

Recap of Waupun Holiday Classic

December 28 - 29, 2017

This year, the Waupun Holiday Classic tournament once again produced some very exciting hockey. Pool play began on Thursday. Pool A included Beaver Dam, DePere, and Evanston, IL. The first game in the pool featured Beaver Dam vs DePere and was the first game of the tournament. This proved to be an exciting start to the Classic.

Beaver Dam was hot right from the start. 3:59 in the game, Sam VanderHoeven made a nice move around the defense and placed a perfect shot over the shoulder of DePere goalie Brody Van Den Heuvel. Near the end of the period, DePere was placed at a further disadvantage when a player received a 5 minute Boarding penalty. By the end of the first period, Van Den Heuvel totaled 9 saves while Beaver Dam Goalie Marshall Goodrich controlled all 10 shots.

Beaver Dam came out in the beginning of the the second just like the first. 2:25 into the first, Beaver Dam scored their second goal again by VanderHoeven. DePere really turned up the pressure and was finally able to find the back of the net at 8:34 of the second period. Grant Tritabaugh picked up a rebound from Eggers Murphy's shot and zipped it past a diving Goodrich. Both teams battled through the rest of the second period without another goal. Goodrich saved 18 of the 19 shots he faced while Van Den Heuvel saved 9 of the 10 shots he faced.

DePere worked hard to try and tie the game up in the 3rd period. With a 1:10 left in the 3rd, DePere pulled Van Den Heuvel in favor of the 6th attacker. Beaver Dam's defense stepped it up and played well. The period ended with Goodrich stopping all 15 shots fired at him and ending up with 43 saves for the game. Van Den Heuvel stopped all 7 he faced in the third ending up with 25 saves for the game.

The second game of Pool A featured DePere vs Evanston, IL. This was Evanston's first time playing in the Waupun Winter Classic replacing Dubuque, IA. DePere's Head Coach Joe Coppo shared before the game started he did a little checking around about Evanston since they had not played in Wisconsin. This "scouting" paid off. DePere came out fast and hard attacking Evanston's defense. The Voyagers were not taking any chances on having a close game. DePere scored their first goal at 11:26 in the first period when Daniel Wagner intercepted a pass in the neutral zone and drove right to the Wildkits net putting it past Evanston goalie Grant Wolner. The Voyagers when on the attack right away and scored a second goal 30 seconds later with Michael Thoresen receiving a nice pass from Connor Keast and hammering the puck into the back of the net. Caelen Markusen was in net for the Voyagers stopping all 6 WildKit shots while Wolner stopped 12 other DePere shots.

DePere continued to be aggressive in the 2nd period. Despite the penalty advantage for Evanston, the Wildkits were unable to put quality shots on net getting just 4 shots off in the period. The Voyagers on the other hand was going to make sure they didn't let Evanston in the game. DePere scored twice more in the 2nd period. At 12:56, the same combination of Thoresen from Keast put a third puck past Wolner to give DePere a 3-0 lead after 2. Markusen ended the period with 4 more saves while Wolner saved 10.

DePere was not finished scoring and protecting their lead. In the third period just 1:46 in, Matej Soukup picked up a turn over in the Wildkits defensive zone and drove hard to the net. With a

few stick handling moves, Soukup put the puck in the back of the cage with Wolner out of position. The Voyagers led 4-0 through the halfway point of the third when they scored their 5th goal. Thoresen earned his hat trick after receiving a tough saucer pass from Dylan Schulander at 7:08. About 2 minutes later, the Wildkits were able to finally put the puck in the net with a hard slapshot by Isaiah Harlan-Ricketts near the blue line of the DePere zone. Ricketts received a long stretch pass from Gabriel Rodriguez deep in his zone at 9:52 in the 3rd period to make the score 5-1. Ricketts was able to score a second goal on almost an identical play taking a hard slapshot with a pass from Charles Rodriguez at 10:26 in the 3rd period. It looked like Evanston was going to mount a comeback, when DePere adjusted their strategy and went back on the attack.

