

BOYS SWIMMING AND DIVING

## Whittington sprints to gold for Ponies

Stillwater lands 6th in state team standings

BY STUART GROSKREUTZ  
THE GAZETTE

MINNEAPOLIS — After breaking one or more records in nearly ever meet this season, Will Whittington capped his senior season with two individual state championships while propelling the Stillwater boys swimming and diving team to a sixth-place finish in the Class AA state meet at the University of Minnesota's Jean K. Freeman Aquatic Center on Friday, March 19.

The Ponies scored points in 9 of 12 events while racking up 145 points to produce one of the

program's top showings in the MSHSL state meet. Stillwater's highest finish at state is fourth place, which it achieved in 2007, 2017 and 2018. The Ponies also placed fifth in 2008 and 2015 and sixth in 2021.

As expected, Edina claimed top honors with 302 points, despite not winning a single event. Chanhassen/Chaska was a distant second with 201 points, followed by Eden Prairie (183), Minnetonka (168) and Maple Grove (161) in the top five.

Stillwater finished 11th in this event a year ago.

"I think everybody except probably one had season or life-

time bests so you can't really ask for much better," Ponies coach Brian Luke said.

This year's state meet was separated into two sessions based on section assignment, with the swimming conducted in one day using timed finals to determine place rather than prelims and finals taking place over two days. This was done to limit the potential spread of COVID-19. Fortunately, Stillwater was placed in second session which included most of the top athletes and all six of the top teams in the final



Whittington



Kaphingst



Bloomquist



Baude



Watson

standings.

"We were busy the whole night," Luke said. "It was very fun to watch. There was no spectators so it was less noisy, which is sad, but the athletes managed to work through that. It was like, they've done it all season and it didn't seem to bother them."

It wasn't perfect, but it worked out well under the circumstanc-

es, the coach suggested.

"The most negative thing I thought was no medal ceremony," Luke said. "That's a cool thing and the kids deserve it."

The medals were sent out to schools after the meet and the postage for Stillwater's will be higher than most.

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GIRLS HOCKEY



The Stillwater girls hockey team celebrates its 1-0 victory over second-seeded Hill-Murray in the Section 4AA championship game on Saturday, March 20 at the St. Croix Valley Rec Center. The victory qualifies the Ponies for their first state tournament since 2009. (Gazette staff photo by Stuart Groskreutz)

GYMNASTICS

## Stillwater tops field in Section 4AA

BY STUART GROSKREUTZ  
THE GAZETTE

WHITE BEAR LAKE — Even with a few missteps, the Stillwater gymnastics team had room to spare while cruising to the Section 4AA championship on Saturday, March 20 at White Bear Lake High School.

It was the fourth section title in the past five seasons for the top-ranked Ponies, who posted a winning score of 147.0. The host Bears placed second at 141.325 and defending champion Mahtomedi (140.725) followed in third place.

The victorious Ponies matched their second highest score of the season, but was still below the 148.725 they received in a victory at Eagan on March 9.

"I think we performed well, but not our best," said Dusty Dennis, who serves as co-head coach for the Ponies with Joan Ledson. "It definitely was not our best meet. We left a lot of points out on the events. We did OK, but not as well as we could do."

Stillwater will compete in the Class AA state meet on Saturday, March 27 at Champlin Park High School. Because of COVID-19 and precautions related to that, this year's state team and individual competition will be held simultaneously, but separated into two four-team sessions.

Stillwater and the Section 4AA individual qualifiers will compete in the early session that starts at 11:30 a.m., along with Sections 5AA, 6AA and 7AA. The Sections 8AA, 1AA, 2AA and 3AA representatives will compete in the later session that begins at 6 p.m.

The Ponies also gained individual state qualifiers

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## Ponies claim section title

BY STUART GROSKREUTZ  
THE GAZETTE

After more than a decade since its last trip to state, the Stillwater girls hockey team assembled the rest of the pieces to complement that determination as the Ponies clipped fifth-ranked Hill-Murray 1-0 in the finals of the Section 4AA tournament on Saturday, March 20 at the St. Croix Valley Rec Center.

The Ponies (19-2-1) notched their third shutout of the season and this one came with a big pay-off — the first state appearance since 2009 when Stillwater claimed its second state championship in three years.

Stillwater was sixth in the final state rankings, but installed as the top seed for the section playoffs. That was even more important this year with all section games hosted by the higher seeded team.

### Stillwater trips up Pioneers 1-0 to earn first trip to state since 2009

This was a rematch of last year's section championship game, which Hill-Murray won 3-1 to earn its seventh section title in eight seasons.

"Obviously it's a huge accomplishment," Stillwater coach Mira Jalosuo said. "It's not easy to make it there because there's a lot of very good high school hockey teams and beating Hill-Murray in the section finals is special."

Stillwater received the No. 4 seed for the state tournament and will face fifth-seeded Eastview (15-4-2) in the quarterfinals on Saturday, March 27 at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul. Game time is 8 p.m. The winner will face either top-seeded Andover (20-0) or unseeded Farmington (11-8-1) in the semifinals on Thursday,

April 1. The finals are scheduled for Saturday, April 3.

Hill-Murray outshot the Ponies 24-16, but freshman goaltender Lily Timmons was sharp throughout while recording her third shutout of the season.

"Lily was awesome in the nets," Jalosuo said. "She didn't look like a freshman at all. She was super calm and where there was rebounds she was able to get them away from the net and that's the sign of a good goalie. She did a very good job of the rebounds control."

The Pioneers were most dangerous in the third, holding in an 8-3 advantage in shots in the period.

"It was awesome that Lily got a shutout," Jalosuo said. "We were very good defensively and keeping our sticks on the

ice in the defensive zone."

The coach said she expected a low-scoring game, which remained tense throughout.

A scoreless opening period looked like it was going to stay that way going into the second intermission until a 2-on-1 rush by freshmen Josie St. Martin and Brooke Nelson produced the game-winner with just 15 seconds remaining in the second. St. Martin, who leads the Ponies with 26 assists this season, raced in with the puck and slid a pass that Nelson slapped into the open net while streaking down the right side.

"Josie gave a nice hard tape-to-tape pass and Brooke made a nice one-timer," Jalosuo said.

