

HIGH SCHOOL HOCKEY

Capitals top Leafs to repeat as champs

SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER

Shawnee, Kan. — The Des Moines Capitals skated to excellence Sunday — for the second season in a row.

They closed out a 21-game winning streak with back-to-back Iowa High School Hockey League state titles in an all-Des Moines final.

The Capitals beat the rival Des Moines Oak Leafs, 4-2, in the championship game at the Ice Sports Arena in Shawnee, Kan.

"This team's been flawless," Capitals' coach Scott Krueger said. "The team's been running on autopilot. The coaches have not had to do much other than some tweaks here and there. The players did it all."

It marked the first time since 1984 two IHSHL teams from the Des Moines area finished as champion and runner-up.

"This is great for our association," Krueger said. "It's the same group of kids, just different jerseys."

Diligent defense led the Capitals (32-1-0-0) to their fourth win against the Oak Leafs this season.

The Capitals gained a 4-0 lead after two periods on goals from Johnston's Charlie Wigger, Dowling Catholic's Josh Henss, Valley's Derek Elliott and Roosevelt's Darren Helm.

They held the Oak Leafs to three shots on goal through two periods.

"We stressed defense," Krueger said. "They have two big scorers on their team."

Dowling Catholic's Brian Spring, one of the league's top points leaders, scored two goals in the third period for the Oak Leafs (24-7-1-1) to cut into the Capitals' lead.

Kansas City, one of three IHSHL teams not based in Iowa, hosted the state tournament.

Scoring by Periods

D.M. Capitals..... 1 3 0—4

D.M. Oak Leafs..... 0 0 2—2

First period—1. Capitals, Wigger (Andregg, Piper) 11:31. Penalties—France, O.L., interference 1:24; Carter, O.L., roughing 3:42; Falvey, C., roughing 3:42; Johnson, C., slashing 5:27; Ferguson, C., boarding 14:57.

Second period—2. Capitals, Henss (Cross) 5:12; 3. Capitals, Elliott (Holmes) 11:08; 4. Capitals, Helm (Henss, Holmes) 13:01. Penalties—Lawrence, C., holding 6:57; Erbes, O.L., holding 6:57; Johnson, O.L., hooking 14:48.

Third period—1. Oak Leafs, Spring (unassisted) 15 (SH); 2. Oak Leafs, Spring (Carter) 11:37 (PP). Penalties—Corbie, O.L., slashing 2:13; Johnson, C., hooking 10:47; McCormick, O.L., high sticking 14:39; Cross, C., roughing 14:39.

Shots on Goal

D.M. Capitals..... 9 13 17—39

D.M. Oak Leafs..... 2 1 11—14

Goalkeeping—Capitals: Erbsen (W, 14 shots, 12 saves); Oak Leafs: Thomas (L, 39 shots, 35 saves).