

PREP BOYS HOCKEY: Brookfield 4, Homestead 2

Brookfield takes control



By Aaron Carlson
Conley Media

MEQUON — A big second period made the difference Jan. 19 as Brookfield netted three goals at the Ozaukee Ice Center on the way to earning a 4-2 victory over Homestead in a Classic 8 Conference boys hockey game.

“Always good to win, right?” Brookfield assistant coach Tim Weiner said. “That other team, as every team will because we’re a really highly ranked squad right now, everyone’s going to bring their best game, and their goalie (Homestead senior Connor O’Brien) played excellent.”

He added that the Stars made some adjustments during the first intermission that paid dividends when the club returned to the ice.

“We made a couple little adjustments in the second period and it changes things up a little bit,” Weiner said. “We moved a couple guys around and I think that kind of switched things up. That got the guys motivated.”

Brookfield struck first a couple minutes into the second period. Preston Slater found himself in the perfect position in front of the net when an attempt by Colin Masek was stopped by O’Brien and deflected his way. The junior had an open angle from close range and put it in for his second goal of the season.

“Great hockey player, great skill,” Weiner said about the forward from Wauwatosa West. “We look to all of our guys to jump in and (we look) for a little scoring from everybody, and he stood up and came up big, and that’s what we need.”

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See STARS, PAGE 3

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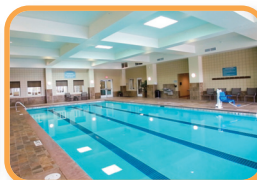
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Leading Freeman sports into new era

A little over six years ago, I introduced myself to the Waukesha Freeman audience as the new assistant sports editor under a little thing called “Viewpoint,” which was part of the “Sidelines” sidebar that once ran on the front of the sports section. In fact, it ran in the very space this column is now running.

Quite frankly, I had trouble filling out the allotted space. Talking about myself isn’t exactly my forte.

Well, a lot has changed since Oct. 16, 2017. High school standouts turned into professionals, Olympians and national and world champions. Dynasties were built. Coaches and athletes came and went. Then COVID-19 changed a lot of things, which included the end of “Sidelines” (sorry to those who miss “Game face”).

There was even a change at our sports editor position over two years ago.

Through all that, I did my best to properly cover what, in my mind, is the state’s most exciting county for high school sports. At times, that came with its challenges — there are a lot of outstanding athletes, teams and coaches in these parts, which makes for some crazy travel and very long days. But even in the busiest of times, I knew I was doing what I loved and took a lot of pride in doing it.

But I’m ready to take on my next challenge.

I am officially assuming the role of sports editor at The Freeman. I had been manning the role on an interim basis since late November, but after some consideration decided it was the right time to accept the position to help me grow professionally and maintain the high bar of sports coverage that we’ve set at this publication.

And that’s really what I want to highlight the most in this column, especially since there’s no need to reintroduce myself — and if there is, just look for my smiling face on 1A.



DAVE
RADCLIFFE

... being able to provide stories, images and keepsakes for people to cherish forever is extremely rewarding, and the passion, words of wisdom and thoughtfulness from our readers over the years hasn’t fallen on deaf ears.

Prep sports will remain the primary focus of The Freeman, just as it always has been. I take a lot of pride in our paper offering some of the best, if not the best, prep coverage in the state. That’s thanks to so many talented writers and photographers that have contributed to The Freeman over the years, and I look forward to continuing to work with them on a weekly basis, along with News Graphic sports editor Aaron Carlson in Cedarburg, Enterprise sports editor Mark Hutchinson in Oconomowoc and Daily News sports editor Tom Kahl in West Bend.

It’s truly an honor to follow in the footsteps of former sports editors like the late Lee Fensin, who was always so supportive after I joined The Freeman, as well as Daniel Mike, Pat Neumuth and Michael Grennell. Pat was the one who gave me my chance to join the Conley Media family, along with Freeman Publisher and Editor-in-Chief Bill Yorth, something for which I’ll be forever grateful.

I’m grateful in large part because of the relationships I’ve built with so many coaches, athletes, athletic directors and others over the years. When you see them reach their goals and achieve their dreams, you feel like you’re a teeny, tiny part of it — just being along for the ride and doing your best to portray their sto-

ries. I think those connections I’ve made within the Waukesha County community will only pay dividends as I start this new journey.

Of course, becoming the sports editor comes with its new responsibilities, and simply put, I won’t be out in the field as much as I used to be. That’s certainly a difficult pill to swallow, but I still plan to cover as many events as I can in the future and writing human interest stories while working in conjunction with The Freeman’s next assistant sports editor.