There weren't many opportunities in the third, but it was the only scoring required for the Suburban East Conference champion Ponies.

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### Katelyn McDowell Gymnastics

It was a productive Section 4AA Meet for Stillwater gymnast Katelyn McDowell, who helped the Ponies qualify for their fourth Class AA state meet in the past five seasons with a winning score of 147.0.



McDowell finished fourth in the all-around with a score of 36.575 to narrowly miss qualifying for state in the all-around, but she did advance with a first-place finish in the vault and a third-place finish in the beam.

The top-ranked Ponies are scheduled to compete at state on Saturday, March 27 at Champlin Park High School.



## SAHS Athletes of the Week

### Tyler Tompkins Boys basketball

Frequently out-sized, guard Tyler Tompkins was rarely was never out-worked as a tireless contributor for the Stillwater boys basketball team, which was eliminated by top-seeded Woodbury 58-46 in the Section 4AAAA quarterfinals on March 18.

The senior ranked second for the Ponies while averaging more than 14 points per game, and often guarded the opposing team's top perimeter player. He scored in double figures in 16 of 19 games this season.

Stillwater finished with a 4-15 record, including 4-15 to place eighth in the SEC.



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ATHLETE OF THE WEEK  
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**LOCAL SCHEDULE**

**Friday, March 26**  
Girls basketball — Section 4AAAA finals: ER at SAHS, 7 p.m.

**Saturday, March 27**  
Girls hockey — State quarterfinals: Eastview at Xcel, 8 p.m.  
Gymnastics — State meet at Champlin Park HS, 11:30 a.m.

**Sunday, March 28**  
Nothing scheduled

**Monday, March 29**  
Nothing scheduled

**Tuesday, March 30**  
Girls basketball — Class AAAA state quarterfinals, TBA

**Wednesday, March 31**  
Girls basketball — Class AAAA state quarterfinals, TBA

**Thursday, April 1**  
Girls hockey — State semifinals at Xcel Center, 8 p.m.

**Friday, April 2**  
Nothing scheduled

**Saturday, April 3**  
Girls hockey — State finals at Xcel Center, 1 p.m.

**Sunday, April 4**  
Nothing scheduled

**Monday, April 5**  
Nothing scheduled

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SPORTS SCHEDULE SPONSOR 2  
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**GIRLS BASKETBALL**

# Stillwater coasts into section finals

**BY STUART GROSKREUTZ**  
**THE GAZETTE**

**OAK PARK HEIGHTS** — Stillwater extended its season and a winning streak that has now reached 20 games after dispatching Cretin-Derham hall 96-38 in the Section 4AAAA semifinals on Tuesday, March 23 at Stillwater Area High School.

The top-seeded Ponies (20-0), who are No. 4 in the Class AAAA state rankings, were never seriously challenged after building a 61-21 half-time lead.

It was a balanced scoring attack for Stillwater, which is seeking its third straight section championship when it hosts East Ridge in the finals at SAHS on Friday, March 26. The second-seeded Raptors (15-5) defeated White Bear Lake 51-34 in the other semifinal.

Lexi Karlen poured in 18 points to lead the Ponies against Cretin-Derham Hall (8-12). Alexis Pratt scored 16 points while Amber Scalia finished with 14 points.

“We do have a very talented team and they’re making that extra pass,” Taylor said. “The last couple of years we did not make that extra pass, but the more you move the ball around the better you’re going to be and that’s key for us.”

Lizzie Holder, who has been hampered by an ankle injury, supplied 12 points and Amy Thompson drained three 3-pointers and finished with 11 points.

“It was good to have Lizzie Holder back,” Ponies coach Willie Taylor said. “She’s back to 80 or 90 percent and we haven’t had her back to that since the end of the Roseville game (on March 5).”

Gionna Carr finished with just two points, but still managed double figures while collecting 10 assists and 10 steals. The coach said her many contributions to the team aren’t found in the scoring column.

“A double-double with assists and steals, that’s rare,” Taylor said. “She really is a special player and this team wouldn’t be where we are without her. She is the unsung hero. She doesn’t fill up the scoring card, but she does the dirty work and her and Pratt and Amber on that press makes it tough — and Lizzie in the back.”

Holder finished with five blocked shots in the first half alone.

Lilly Hahs led the Raiders with 12 points.

Stillwater defeated East Ridge 60-40 and 82-55 during the regular season, but Taylor isn’t taking anything for granted against a team that is coached by one of his former players Ashley Ellis Milan.

“This will be a good game,” Taylor said. “Ashley played for me for four years and they will be as ready as anybody we play. We run some of the same stuff and she knows what we’re all about.”



Carr

**Cretin-Derham Hall (pts):** T. Edwards 5, Anisah Wolf 6, Anna Caruso 6, Kalina Fitzgerald 6, Lilly Hahs 12, Mary Markoe 1 and B. Kalderman 2.

**Stillwater:** Alexis Pratt 16, Peyton Shaffer 3, Amy Thompson 11, Gionna Carr 2, Amber Scalia 14, Lizzie Holder 12, Lydia Knutson 9, Maya Tompkins 2, Eva Stafne 2, Elayra Dizon 5, Eyanna Dizon 2 and Lexi Karlen 18.

**3-pointers:** C-DH (1): Fitzgerald; St (11): Pratt, Shaffer, Thompson 3, Scalia, Holder, Knutson 3 and El. Dizon.

**Free throws:** C-DH, 7-13; St, 13-18.

**Fouls:** C-DH, 16; St, 11.

**Stillwater 88, North St. Paul 19**

At Oak Park Heights, Alexis Pratt tossed in a game-high 21 points as the Ponies defeated North St. Paul 88-19 in the Section 4AAAA quarterfinals on Thursday, March 18 at SAHS.

Amy Thompson drained four 3-pointers and finished with 17 points while Amber Scalia and Lizzie Holder added 12 and 10 points. Stillwater led 50-7 at half-time.

LaKesha Thompas scored seven points to lead the Polars (2-12).

<b>North St. Paul</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Stillwater</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>88</b>

**North St. Paul (pts):** LaKesha Thomas 7, Lucy Walker 2, Neveah Jones 2, Kahlia Briley 4, Aliyah Horton 2 and Jordanah Jacobs 2.