The game ended with DePere taking a 5-2 victory. Wolner stopped 33 of the DePere shots while Markusen stopped 18 for the game in net for the Voyagers. Coach Coppo commented that his team has been up and down all season and played flat against Beaver Dam but came out on fire and sharp against Evanston. "It was critical we started out fast and then made sure to shut down Ricketts who was Evanston's stud player according to some contacts I have in Illinois" said Coach Coppo.

The final game of the pool was Beaver Dam vs Evanston. On paper and based on the previous results, Beaver Dam was heavily favored to win this game and advance to the Championship game. But this is why they play the game. Evanston started out right out of the gate. Just 44 seconds into the game Isaiah Harlan-Ricketts took a stretch pass from Gabriel Rodriguez and drove hard to the net where Marshall Goodrich was waiting. Ricketts fired a shot from the bottom of the circles right under the glove of the full right goalie Goodrich. Although a little stunned, Beaver Dam was able to gather themselves and put on an attack of their own. Jay Kirschbaum picked up the loose puck in the neutral zone and deked his way past Garrett Wolner to put the puck in the net with 3:19 off the clock in the first period. And this all the scoring that took place in the first. Goodrich was able to stop 5 Wildkit shots while Wolner stopped 11.

Beaver Dam came out in the second period fast. They attacked Wolner and the Wildkits defensive zone for most of the period putting 13 shots at Wolner. However the Golden Beavers were unable to get one passed Wolner. The Wildkits made a few attacks on Goodrich who was able to turn most of the pressure away. Then at 14:19 elapsed in the 2nd period, Ricketts once again was able to snipe a shot over the shoulder of Goodrich after receiving a nice stretch pass from Kofi Hopps. The period ended with Evanston having its first lead of the tournament heading to the locker room with a 2-1 lead over the Beavers. Wolner stopped all 13 shots while Goodrich was able to stop 7 of the 8 shots.

Both teams came out in the third ready to win the game. Both teams moved the puck up and down the ice getting off an occasional shot on goal. Both goalies and their defenses held strong. Evanston fought off a penalty for about 30 seconds around 6 minutes into the period. Beaver Dam made it a 4 on 4 by having a penalty of their own 30 seconds later. Neither team was able to capitalize on the mistakes. The same situation arose around the halfway point of the period. Again Evanston went to the box first. For a 1:30 Beaver Dam tried to even up the score, when another penalty occurred for the Beavers. This time Evanston capitalized on the man advantage. Gabriel Rodriguez tipped a back door shot into the net after a pass from Andrew Cousineau went to Andrew Ebler who took a shot and the rebound went to Rodriguez.

Evanston now needed to hold on to the 2 goalie lead with 5:34 left in the game. Beaver Dam push the puck in the defensive zone and held it for most of the remainder of the game. With 2:10 left in the game, Beaver Dam pulled Goodrich for the 6th attacker. Evanston was able to grab control of the puck with 1:19 left in the period when Isaiah Ricketts scored an empty net goal and earning a hat trick for the game. Evanston held on for the rest of game winning 4-1. Wolner saved all 14 shots in the 3rd period while Goodrich stopped 8 shots.

The issue with Pool A was all teams were 1-1. This meant head to head tiebreaker criteria was out the window and came down to the 2nd criteria which was greatest number of periods won. In the 2 games played by each team, DePere and Evanston each won 2 of their 6 periods played while Beaver Dam won only 1 period outright. With Beaver Dam eliminated from the tie break, this left head to head with DePere and Evanston. DePere had beaten Evanston and therefore was advancing to the Championship game, Evanston would play for 3rd, and Beaver Dam would play for 5th.

