



Hill-Murray PIONEERS



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FORWARD



LANDON COTTINGHAM
DEFENSEMAN



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GOALIE

Inside scoop

Death. Taxes. Hill-Murray making a run at the Class 2A state tournament. How predictable.

A year after being the tournament's top seed boasting a roster loaded with talent, the Pioneers (14-13-1) return to St. Paul barely over .500.

But don't let the record fool you.

Head coach Bill Lechner, a tournament veteran with two state titles to his name, finds a way to mold his teams into pesky playoff participants no matter the record. Hill-Murray out-scored opponents 12-2 in the Section 4AA tournament and is as battle-tested as any team, thanks to arguably the state's best schedule.

Plagued by injuries all season, this edition of the Pioneers conjures up memories of the 2020 team — a younger group that peaked at the right time and captured the state title. Can Lechner and the Pioneers make a magical run again?

The task is formidable. Hill-Murray will meet top-seeded Minnetonka in Thursday's quarterfinals, a team it lost to 5-0 during the regular season.

Team snapshot

FORWARDS: Hill-Murray won't wow you with offensive production — the two highest-scoring Pioneers notched 21 and 20 points respectively (Brady Ingebritson and Jackson Reeves). Caden and Boden Sampair have been formidable, and Northeastern commit Ben Miller is hitting his stride after sitting out with a knee injury for much of the season. The emergence of eighth-grader Riley Zupfer helps, too.

DEFENSEMEN: It's a youth movement on the Pioneer blueline after losing boat loads of talent off last year's team. Sophomores Graham Greeder (16 points) and Landon Cottingham (15 points) are poised beyond their years, and freshman Casper Lang isn't far behind with 10 points of his own.

GOALIES: Perhaps the only certainty in the Hill-Murray lineup this season was Jack Erickson, who played over 1,200 minutes and racked up a .924 save percentage against top-notch competition.

Stats

NO.	NAME	GR	POS	G	A	PTS	PIM
15	Brady Ingebritson	12	F	9	12	21	16
18	Jackson Reeves	10	F	11	9	20	6
12	Caden Sampair	12	F	7	11	18	10
17	Boden Sampair	10	F	8	8	16	6
19	Graham Greeder	10	D	4	12	16	6
16	Lucas Mann	11	F	6	9	15	19
20	Landon Cottingham	10	D	5	10	15	35
9	Jude Bonin	11	F	6	7	13	12
8	Simon Seidl	11	F	3	9	12	16
27	Riley Zupfer	8	F	7	5	12	6
28	Casper Lang	9	D	3	7	10	4
11	Ben Miller	11	F	3	6	9	6
26	Seth Klepac	11	D	3	5	8	16
7	Ryan Madigan	11	F	3	4	7	6
14	Matthew Whisler	12	D	0	6	6	20
2	Joseph Luger	11	D	1	4	5	24
6	Brayden Houge	12	D	0	2	2	0
10	Cullen Ingebritson	10	R	1	1	2	8
22	Zach Launmeyer	11	R	2	0	2	4
21	Jack Blissenbach	11	F	0	1	1	2
25	Caden Zasada	8	F	1	0	1	0
33	Jack Erickson	12	G	0	0	0	2

NO.	NAME	GR	MIN	W-L-T	GAA	SV%	SO
33	Jack Erickson	12	1248:32	11-12-0	2.25	.924	2
1	Andrew Lane	11	202:33	3-1-0	1.26	.930	1

BY THE NUMBERS
Power Play Percentage: 16.5%
Penalty Kill Percentage: 89.2%
Goals Scored Per Game: 2.96
Goals Allowed Per Game: 2.25

Coach Bill Lechner

Lechner, who has led the Pioneers to two state championships, also served on the coaching staff when Hill-Murray won a state title in 1983. He has led the Pioneers to 17 tournaments and also was the school's baseball coach and athletic director before retiring from those roles.



By the numbers

0-for-7: The Pioneers are winless in seven tries this season against teams in the Class 2A field. Two of the losses came on back-to-back nights against Edina.

Unseeded Info

CONFERENCE: Metro East
RECORD: 14-13-1
STATE TRIPS: 32
COACH: Bill Lechner, 25th year (530-182-33); 30th overall (588-260- 36)
HOME ARENA: Aldrich Arena, Maplewood

Schedule

DATE	OPPONENT	SCORE
12/2	@ Eden Prairie	W 2-1
12/3	Hermantown	L 1-3
12/8	@ Wayzata	L 1-2/OT
12/10	Tartan	W 4-1
12/17	@ Hastings	W 5-3
12/22	@ Benilde-St. Margaret's	L 2-3
12/27	Lakeville South	L 4-5/OT
12/28	Andover	L 2-5
12/29	@ Champlin Park	L 2-3
1/5	Minnetonka	L 0-5
1/7	@ Two Rivers	W 1-0
1/12	@ St. Thomas Academy	L 1-3
1/14	Simley	W 10-0
1/17	@ Stillwater	T 2-2/OT
1/21	Grand Rapids	W 4-1
1/25	@ Mahtomedi	W 4-2
1/28	@ White Bear Lake	W 3-2/OT
1/30	Mahtomedi	W 2-1/OT
1/31	South St. Paul	W 7-1
2/3	Edina	L 1-2
2/4	@ Edina	L 1-2
2/8	Blake	W 8-4
2/11	St. Thomas Academy	L 0-1
2/14	@ Maple Grove	L 2-5
2/18	Moorhead	L 2-4

SECTION 4AA PLAYOFFS

2/25	East Ridge	W 6-1
3/1	Woodbury	W 3-1
3/3	Gentry Academy	W 3-0