**Stillwater:** Alexis Pratt 21, Grace Mattox 2, Peyton Shaffer 4, Amy Thompson 16, Katie Hardtke 3, Gionna Carr 6, Amber Scalia 12, Lizzie Holder 10, Lydia Knutson 3, Maya Tompkins 2, Elayra Dizon 8 and Lexi Karlen 1.

**3-pointers:** NSP (0); St (15): Pratt 3, Thompson 4, Hardtke, Carr 2, Holder 2, Knutson and Dizon 2.

**Free throws:** NSP, 5-8; St, 5-6.

<b>Cretin-Derham Hall</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Stillwater</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>96</b>

**BOYS BASKETBALL**

# Ponies fall to top-seeded Royals

**BY STUART GROSKREUTZ**  
**THE GAZETTE**

**WOODBURY** — A familiar and daunting opponent greeted Stillwater in the quarterfinals of the Section 4AAAA boys basketball tournament on Thursday, March 18 at Woodbury High School.

The top-seeded Royals used a late first-half run to surge in front and held off the Ponies for a 58-46 victory.

It was Woodbury’s third victory of the season over the Ponies, but the previous encounters were decided by 18 and 27 points.

“We played very well for 30 minutes,” Stillwater coach Brady Hannigan said.

Woodbury (17-3), which shared the Suburban East Conference championship with Mounds View, trailed the Ponies 17-15 with about six minutes remaining in the first half. The Royals, however, took advantage of so turnovers and turned those into points while embarking on an 18-2 run end the first half with a 33-19 advantage.

“We turned the ball over and they got easy lay-ups,” Hannigan said. “When we didn’t turn the ball over, we controlled the tempo and we did a decent job playing defense in the half-

court, but we had some very tough turnovers in that first half that led to easy baskets for them.”

Stillwater (4-15) trailed by just eight points and had the ball in the final minutes, but misfired on a three-point attempt and Woodbury was able to increase its lead from there. The Royals made just 8 of 16 free throws in the game, but hit three of those down the stretch to extend the lead.



Shikenjanski

“I was just proud of the way our guys fought to the end of the season,” Hannigan said. “They thought we had a chance to beat this team and they did have a chance. I think we all believed that we did have a chance to win this game and I was proud of the guys going through all that.”

Max Shikenjanski finished with 22 points to lead the Ponies and Sam Shikenjanski added 11 points and pulled down a team-high nine rebounds.

Woodbury opened the door slightly with a subpar shooting night, but Mac Lockner was on target and finished with 19 points. He made 4 of 7 three-point attempts while the rest of the team was just 1 for 11.

“We played decent defense outside of Lockner,” Hannigan said.

Bradley Cimperman

added 18 points for the Royals and Dominic Cuoco chipped in with 10.

The Ponies entered the postseason on the heels of better results down the stretch, including two victories in their last five games, but couldn’t overtake Woodbury, which defeated St. Paul Central 57-39 in the section semifinals and will meet No. 2 seed Cretin-Derham Hall in the finals on Friday, March 26 for a spot in the state tournament. Even Stillwater’s three losses down the stretch were by just two, three and six points, and two of those losses came against Cretin-Derham Hall and Mounds View.

“We were playing significantly better the last three weeks of the season,” Hannigan said. “It would have been nice to have an extra eight games.”

Those extra games were eliminated after the season started late due to COVID-19.

“We had a new offense and we had a lot of new guys this year,” Hannigan said. “We really only had three guys come back with significant varsity minutes a year ago. We finally were able to establish the lineups that worked well and all the little things as an inexperienced team you figure out through the course of the season. It took us 13 games to get into that rhythm.”

“I thought we started

taking care of the ball better for the most part. The last game we had 20 turnovers, but we took care of the ball and had better offensive flow. I thought we were playing with better confidence. By the middle of the season we were competing and working hard but hadn’t figured out a way to win as a young and inexperienced group yet. We started to figure that out a bit towards the end.”

Woodbury also started slow out of the gates, but has now won 16 in a row since losing three of its first four games to start the season.

“They play really good defense,” Hannigan said. “They’re long, their strong and they’re quick. They have a really good group of kids. They may not be top-end talent like East Ridge, but they’re a team that works hard and plays hard together and has very underrated athletes.”

<b>Stillwater</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Woodbury</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>58</b>

**Stillwater (pts):** William Swanson 4, Tyler Tompkins 8, Max Shikenjanski 22, Nick Koehn 1 and Sam Shikenjanski 11.

**Woodbury:** Devin Padelford 5, Bradley Cimperman 18, Blake Rohrer 6, Mac Lockner 19 and Dominic Cuoco 10.

**WRESTLING**

# Stillwater represented in nine weight classes at individual state tourney

**BY STUART GROSKREUTZ**  
**THE GAZETTE**

**OAK PARK HEIGHTS** — After already locking up its spot in the four-team Class AAA state team tournament, the Stillwater wrestling team ensured strong representation in the individual field after crowning five champions and advancing a total of nine to this week’s state finals following the Section 3AAA-4AAA state prelims on Saturday, March 20 at Stillwater Area High School.

Unlike previous years when two individuals per weight class in each of the state’s eight sections advance to the state tournament. Due to COVID-19, sections were combined and state preliminaries tournaments were held at four different sites. The top two finishers advanced to the finals, which consist of eight-person brackets with competition set to follow the team semifinals and finals on Thursday, March 25 at St. Michael-Albertville High School.

“I think it was about what we thought,” Ponies coach Tim Hartung said.

There were a few narrow misses, but most of the seeds held to form. Four of Stillwater’s five first-place finishes came from the gauntlet stretching from 160 to 195 pounds. Antony Tuttle, Hunter Lyden, Ryder Rogotzke and Roman Rogotzke each posted 3-0 records and were never seriously challenged.

Ryder Rogotzke needed less than two minutes combined while pinning his opponents in 39, 28 and 47 seconds on the way to the title at 182 pounds. Roman Rogotzke, the defending state champion at 182 pounds, needed just 27 and 25 seconds to pin his first two opponents before sticking Mounds View’s Jacob Solheim in 1:52 in the finals.