Pool B summary

Pool B kicked off with a match up of the tournament host and recently named Honorable Mention in the Coaches poll against #10 ranked Marquette. And the game lived up to the billing. Both teams went after each other right from the start. Both teams had good chances to score, but Zach Schmitt in goal for Marquette and Caleb Sauer for Waupun battle hard in the crease stopping high quality opportunities. Waupun continued to earn untimely penalties in this contest with 4 penalties. In this case, it played into their favor. With 3:04 left in the 1st period with Waupun in penalty kill mode, Waupun's Baron Buchholz forced a turnover in the Hilltoppers defensive zone. Caleb Baxter came rushing in to pick up the puck, went straight to the net and was able to sneak it past Schmitt's blocker shoulder. Baxter with a short handed goal near the end of the first was the first score of the game. Both Schmidt and Sauer stopped 10 shots in the first period.

The second period once again was a heavily contested period. Both teams had opportunities to score with no luck. It was a rather clean period as penalties go with Marquette actually having 1 extra penalty than the Warriors. Waupun outshot the Hilltoppers 10 to 4 in the period with both goalies stopping all shots.

Waupun started the 3rd period with the 1-0 lead and was looking to add to it. Marquette was hoping to hold and score to at least get even if not take the lead. Once again the teams went back and forth. Both teams had odd man rushes several times in the period with both Schmidt and Sauer holding up to the pressure. And then with 3:57 seconds left in the third with Waupun on the Power Play, Marquette returned the favor given earlier in the 1st period. Charles Langenfeld was able to break up a crossing passe during the power play and tip it to William Sweeney. Sweeney was all alone near the blue line when he took it to the net and flipped a back hand shot over Sauer who was sprawled on the ice. The tie last for the remainder of the period forcing overtime.

In over time, the Hilltoppers dominated. Waupun ended up with a penalty 2:00 minutes into the overtime and then earned another penalty a minute later. The Hilltoppers worked the 5-3 very well keeping the Warrior penalty killers on the ice. Waupun was able to kill off both penalties but the players were unable to change. Just as the penalty ended, the exhausted Warriors got caught standing around the crease screening Sauer from a mid slot wrister by Ryan Hensien

who received passes from Langenfeld and Tyler Reineck that trickled into the net through his five hole. Marquette wins with 2:00 minutes remaining in OT.

The second game for Pool B was Marquette vs Waunakee. The first period went scoreless as both teams were trying to feel each other out. Marquette appeared to be a little tired after the first game of the game while Waunakee was hitting the ice for the first time.

Waunakee came out at the start of the 2nd period and put the puck in the net within the first minute to take the lead 1-0 over Marquette. That seemed to be the spark Marquette needed as they answered with 4 straight goals of their own for the rest of the game winning 4-1 and going 2 - 0 in Pool B guaranteeing a spot in the Championship game.

The third game of Pool B featured Waunakee vs the tournament host Waupun: the battle of the Warriors. Waupun started the game out slow while Waunakee came out on fire. Waupun seemed a little flat from the overtime [loss.as](#) well as little tired. At 5:51 in the 1st period, Waunakee used the fire they had coming out at the start of the game to put the biscuit in the back of the net. Waupun was on the penalty kill when, Tyler Hoffman found Mason Ihrke on the backdoor who one timed the puck past Waupun goalie Caleb Sauer. This was the first of 5 penalties for Waupun in the first period. Fortunately, Waupun was able to survive this slow start and get into the locker room down 1 - 0 to Waunakee. Sauer had 6 saves while Waunakee goalie Hunter Beck stopped all 8 shots.

The 2nd period was a complete flip. Waupun came out of the locker room ready to show the team they really are. The first period ended with Waunakee on a 5-3 for 30 seconds . The second period continued the 5 - 3 for 20 seconds and power play for another 1:30. Waupun was able to kill this off with only one shot on goal. As has been the case all season for Waupun, they shifted their game into high gear half way through the 2nd period. Waupun scored their first goal at 8:32 in the second period. Cameron Beek made a strong stick check taking the puck away from Waunakee at the blue line. He was able to take possession and drive hard to the net. At the same time Baron Buchholz jumped into the play in the mid slot. Beek made a drop pass to Buchholz who hammered a slap shot passed Beck. Less than a minute and a half later, the exact same situation developed with a Beek stealing the puck at the blue line, turned on the jets, and drove to the net. This time he kept the puck and put a backhand shot past Waunakee goalie Hunter Beck to put the Waupun up 2 -1.

