ames.
  - 4 p.m. — Urbandale vs. West Des Moines Valley-Dowling.
  - 6 p.m. — Waterloo Public vs. Waterloo Columbus.
  - 8 p.m. — Des Moines Public vs. Sioux City.
- Dubuque winner.

## On Tap This Weekend

but both 7:30 p.m. games are at home.

"Our team is looking good," he said. "This is a very important week. We're still shooting for fourth place and also for .500, which is realistic the way we've been playing."

North Iowa is 19-24 and has won five of its last seven games in the U.S. Hockey League. The Huskies are in a close three-way battle for fourth place overall in the USHL.

Heading into today, Des Moines is fourth with 44 points, Dubuque is fifth with 43 and the Huskies are sixth at 39. North Iowa will play either Dubuque or Des Moines in the playoffs.

Each has five games remaining before the playoffs, for which the home-ice advantage is determined by regular-season points.

North Iowa plays third-place Sioux City tonight, seventh-place Waterloo on Saturday, last-place Bloomington on the road Tuesday, league-leader St. Paul at home March 9 and Dubuque in an away game March 10.

Dubuque has to play St. Paul twice, and Bloomington, Des Moines and North Iowa once each. Des Moines plays second-place Austin twice, and Sioux City, Waterloo and Dubuque once apiece.

"The key this weekend is the first game," said Motzko. "We've beaten them (Sioux City) the last two times and I'm sure they'll come in here with blood in their eyes."

Cory Hervas and Tom Genz of North Iowa are tied for third in USHL scoring. Hervas has 40 goals and 37 assists for 77 points and Genz has 28 and 49 for 77. Sioux City's Mike Sparago also is third at 43-34-77.

## Connors honored

NEW YORK — Jimmy Connors, who won tournaments in Memphis and La Quinta, Calif., last month, was named Volvo Grand Prix player of the month for February on Thursday.