Antony Tuttle, who remains undefeated this season, pinned Nolan Myers of Hastings in 1:03 to take top

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**ST. CROIX PREP**

# Lions run winning streak to 13

**THE GAZETTE**

The top-seeded St. Croix Preparatory Academy boys basketball team advanced to the Section 4AA finals with a 69-41 semifinal victory over fourth-seeded St. Paul Humboldt on Tuesday, March 23 at SCPA. It was the 13th consecutive victory for the Lions (19-1), who were No. 8 in the final Class AA state rankings.

Teige Lethert scored 22 points to lead four Lions in double figures. Addison Metcalf added 17 points for SCPA, which stormed out to a 45-16 halftime lead.

The Lions, who received 25 points from Andrew Howard in a 93-55 quarterfinal victory over Hiawatha on Saturday, March 20, were scheduled to face second-seeded Twin Cities Academy/Great River Tigers in the section finals on Thursday, March 25 at SCPA. TCA/Great River defeated St. Paul Academy 76-59 in the other semifinal game.

**SCPA girls fall in section semifinals**

The SCPA girls basketball team was stopped by top-seeded Minnehaha Academy 89-23 in the Section 4AA semifinals on Tuesday, March 23. Ruthanna Doely finished with seven points to lead the Lions (8-12), who trailed 46-11 at halftime.

The Redhawks, who received a game-high 24 points from Addi Mack, advanced to face second-seeded Concordia Academy in the finals on March 25.

The fifth-seeded Lions upended fourth-seeded St. Agnes 54-50 in the quarterfinals on Saturday, March 20. Charlotte Peterson and Lauryn Schutz led SCPA with 12 points apiece and Emma Ylonen chipped in with 10 points.

It was the fourth time the teams have met this season, with St. Agnes winning two of the first three — including a 55-43 triumph in the regular season finale on March 11.

# 10 years ago this week ...

**Nordic skiing** — Senior Brett Ylonen is chosen the Most Valuable Athlete for the Stillwater boys Nordic skiing team and senior Leah Ranta garners the MVP honor for the Stillwater girls. Ylonen is a two-time all-state performer and one of 10 athletes from the boys team to receive all-conference honors for the Suburban East Conference champions. Ranta joins a list of 10 member of the Stillwater girls team to earn all-conference honors for a team that places second in the SEC and third in Section 4. Also announced at the team’s banquet is that long-time supporter Bob Hagstrom is recipient of the Section 4 Volunteer of the Year.

**Colleges** — Two former Stillwater standouts help lead the University of Minnesota women’s swimming and diving team to a ninth-place finish in the NCAA Championships, which is the program’s best-ever finish. Diver Maggie Keefer, a two-time state champion for the Ponies, earns honorable mention All-America honors after placing 11th in 1-meter diving, 22nd in platform diving and 24th in 3-meter diving. Meagan Radecke also competes at nationals in the 200 freestyle relay, where the Gophers place 19th after prelims to miss out on a spot in the finals, and in the 100 freestyle, where she places 60th.

This is a look back at some of the people and teams making news in the St. Croix Valley 10 years ago, as reported in the Stillwater Gazette.



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## BOYS HOCKEY

# Late goal lifts Hill-Murray over Ponies in sections

BY STUART GROSKREUTZ  
THE GAZETTE

MAPLEWOOD — Stillwater did enough things well, but was unable to overcome top-seeded Hill-Murray in the Section 4AA semifinals. The Pioneers scored with less than three minutes remaining to slip past the Ponies 3-2 on Saturday, March 20 at Aldrich Arena.

The defending state champion Pioneers, who are ranked No. 5 in Class AA, scored twice in the third period to thwart Stillwater's upset bid. Hill-Murray (17-2) went on to defeat second-seeded White Bear Lake (16-3-1) 5-0 in the finals on Wednesday, March 24.

It was the third straight year White Bear Lake and Hill-Murray have played in the finals. Stillwater (12-7-1) was seeking its first trip to the section finals since 2017, which ended a run of four straight years in the Section 4AA title game. Hill-Murray has ended Stillwater's season three of the last four years.

Joe Palodichuk scored on the power play for Hill-Murray at 4:31 of the opening period.

"We knew they had a lethal power play that was clicking at about 45 percent," Ponies coach Greg Zanon said. "We did a good job of staying out of the box, but with one opportunity they scored a goal."

It was the only penalty of the game for Stillwater, which executed its game plan most of the night.

"We really wanted to play a physical game against them," Zanon said. "I definitely think we played well enough. Things happen in games even when you play well, it's the smallest mistakes that end up costing you."

Ethan Mosley eventually answered for the Ponies at 13:07 of the second period to even the score at 1-all. The sequence started with a hit by Keegan O'Brien that led to a turnover and Evan Murr also assisting on the goal. It was Mosley's third goal of the season.

"It was a big moment for him, especially since he was coming back from an injury in the Forest Lake game," Zanon said. "It was good to have him come back and get one on the scoresheet for us."

Hill-Murray outshot the Ponies 38-16 in the game and 18-5 in the third period, but Nolan LaCrosse was sharp throughout in limiting the damage.

Jared Jensen eventually produced the game-winner for the Pioneers, scoring at 14:30 on assists from Godbout and Leo Gruba.

"The second and third goals were turnovers that led to goals," Zanon said. "Their second goal we failed to get it in and they came the other way and scored again. When you play good teams and the stakes are high, mistakes are what ends up costing you in the end."

The Ponies didn't anticipate a high-scoring game considering Hill-Murray entered the game

having allowed just 19 goals all season. The Pioneers have allowed one goal or fewer in 14 of their 19 games this season and recorded eight shutouts.

"They were playing some good hockey and that's the type of hockey they play," Zanon said. "That's the type of game we wanted to play against them."

"We needed to be willing to play a similar game to what they play, that one-goal game where you need to be willing to dump pucks. We did that for the most part, but we had a couple mistakes not getting pucks in. We hung around and the outcome could have gone either way at that point."

LaCrosse played one of his best games of the season against an opponent that was averaging nearly five goals per game.

"He played outstanding for us," Zanon said. "He made some class-A saves to keep us in the game when it was 1-1 and 2-1. They made some good plays and he came up with some dandies for us and it gave us life to be battle back a couple of times like we did."

