

Warriors fall in MHSHL finals

Kansas City breaks open scoreless game in third en route to 4-0 victory

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AMES—This year's Midwest High School Hockey League championship featured two teams that have dominated the tournament over the past 12 years.

The Waterloo Warriors (22-6-1-2) have captured four titles in that span with the latest coming in the 2019 season. The Kansas City Jets (24-3-2) had four titles as well, with back-to-back championships in 2015-16, and were reigning champions from last year.

Therefore, when the two powerhouses met Sunday in the tournament finals at the Iowa State Ice Arena the game was as tight as many would have expected.

After two scoreless periods, the Jets, however, early in the third

and pulled away to win their fifth title in eight years with a 4-0 shutout of the Warriors.

Mason Johnston scored what would prove to be the game winner on a breakaway 4 minutes and 24 seconds into the third.

"I think it came down to us surviving through the first two periods or so," said Warriors coach Brian Cook. "They are a very talented team and it was one of those games that whoever scored first was probably going to win. Unfortunately they got the first one on a break-away with their best player and gave them a lot of life.

"It wasn't really (Caleb) Raisty's fault. He played very well in goal and he just was caught after a turnover and Johnston won the battle."

The game pitted two of the leagues best net minders, with Raisty allowing just 14 goals in 11 starts and sported a league high .958 save percentage.

Jets goalie, Zach Broxterman

was second with 21 goals and a high .938 avg.

"We knew this was going to be a tough one, because they are so good," said Raisty. "I was just trying to keep my team in the game but they got a couple fast breaks there and it put us in a hole (2-0) and it went down hill from there. It didn't help not getting any goals, but their defense played hard."

The Warriors were trailing 1-0 with 10 minutes left, when the defense made another error and Hunter Swierczek took advantage, depositing and easy flip into the back of the net.

The back breaker came for the Warriors with 10:07 left when a two-on-one advantage for the Jets resulted in a quick give-and-go netter by William Biggar. Seconds later (33) an identical situation with an odd-man charge produced the same outcome and the Warriors went down 4-0.

"We tried to get the puck on goal, but their defense was great with their wingers," said senior Christian Heiser. "We couldn't get the puck by them and it just proved to be a tough one for us today. This definitely hurts a lot, because we all put everything we had into this season. It was by far my favorite season here. I just didn't like the way it ended."

Waterloo's offense had trouble all game trying to get set up on that end and when they could pull the trigger the shots generally went wide, with Broxterman not working very hard.

"It was very frustrating not getting any goals," said Raisty. "It shows we have a lot to work on yet and watching them celebrate at the end of the game started a fire burning in us. I wish we could start next year tomorrow. This will hurt a long time."

The Warriors will only lose a few players to graduation and if everyone else comes back, Cook

will be enjoying what he will have.

"We were just a few plays short today, but we will have a lot coming back next season," said Cook. "We will miss the senior leadership from guys like John Harrison. We will have all of our defensive guys back and that will be good. It is just sad for us to have come this far and not get it done."

Kansas City 4, Waterloo 0

SCORE BY PERIOD

Waterloo	0	0	0-0
Kansas City	0	0	4-4

FIRST PERIOD—No scoring. Penalties—none.

SECOND PERIOD—No scoring. Penalties—Brendan Shaner, Wat. (interference) 6:27, LT, Metcalf, Wat. (roughing) 10:12.

THIRD PERIOD—1 Kansas City, Mason Johnston (unassisted) 4:24, 2, Kansas City, Hunter Swierczek (Matt Buoniconti, Johnston) 10:07, 3, Kansas City, William Biggar (Ryan Graven) 10:40, 4, Kansas City, Justin Stetler (Carter Elbes, Carson Baker) 12:10. Penalties—Carter Frost, Wat. (head contact-misconduct) 10:40, Biggar, KC (unsportsmanlike) 10:40, Frost, Wat. (second misconduct) 10:40, Frost, Wat. (head contact) 10:40, Johnston, KC (roughing) 11:31, JP Smith, Wat. (roughing) 11:31, Cale Neuwendorf, Wat. (charging) 13:38, Neuwendorf, Wat. (misconduct) 13:38, Landon Sturch, Wat. (slashing) 15:08, Johnston, KC (hooking) 15:49.

SHOTS ON GOAL

Waterloo	5	8	9-22
Kansas City	14	13	13-40

Goalenders—Caleb Raisty, Waterloo, (36 saves), Zach Broxterman, Kansas City (22 saves).

Officials—Referee, Matt Larson and Aaron Mostram. Linesman, Grant Crowell and Edward Hill.