The penalty bug bit Waunakee in the 2nd period and Waupun was all over it. Waupun went on the power play with 6:10 left on the clock. 20 seconds later the Waupun power play was able to put the puck into the back of the net. Carter Flegner hammered a slapshot toward the net after receiving a pass out of the corner from Colin Holtz. Beck was screened well by Carson Schramm as the puck whizzed past him. Less than a minute later, Waupun was back on the power play. And they took advantage. This time Colin Holtz and Cameron Beek were working a cycle out of the corner when Beek spotted Carter Schramm all by himself on the back door of Beck. Beek made a perfect pass which Schramm one timed into the net at 14:32 of the second period putting Waupun up 4 - 1. The period ended with the same score.

At the beginning of the 3rd, Waupun put its 4th line out to start to gain some valuable experience. And experience they did gain. 55 seconds into the period, Waupun had the puck in their offensive zone, when the puck was turned over. Waunakee capitalized on the mistake and had a 3 on 1 odd man rush. Dane Luebke moved the puck to Grant Carlson who faked a shot and passed it to Brennan Pellino who was able to sink the puck in a nearly wide open net

as Sauer was unable to recover from the puck movement. Waupun then went on a roll with several penalties. However, the penalty kill seemed to be a well drawn up plan to score. (obviously not true). Dylan Sauer was able to pick up a puck after Caleb Sauer made a save and took it out of the zone. Off to his left was Caleb Baxter who took the puck the rest of the way on an odd man rush to the net. Beck made a great save. However the rebound squirted out to the mid slot where Cameron Beek was sitting. Beek place a wrist shot in the corner scoring a short handed goal giving Waupun a 5 -2 lead.

Waupun again went on the penalty kill with 9:26 left in the 3rd period. This time Carter Flegner picked up a rebound from Sauer in the corner, found open ice, and skated the puck into the Waunakee zone. Flegner snapped a wrist shot from the top of the circle scoring Waupun's second short handed goal. Waupun now lead 6 - 2. With 2:03 left in the 3rd, Waupun committed its 9th penalty of the game. Waunakee took advantage of the power play opportunity. With :38 seconds left in the game, Carlson passed the puck across the blue line to Luebke, who found Ihrke on the back door of Sauer. Ihrke mad a clean tip in from the pass scoring Waunakee's 3rd goal. And that ended up being the final score. Waupun won 6-3. Beck had 33 saves while Sauer ended up with 22 saves.

This set the games for Championship Friday.

5th place game would be new Badger North rivals Beaver Dam vs Waunakee

3rd Place game would be Evanston, IL vs Waupun

1st Place DePere vs Marquette

In talking to Coach Heibel from Beaver Dam and Coach Olson from Waunakee, neither were sure how they were going to set up and play this 5th place game. They will be facing each other in 2 weeks and then again later in January as conference foes. Both teams see themselves as potential conference champs and find that more valuable than winning a consolation game in the Holiday Classic.

Beaver Dam opted to play the game and hope for a win without playing their normal lines and without starting goalie Marshall Goodrich. Instead Kyle Hennig was in net. Hennig held his own for most of the game. It took over 11 minutes in the first for goal to be scored.

Waunakee's Mason Ihrke scored a nice upper right corner snipe shot on Hennig after receiving a pass from Tyler Hoffman. Two and a half minutes later, Waunakee scored again when Will Brezinski intercepted a pass and took his breakaway all the way to the net scoring Waunakee's second goal.

Three minutes into the second period, Waunakee scored again on a power play. Ihrke pounded an open backdoor pass from Keagan Ripley to give the Warriors a 3 - 0 lead. Shots in the 1st and 2nd period were equal with Hennig stopping 22 of 25 and Beck stopping all 25 shots.