After scuffling down the stretch with a 4-5-1 record in their last 10 regular season games, Zanon was pleased with the team's performance in the postseason, including a shutout victory over East Ridge in the quarterfinals.

"That's where our game started to come back to us," Zanon said. "We had three hard days of practice to get ready and we

came out and played a really good game."

"We kind of found our game, it was just a little too late in the season. It was good season and the guys coming out with that kind of an effort to give us the best opportunity to win."

It was also a fulfilling season when you consider the less desirable possibilities due to COVID-19 and the number of teams which had games canceled.

"Our guys came every day with the right attitude and they wanted to get better," Zanon said. "In a year that could have gone either way, we were fortunate to be able to play without any interruptions. You have to give guys credit because they were doing the right things with masking and social distancing. It was a bummer for the seniors, but the fact that they were able to play and be together this season was awesome, too."

**Stillwater** 0 1 1 — 2  
**Hill-Murray** 1 0 2 — 3

**First period** — 1. H-M, Joe Palodichuk (Matthew Fleischhacker, Dylan Godbout) pp, 4:31.

**Second period** — 1. St, Ethan Mosley (Keegan O'Brien, Evan Murr) 13:07.

**Third period** — 2. H-M, Godbout (Jared Jensen, Axel Begley) 7:09; 2. St, Murr (Daniel Roeske, Aidan Anderson) 9:59; 3. H-M, Jensen (Godbout, Leo Gruba) 14:30.

**Penalties** — St, 1-2:00; H-M, 2-4:00.

**Saves** — St (Nolan LaCrosse) 9-10-16—35; H-M (Nick Erickson) 4-6-4—14.

## Stillwater 3, East Ridge 0

Nolan LaCrosse finished with two shutouts this season and

both came against the Raptors — the second of which occurred during Stillwater's 3-0 victory in the Section 4AA quarterfinals on Thursday, March 18 at the St. Croix Valley Rec Center.

This was Stillwater's third victory over the Raptors (7-12) this season.

"We played really well," Ponies coach Greg Zanon said. "East Ridge played well as well. They played very tough and they didn't make it easy on us."

Evan Murr scored with just over a minute remaining in the first period to give the Ponies a 1-0 lead.

Stillwater outshot the Raptors 30-13 combined in the first two periods, but was unable to pull away until the third. Carter Bies scored three minutes into the third period to build a 2-0 lead and Aidya Mehta provided some insurance with an empty-net goal at 14:55.

"To come out like that in the first game of sections was good to see," Zanon said. "It was good to get that one."

**East Ridge** 0 0 0 — 0  
**Stillwater** 1 0 2 — 3

**First period** — 1. St, Evan Murr (Riley Skuza, Ty Tuccitto) 15:48.

**Second period** — No scoring.

**Third period** — 2. St, Carter Bies (Gunner Arens, Bo Dustin) 3:11; 3. St, Aidya Mehta (unassisted) en, 14:55.

**Penalties** — ER, 5-10:00; St, 4-8:00.

**Saves** — ER (Croix Kochendorfer) 12-17-13—42; St (Nolan LaCrosse) 7-6-6—19.

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Members of the Stillwater boys swimming and diving team who contributed to sixth-place finish at the Class AA state meet on Friday, March 29 at the University of Minnesota's Jean K. Freeman Aquatic Center include, from left, Sam Ciegler, Dylan DeAgazio, Alex Kaphingst, Jaden Petersen, Aidan Bloomquist, Brodie Watson, Jack Baude and Will Whittington. State qualifying diver Tate Sorensen is missing from the photo. (Contributed photo)

## SWIMMING

(Continued from page 12)

Whittington entered the 50 and 100 freestyle events with the fastest qualifying times and he lived up to those lofty expectations. He won the 50 freestyle in 20.20, nearly a half second ahead of runner-up Daniel Baltés (20.63) of Maple Grove. Each of the top seven finishers in the race were seniors.

In the 100 freestyle, Whittington touched the wall in 44.14 with Baltés in second place with a time of 45.06.

Whittington broke his own school records and also earned Automatic All-American honors in both of those events.

"He's a great swimmer, and versatile, too," Luke said.

Whittington, who will continue his swimming career at the University of Missouri, claimed the 10th and 11th individual state championships in the program's history. He is the first to win two individual gold medals in the same year.

In addition to the three relays, Whittington owns three school records (50, 100 and 200 freestyle) and ranks second on the program's all-time list in three others (100 butterfly, 500 freestyle and 100 backstroke). He is also the Suburban East Conference record-holder in 9 of 11 swimming events — with the 100 breaststroke and 200 individual medley the only exceptions.

His success is no coincidence, Luke said when asked what makes Whit-

tington so fast.

"Obviously being 6-foot-7 or 6-8 doesn't hurt, but a lot of tall people aren't good athletes," Luke said. "It helps to be tall, but then obviously he's strong, a hard worker, and smart. He has a good feel for the water. The good swimmers can leverage against the water at a way higher force than the next kid — and the more feel you have for the water the faster you can get. I don't know if it's even teachable because if it was teachable we'd all be faster."

Whittington also has fast teammates who contributed to a state runner-up finish in the 200 freestyle and a third-place showing in the 200 medley relay.

Aidan Bloomquist, Jack Baude and Brodie Watson joined Whittington as Stillwater broke another school record and in the 200 free relay with an automatic All-American time of 1:24.24. Chanhassen/Chaska won the event in 1:22.54.

Alex Kaphingst, Bloomquist, Baude and Whittington also lowered the school record while placing third in the 200 medley relay in 1:33.16, which is another automatic All-American time. Eden Prairie won the event in 1:31.36.

Bloomquist and Baude joined Whittington in having a busy night while competing in four events.