On that note, I’m excited to see who fills my shoes in that role and integrating them into this amazing community. Before I came to The Freeman, I knew that Waukesha County was highly-successful when it came to high school sports. But nothing could have prepared me for just how eye-opening it is, and that will be a pleasure for my predecessor to discover.

Having been in the newspaper business in some form or fashion for about a dozen years, I understand this can be a thankless profession at times and that mistakes are bound to happen. I know I’ve made my fair share, but it is always my intention to be as accurate as possible, while being sympathetic and transparent with our subscribers when there are questions or concerns about the sports section. And the best you can do is learn from your mistakes and apply those lessons in the future, just as we try to do in all facets of life. On the flip side, being able to provide stories, images and keepsakes for people to cherish forever is extremely rewarding, and the passion, words of wisdom and thoughtfulness from our readers over the years hasn’t fallen on deaf ears.

So thank you for bearing with me as I settle into this exciting new opportunity. There are so many people in this company and community that make it a joy to work for The Freeman, and I can’t wait to see what’s next.



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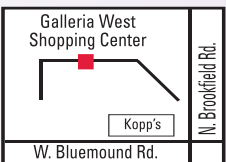
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Stars

From Page 1

The Stars wasted little time adding to their lead. Just 56 seconds later, two-man action from Cooper Simon and Parker Dysart yielded another goal. Simon, a sophomore who leads the club with 35 assists and 47 points, slid the puck to Dysart, who lit the lamp for the fifth time this season.

“Fantastic play,” Weiner said. “Cooper’s a great hockey player, great setup man, and probably one of the best passers, maybe in the state. He had the puck, put a nice move on a guy, probably could have shot but put it right across the net and put it right on the stick and (Dysart) made the goal.”

Jack Templeton netted a goal later in the period, tucking in a try inside the far post with just over four minutes left in the frame. Adam Sexton and Drew Sparacino assisted the score.

“Templeton is one of the hardest workers on the team. He’s a grinder,” Weiner said bout the Wauwatosa East sophomore, who is second on the Stars with 15 goals. “He’ll grind and he’s got great skill. As you could see, on that last goal he was probably a foot out and put it up in the corner, up over the goalie’s shoulder. I don’t know how he did it.”

Homestead finally got on the board in the closing minute of the middle frame, when sophomore Bryc Borys put the biscuit in the basket with 30 seconds remaining to trim the home side’s deficit to 3-1.

The Highlanders would edge closer in the third period. After coming up empty on a pair of power play opportunities, the home side broke through for a goal by Chris Auchter with 3:03 left.

However, the home team would get no closer. The Highlanders pulled the goalie with about 90 seconds left and Sexton struck for an empty net goal with 18.8 seconds remaining for a big insurance goal to wrap up the scoring.

Sexton wrapped up the scoring, but nearly got it started. The opening period featured little in the way of drama or dangerous scoring chances, save for one sequence late in the frame that gave the Stars a golden opportunity to take the lead.

Brookfield, which largely attacked from out near the blue line for much of the first 17 minutes, closed in on O’Brien with roughly three minutes left in the stanza. After a scrum developed in front of the net with players from both sides jostling for position and jabbing at the puck, the home team got too aggressive in an effort to clean things up when a skater covered the puck resulting in a penalty shot for the Stars.

However, Sexton was unsuccessful in his bid to give the visitors the lead. It was uncharacteristic for the junior to come up empty, but he collected his team-best 18th goal in the closing seconds.

“When you go in on a penalty shot, you look at the goalie. If the goalie’s out, you can move on him, if the goalie’s back, you shoot,” Weiner said. “He’s one of our best shooters. He came in, he looked, the goalie was out. He had the goal. The goalie had already slid across.

“The goalie just stuck his stick out,” the coach added. “He just got the tip of his stick on the puck.”

Brookfield, now 14-2 overall and 8-0 in the Classic Eight, will be back on the ice today at 12:30 p.m. when the team travels to the Blue Line Ice Center to take on Fond du Lac Springs.



Stars left wing Cooper Simon attempts to get a shot off against the Homestead defense early in the second period.



Stars junior center Adam Sexton finds himself alone mid-ice as he brings the puck up ice during a shift change.

Photos by Mark Justesen/Conley Media



Senior Colin Masek of the Stars moves in on Homestead defenseman Caden Barnhill during the game against the Highlanders.



Sophomore goalie Brady Ferrell of the Stars makes a save late in the first period in the game against Homestead.