In the 3rd period, Waunakee took over the game limiting the Golden Beavers to just 4 shots in the period. Waunakee scored its 5th goal 53 seconds into the period with a powerplay goal by Jeremy Werner. Beaver Dam was finally able to score when Jacob Stuebe fired a slap shot from the just inside the blue line after receiving a pass from out of the corner by Sam VanderHoeven. Waunakee finished off the scoring with its own power play goal with 3 minutes remaining in the game. Ihrke earned a hat trick after receiving another backdoor goal on the pass from Dane Luebke. Hennig ended the game with 32 saves and Beck from Waunakee with 29.

Third place game featured the host Waupun Warriors against the Evanston, IL Wildkits. The Warriors were still disappointed in their OT loss to Marquette. The only thing they could do was finish strong and prepare for the upcoming Badgerland Conference game against #6 Neenah. The Warriors did just that at the start game. Waupun scored in the first minute and a half into the first period. Colin Holtz took a stretch pass across the neutral zone from Cameron Beek. Holtz kicked in the afterburners and flew to the net lifting the puck over the shoulder of Garrett Wolner for Evanston. Both teams moved the puck up and down the ice getting off shots. It was Waupun that was able to find the back of the net. At 5:27 in the first, Tyler Flegner was waiting in the low slot and received the pass from Dylan Sauer who took the puck on the cycle from Brayden VandeZande. Flegner drilled the puck into the nylon giving Waupun a 2 - 0 lead. 3 minutes later, Waupun scored its third goal. This time Caleb Baxter scored on a juicy rebound in the mid slot after Sauer took a shot at Wolner. An assist was also given to Baron Buchholz. And then the penalty bug took over for the Warriors. Waupun finished the period short handed on back to back penalties giving Evanston a chance. Waupun's penalty kill and Caleb Sauer in net was able to turn the Wildkits away saving all 10 shots. Wollner ended the first saving 7.

A 1:30 in the second, Waupun again was on the penalty kill. Again, the "killers" and Sauer turned away the Wildkits. Just as the penalty expired for Waupun, Evanston earned a penalty. Waupun took advantage and scored on the power play. Holtz again took the puck from Beek and Carter Flegner who were running a cycle in the near corner when Holtz saw an opening and drove to the low slot where he was able to put the puck in the net over the glove of Wollner. With a 4-0 lead, Waupun was in control but was wary of last year's collapse of a 4 - 1 lead against Marquette losing 6-5. The Warriors decided to get some players some playing time that usually do not. Evanston capitalized on the inexperience. The Wildkits gained possession in their defensive zone and was able to breakout the puck with a long stretch pass setting up a 3 on 1. Sauer stopped the initial shot but the rebound went right to Andrew Cousineau who was able to lift it over Sauer to score the first goal for Evanston.

With 12:17 having passed in the 2nd, Waupun's Griffin Levey took the puck end to end. While circling around the net, Levey passed the puck to Cameron Beek who took a shot which Wolner stopped but put the rebound right on the stick of Carter Schramm who was able to finish and score for the Warriors 5th goal. Once again the Warriors took penalties toward the end of the period. Evanston had a 5-3 for a 1:30 but was unable to score on Sauer and his penalty killers. Both goalies ended up with 9 saves a piece.

Waupun started out the 3rd period again just like the 2nd. About 2 minutes into the period, Caleb Baxter scored his 2nd goal in the low slot off of a pass by Jarrett Buchholz who was able to pick up the turnover force by Barin Buchholz on a hard forecheck. Then the wheels fell off once again for the Warriors and they took penalty after penalty. Evanston jumped on the first penalty scoring on their power play. Kofi Hopps scored on back door goal after receiving a pass from Joe Ebler making the score 6 - 2. Waupun continued to take penalties throughout the 3rd period again going 5-3 in the final minutes of the game. Evanston pulled Wolner and tried to score again. However, the Warrior defense was able to hold and Waupun won 6 - 2. Wolner saved 5 of 6 shots for a total of 20 in the game while Sauer saved 13 in the 3rd with a game total of 33.