Bloomquist finished fourth in the 200 individual medley with a time of 1:52.20, a time that places him third on Stillwater's all-time list in the event. Hayden Zheng of St. Louis Park won the

## Gold medal club

### Stillwater boys swimming and diving state champions

Athlete	Event	Year
Steve Hamerski	Diving	1986
John Schmidt	Diving	2001
John Schmidt	Diving	2002
Brandon Adair	100 butterfly	2007
Brandon Adair	100 butterfly	2008
Andy Knaak	200 individual medley	2008
Stillwater	200 medley relay (Knaak, Adair, Wise and DeShaw)	2008
Jon Busse	100 backstroke	2015
Josiah Fick	Diving	2019
Josiah Fick	Diving	2020
Will Whittington	50 freestyle	2021
Will Whittington	100 freestyle	2021

event in a time of 1:47.36. Bloomquist also finished ninth in the 100 breaststroke while lowering his school record in the event with a time of 57.20.

The senior ranks among Stillwater's top 10 all-time in seven of eight individual swimming events.

"He's a great swimmer, too," Luke said. "He's on the dual meet dream team in four events and is a tremendous swimmer."

He was a tremendous leader in and out of the pool.

"He's been on the team for six years and in six years has perfect attendance," Luke said. "He never missed a practice, through flu and cold seasons and a pandemic, that's very impressive — and he's very fast."

Another member of this exceptional senior class, Baude finished ninth in the 50 freestyle (21.37) and 16th in the 100 butterfly (51.15).

His time in the 50 freestyle bettered the previous school standard that stood for more than 20 years until Whittington eclipsed it

earlier this season.

"Jack really came together this year," Luke said. "He was always a good swimmer, but this year everything just fell into place for him. He's on the dual meet dream team in four events and that 50 freestyle record stood for a long time and he ended up under that record. He really came together nicely as a senior."

Watson finished 30th in the 100 butterfly (52.70) and also led off Stillwater's 400 freestyle relay team that finished 16th in a time of 3:15.28. Dylan DeAgazio, Jaden Petersen and Sam Ciegler were also members of that relay.

"Brodie Watson has always been solid — that whole senior crew — it is a great group," Luke said. "Great leadership and hard working, it's been a joy. Other than standing on a razor's edge for 12 weeks with the pandemic, everything else was just great about this season and a lot of that has to do with those seniors. It's always good to have seniors and one of the keys to suc-

cess is senior leadership. They came together really nicely."

Ciegler competed in three events at state for the Ponies. He also placed 14th in the 500 freestyle with a time of 4:49.24. He also competed, but was disqualified, in the 200 freestyle.

The diving competition was held on Thursday, March 25. Stillwater freshman Tate Sorensen placed 28th after prelims with a five-dive score of 125.80.

"It was good experience for him," Luke said. "I thought he dove pretty well. You can never take experience away, so next year should be his second year and I think he'll be pretty confident."

Swimming and diving at state and at the U of M was a one-time occurrence for the Ponies this season, who were limited to dual meets until the field expanded to four teams for their half of the Section 4AA Meet. That never stopped the Ponies as they set school, pool or conference records in just about every meet this season.

Kaphingst, Bloomquist, Baude, Whittington and Watson each earned all-state honors, which is reserved for the top eight finishers in individual events and relays.

But it wasn't only performance which made for such a gratifying season, Luke suggested.

"They're all really nice kids, too, and they are humble athletes," Luke said. "If you meet them, they do not act like they are above anyone else on the team and I think that's important. If you walked in and tried to figure out

who the best swimmers were by how they're acting, you'd never know."

### Team standings (top 10)

1. Edina 302; 2. Chanhassen/Chaska 201; 3. Eden Prairie 183; 4. Minnetonka 168; 5. Maple Grove 161; 6. Stillwater 145; 7. St. Cloud Tech 106; 8. St. Michael-Albertville 98; 9. Wayzata 95; 10. Lakeville South 93.

### Individual results

**200 medley relay** — @1. Eden Prairie, 1:31.36; #@3. Stillwater (Alex Kaphingst, Aidan Bloomquist, Jack Baude and Will Whittington) 1:33.16.

**200 freestyle** — @1. Chris Morris (St. Cloud Tech) 1:37.82; Sam Ciegler (St) DQ.

**200 individual medley** — @1. Hayden Zheng (St. Louis Park) 1:47.36; 4. Aidan Bloomquist (St) 1:52.20.

**50 freestyle** — #@1. Will Whittington (St) 20.20; 9. Jack Baude (St) 21.37.

**Diving** — 1. Tyler Barrett (St. Michael-Albertville) 399.10. Prelims: 28. Tate Sorensen (St) 125.80.

**100 butterfly** — \*@1. Chris Morris (St. Cloud Tech) 48.11; 16. Jack Baude (St) 51.15; 30. Brodie Watson (St) 52.70.

**100 freestyle** — #@1. Will Whittington (St) 44.14.

**500 freestyle** — %1. Jackson Brown (Maple Grove) 4:28.81; 14. Sam Ciegler (St) 4:49.24.

**200 freestyle relay** — \*@1. Chanhassen/Chaska, 1:22.54; #@2. Stillwater (Aidan Bloomquist, Jack Baude, Brodie Watson and Will Whittington) 1:24.24.

**100 backstroke** — %1. Luke Logue (Eden Prairie) 49.59.

**100 breaststroke** — @1. Hayden Zheng (St. Louis Park) 54.08; #9. Aidan Bloomquist (St) 57.20.

**400 freestyle relay** — @1. Chanhassen/Chaska, 3:02.72; 16. Stillwater (Brodie Watson, Dylan DeAgazio, Jaden Petersen and Sam Ciegler) 3:15.28.

\* All-time state record  
# Stillwater school record  
@ Automatic All-American  
% All-American consideration

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# TITLE

(Continued from page 12)

“Most of the shots came outside the dots, but we had four or five high quality chances and obviously we ended up putting one of them in,” Jalosuo said.

Hill-Murray did not give up, but the Ponies made sure it stood up.

“My message was that we didn’t have to change anything,” Jalosuo said. “I felt we were the better team in the second period so we were just focusing on getting pucks deep and winning races and also winning the blue line.”

Hill-Murray defeated the Ponies 3-1 in last year’s section finals and the coach was not surprised it was a low-scoring game. Pioneers goaltender Grace Zhan finished with 15 saves.

“I was expecting that,” Jalosuo said.

What did surprise her slightly was that special teams didn’t play a larger role. Both teams have a success rate of around 25 percent on power plays, but there were just three penalties called in the game — none in the third period.