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PREP WRESTLING: Brookfield East 41, Brookfield Central 39

Knecht for the win: Spartans rally past BC



Russ Pulvermacher/Special to The Freeman
Brookfield East's Ethan Knecht (144 pounds) uses a cradle on Brookfield Central's Jaxon Mueller during a Greater Metro Conference dual meet Jan. 25 in Brookfield.



Russ Pulvermacher/Special to The Freeman
Brookfield Central's Jackson McGurn (215 pounds) rolls Brookfield East's Mason Augustynowicz during a Greater Metro Conference dual meet Jan. 25 in Brookfield.

Pin in final match gives East victory

By Michael Grennell
Freeman Correspondent

BROOKFIELD — Jan. 28, 2016.
On that night, the Brookfield Central wrestling team pulled out a 34-33 victory over crosstown rival Brookfield East in the final match of the dual.

Since then, the Spartans have won each of the last seven rivalry classics.

On Jan. 25 — nearly eight years to the day since their last dual victory over East — the Lancers were on the verge of snapping the streak, as they carried a 39-35 lead into the final bout of the night at Brookfield East.

Central sophomore Jaxon Mueller found himself trailing East junior Ethan Knecht 4-0 entering the final round of the 144-pound match. Mueller appeared to be on the verge of eking out a loss by decision — which would have still given the Lancers the dual victory. But with 31 seconds remaining in regulation, Knecht found his opening and brought Mueller down to the mat for the pin and the win, as the Spartans escaped with a 41-39 triumph in front of a roaring home crowd.

“Wow. That was amazing. That was the battle for North Avenue. Unbelievable back and forth,” East coach Mike Rakowiecki said. “I have great respect for (Brookfield Central) coach Keith Day and his staff. Keith is a good friend. We’ve been talking about this one for weeks, and it happened. And it came down to where it came down to. They’ve got Carson (Bruce), he’s a great, great wrestler; and so many more. Just ups and downs, and Ethan Knecht — wrestled a lot of JV last year and was hungry and it happened.”

“Hasn’t really sunk in yet, but it feels nice having the win against crosstown rivals,” Knecht added. “I just kind of saw an opening and took it.”

The dual started out on a high note for Central as junior Carson Bruce (150 pounds) opened with a pin in 3:40 before senior Julian Sanchez (157) — making his return to the mat after being in concussion protocol — notched a pin 38 seconds into overtime against East sophomore Ben Botsch.

“That match, man, he’s a good wrestler. I can admit that. I knew he was a good wrestler going into the match, and I was prepared and ready,” Sanchez said. “It’s

my first match back in a long time. I’ve seen him wrestle — I knew what he was good at, I knew what he wasn’t good at, and I tried to capitalize on all those things. And at the end of the day it was just my passion for the team and passion for the sport that pulled that match out with six points and the pin.”

Lancers sophomore Henrik Kellog (165) tallied another win by pin in 1:22 before East finally got on the scoreboard with a pin in 19 seconds by senior Jonny Botsch (175). That pin was followed up by another Spartans’ pin at 190 pounds, as sophomore Lincoln Goldsmith needed 3:44 to dispatch Central sophomore Noah Lightbody.

Central freshman Jackson McGurn (215) earned a win by 9-6 decision, and then a forfeit win at 285 pounds by freshman Turner Doering would put the Lancers up 27-12. But the Spartans quickly made up that ground, as freshman Colin Seifert (106) earned a 15-0 technical fall and then a forfeit win for freshman Evan Knechtges at 113 pounds would close the gap to 27-23.

Back-to-back pins by junior Noah Mentjes (120) and senior Mason Bartels (126) would put Central up 39-23 with three matches remaining. But East would take control from there, as senior Tristan Viljevac (132) pinned junior Cody Mentjes in 1:45 and junior Daniel Sayas (138) pinned freshman Tyler Roberson in 3:19 before Knecht’s heroics sent the Spartans home winners of the crosstown classic once again.

“We needed a pin to win. Back and forth, just two guys trying to seal the deal for their team and Ethan found a way,” Rakowiecki said. “Ethan found a way. He dug down, and he found it and he earned it.”

For the Lancers, it was yet another disappointing loss to the Spartans — albeit a very close one with many positive take-aways.

“I think a lot of our guys stepped it up. We put a lot of JV kids out, they fought for the team, they saved us some points. I think there was a match that could have gone our way but didn’t, and I think that was what ultimately decided the meet,” Day said. “But I’m proud of how we competed. We haven’t had a close match like this with East in eight or nine years, so we’re moving in the right direction.”

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