

Metros seeded second in state hockey tourney

AMES, Iowa — The Sioux City Metros, champions of the Iowa High School Hockey League's five-team Western Division, open play tonight in the 10-team IHSHL State Tournament, hosted by Ames.

The Metros, coached by Dave Davies and Dave LeGree, are assigned to the last of five games on a busy first-day agenda, taking the ice at 8 p.m. to face either Mason City or the Omaha Junior Lancers, opponents for today's initial contest at 10 a.m.

Mason City, 8-17-1, is seeded seventh, while the Junior Lancers, winless in 26 games, are seeded last.

The Metros enter tournament play with a 21-4-1 record and are seeded second behind Dubuque, the Eastern Division champion with a 22-3-1 record.

Sioux City split two regular season games with Dubuque, winning 7-1 on Jan. 26, then bowing 4-1 the following day in a weekend road trip to Dubuque.

Valley-Dowling of West Des Moines, which owns two wins over the Metros in four meetings, is the No. 3-seeded team with a 19-7-0 record.

Seeded fourth are the Omaha Gladiators, 18-8-0 with one win in four tries over Sioux City.

Although the league presumes to crown an Iowa high school hockey champion, the IHSHL also includes two teams from Omaha, one of them

the first-year Junior Lancers, along with St. Joseph, Mo., also added to the circuit this winter.

Valley-Dowling faces St. Joseph at 12:30 p.m. today, then the Omaha Gladiators meet Waterloo at 3 o'clock, followed by Ames vs. Urbandale.

The winner of tonight's game involving Sioux City would play again in semifinal action Saturday at 7 p.m., facing the Omaha Gladiators/Waterloo winner. The championship game is Sunday at 12:45 p.m.

T.J. Reinsch leads the Metros offensive with 37 goals and 33 assists. His 70 points rank second in the IHSHL, although league statistics are based on points per game, which relegates Reinsch to third in league scoring.

Similarly, the Metros' Chris Sorum is third in total points with 69 on 36 goals and 33 assists, but ranks fourth on the basis of points per game.

Sioux City's Daniel Davies (32-23-55) and Jesse Monell (16-35-52) also rank among the IHSHL's final regular season leaders, while goalies Jesse Basarich (10-2-0 with a 90.2 percent save percentage) and Jeff Brogan (10-2-1, 88.4 percent) rank third and fifth, respectively in goaltender statistics.

The Metros, who've never won the title, were runners-up in last year's tournament.