“I would have bet my money on special teams,” Jalosuo said. “I was counting on us to score one or two power play goals but there was only a couple penalties so that was not the factor in this game. I’m very happy with the direction we are going where we are taking fewer penalties each game.”

Hill-Murray didn’t make it easy in the third, but the Ponies did not break.

“They fought extremely hard,” Jalosuo said of the Pio-



Junior Sydney Scheel fires a shot towards the net in the second period of Stillwater’s 1-0 victory over Hill-Murray in the Section 4AA finals on Saturday, March 20 at the St. Croix Valley Rec Center. (Gazette staff photos by Stuart Groskreutz)

neers. “It’s hard to play when a team is trying to end the other team’s season, that’s the hardest thing to do.”

As the seconds ticked away, jubilation eventually set in for the Ponies with a wild celebration after the horn sounded.

“There was a lot of emotions from the seniors and juniors that have been in this program longer than I have, so I can imagine what was going through

their head that finally we made it to state,” Jalosuo said. “It has been a long 11 years for Stillwater High School and everybody was very happy and very emotional. It was cool to see the kids coming together. I think of the freshmen and making it to state, they see the banners every single day hanging up at the rec center and they see this program hasn’t been to state since 2009. The seniors and juniors know that this is not an every day or every year thing, so it’s a special moment.”

This will be Stillwater’s sixth trip to the state tournament, three of which occurred under Tony Scheid as the Ponies compiled an 8-1 record while placing fifth and claiming two titles from 2006 to 2009. Stillwater also qualified for state under Ken Bjorlin in 1995 and again while led by Doug Long in 1997.

The uncertainty that comes with conducting a season during a pandemic was driven home again since the state pairings were announced. Centennial (16-5), which was scheduled to play second-seeded Edina in the quarterfinals, has been forced to drop out of the tournament due to a positive test for COVID-19.

The Hornets (19-0) will advance to the semifinals and wait for the winner of Alexandria (14-4-2) vs. third-seeded Minnetonka (15-3-3).

Hill-Murray	0	0	0	—	0
Stillwater	0	1	0	—	1

**First period** — No scoring.  
**Second period** — 1. St. Brooke Nelson (Josie St. Martin) 16:45.  
**Third period** — No scoring.

## Girls hockey

### Class AA state quarterfinals Saturday, March 27

Centennial vs. #2 Edina, 11 a.m.  
 Alexandria vs. #3 Minnetonka, 1 p.m.  
 Farmington vs. #1 Andover, 6 p.m.  
 #5 Eastview vs. #4 Stillwater, 8 p.m.

### Semifinals

Thursday, April 1, 6 & 8 p.m.

### Finals

Saturday, April 3, 1 p.m.

**Penalties** — H-M, 1-2:00; St, 2-4:00.  
**Saves** — H-M (Grace Zhan) 5-7-3—15; St (Lily Timmons) 9-7-8—24.

### Stillwater 7, Mounds View 2

Playing for the third time in less than a week, the Ponies breezed past fifth-seeded Mounds View 7-2 in the section semifinals on Thursday, March 18 at the SCVRC. It was Stillwater’s third victory over the Mustangs this season, but Ponies coach Mira Jalosuo was concerned coming in due to All-Metro goaltender Abbie Thompson.

The Ponies kept her busy while putting 48 shots on goal.

“She is in my opinion probably the top goalie in the conference and getting seven behind her back was huge,” Jalosuo said. “Everybody was into the game. Our offense was extremely dangerous and the girls came ready to play.”

Avery Braunschauen opened the scoring for the Ponies just two minutes into the game, but

Mounds View evened the score at 5:46 with a goal from Ava Bullert.

Myah Krueger and Morgan Wohlers each scored for Stillwater in the last four minutes of the first to build a 3-1 lead.

Jaclyn Kulzer extended the lead with a power play goal at 4:29 of the second period. It was the first of two special teams goals for the Ponies as Brooke Nelson added a power play tally with just over a minute remaining.

In between, Stillwater received two goals from Josie St. Martin in the third period to stretch its lead to 6-2.

“Two power play goals was very good,” Jalosuo said. “Give Mounds View a lot of credit. It is an up-and-coming program and they’re coaching staff is young and passionate.”

Sophie Cronk finished with 15 saves for in goal for the Ponies.

Mounds View	1	1	0	—	2
Stillwater	3	1	3	—	7

**First period** — 1. St. Avery Braunschauen (Addison Finn) 2:02; 1. MV, Ava Bullert (Paige Landis) 5:46; 2. St. Myah Krueger (Brooke Nelson, Josie St. Martin) 13:12; 3. St. Morgan Wohlers (Lexi Huber) 15:26.

**Second period** — 4. St. Kaclyn Kulzer (Nelson, St. Martin) pp. 4:29; 2. MV, Gabi Bullert (Lindsay Berggren) 4:46.

**Third period** — 5. St. St. Martin (Krueger, Nelson) 6:36; 6. St. St. Martin (Kylie Ligday, Krueger) 11:57; 7. St. Nelson (Finn, Krueger) pp. 15:50.

**Penalties** — MV, 3-6:00; St, 3-6:00.  
**Saves** — MV (Abbie Thompson) 12-13-16—41; St (Sophie Cronk) 5-7-3—15.

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Josie St. Martin, left, and Brooke Nelson celebrate Nelson’s goal late in the second period of Stillwater’s 1-0 victory over Hill-Murray in the Section 4AA finals on Saturday, March 20 at the SCVRC.

# FIELD

(Continued from page 12)

in all four events, including two each in the vault, bars and beam. The top three gymnasts in the all-around qualify to state as individuals, in addition to the three highest finishers in each event who did not qualify in the all-around.

Stillwater’s only concern is putting together the best possible team score.

“We’re going out there and are focused on the team and that is it,” Dennis said. “We’re not focused on individual scores. Everybody has a job to do and that’s what we’re here for and they all understand that. Their chance for glory is to work as a group.”

Stillwater posted the highest team score in three of four events in Section 4AA, including a more than two-point margin over the next highest team in the bars. The Ponies outscored Mahtomedi 37.175-35.125 in the event.

Erica Stanton received a season-high score of 9.6 to finish first in the event and pace Stillwater in bars. Ashley Peterson (9.475) placed third to join Stanton in qualifying for state as individuals. Norah Bates (9.225) and Katelyn McDowell (8.875) completed the scoring for the Ponies.

“Bars we had four out of five, so we did OK, but didn’t score very high,” Dennis said.

Stillwater’s highest score came in the vault at 37.425, led by McDowell (9.575) and Kendall Rogers (9.45) in first and second place to qualify as individuals. Liberty Quast (9.3), Bates (9.1) and Heather Wiehe (9.1) also delivered strong scores for the Ponies in vault.

“We did really well on vault,” Dennis said. “Katelyn had a season high on vault and Erica had a season high on bars. Those were both huge and added a few tenths to round off some of the falls on beam.”

The beam was the one event that featured some hiccups for the Ponies, whose score of 35.775 was second overall behind White Bear Lake (36.375). Peterson (9.325) and McDowell (9.25) placed second and third to qualify for state while Bates (8.775) and Rogers (8.425) completed the scoring.

“We had three falls on beam that we counted, that’s 1.5 points right there,” Dennis said.

Peterson also qualified for state after placing second in the floor with a score of 9.45. Rogers (9.275), Bates (9.0) and Evelyn Johnson (8.9) also factored into the scoring for Stillwater in that event.

“We did pretty good on



The Stillwater gymnastics team celebrates their Section 4AA championship on Saturday, March 20 at White Bear Lake High School. (Contributed photo)

floor so we did keep our score up, but we did leave a lot out there,” Dennis said.

The Ponies finished second in their most recent state appearance in 2019, which came one year after the program’s only state team championship in 2018.

Unlike those seasons when the Ponies were loaded with experienced, returning gymnasts, this year’s campaign has featured more uncertainty — and not just because of a pandemic which delayed the start of the season for

a month.

“It’s pretty surreal, I guess,” Dennis said. “I didn’t even know if the season was going to happen. After we were third last year in sections, I had no aspirations this year that we were suddenly going to be a state qualifier. I thought we’d be better than last year when we started the season, but I didn’t think we’d even win sections. They have worked really hard. It was not a goal or expectation, especially early when we were 142-ing forever. I’m thankful we get to go and

I hope we can be in the top half of that group. I think the girls can finish in the top half and that would be a great accomplishment.”

Stillwater finished third in the section a year ago after compiling a 4-4 dual meet record. The Ponies feature just two seniors on this year’s team with Wiehe and Bates. Bates and Rogers are the only current team members who have previously competed at state.

This is the ninth time in school history the Ponies have qualified for state and the fourth time in the past

five seasons.

“Obviously with any team that has had some experience they’re more familiar with the pressure and can lead the way,” Dennis said. “We have three or four girls that were around at that time so they have a good feeling for what it’s like. It’s not going to be the same pressure as at the U of M where there’s so many people and officials everywhere. Now you’re going to have four teams and in a high school gym, so it’s going to be a different kind of pressure. It’s just going to look a little different.”

Stillwater has benefited from a deep and balanced lineup all season and don’t expect that approach to change at state.

“We added like two or three kids,” Dennis said. “Ashley Peterson was great and she helps us on the top end, but we didn’t add any rock stars who are going to win any individual stuff. We are so deep with kids who can just do strong gymnastics. Usually those teams have one or two that are way up there who raise the average, but we have a bunch of girls who are so strong, but very deep. It’s just a group that’s working hard — and there’s a bunch of them.”

Because there are two sessions, the athletes will

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# WRESTLING

(Continued from page 13)

honors at 160 pounds. Hunter Lyden pinned his first two opponents in 29 and 18 seconds before defeated Mounds View's Mannix Morgan 8-1 in the finals.

"Tuttle, Lyden, Ryder Rogozke and Roman Rogotzke had great days," Hartung said.

Lyden, a state champion at 152 pounds last season, has missed much of this abbreviated season with a rib injury, but Hartung said it looks like he hasn't missed a beat.

"Lyden is in a great place," the coach said. "He's wrestling awesome."

The second-ranked and No. 2-seeded Ponies, who carry a 29-2 record into the state semifinals against St. Michael-Albertville, were fortunate with their depth that they didn't have to rush Lyden back too soon. Stillwater defeated Mounds View 52-20 in the Section 4AAA finals and dispatched Hastings 51-21 in the state quarterfinals.

"It's hard to judge a kid's rib cage, but he knows his body," Hartung said. "We didn't need him until the end and we played it safe with him."

Stillwater's other first-place finish came from undefeated Matt Hogue at 138 pounds. Hogue also made quick work of his first two opponents with pins that took less than a minute and he closed it out with a 12-7 win over Irondale's Charlie Dojan in the finals.

"Hogue was extremely solid, no issues," Hartung said.

Junior Zachariah Hunter is forced to wrestle up a few weight classes due to Stillwater's strength in the upper weights, but he delivered an impressive performance while placing second at 220 pounds. After losing to eventual champ Austin LeFlay of Hastings 6-4 in the semis, Hunter responded with three straight pins. He stopped Denis Tokin of Woodbury in 2:26 to claim true second.

"Hunter had a great day," Hartung said. "He was probably our biggest surprise. He's a 182-pounder — 184 with growth weight — and a utility guy for us. For him to go up to 220 pounds and get a spot in the state tournament is pretty good."

Stillwater is also loaded in the bottom half of its lineup and advanced wrestlers with second-place finishes at 106, 120 and 132 pounds.

The most notable was senior Reid Ballantyne, a four-time defending state champion who has battled hand and back injuries while missing much of the season. He cruised through the first two matches with pins 59 and 44 seconds, but then injury defaulted to Woodbury's Will Bents in the finals.

There was a chance he would still need to wrestle a true-second match, but the opponent he defeated in the semifinals won the match for third place. Hartung said he could have wrestled in a true-second match if required, but figured additional rest was a better option.

"We had a little concern about his back, which has been an issue all season," Hartung said.

Wrestling at 106 pounds, Dylan Dauffenbach quickly pinned his first two opponents before falling to Blake Beissel of Hastings 5-2 in the finals to finish in second place.

Sam Bethke also advanced with a runner-up finish at 120 pounds. He defeated Jack Bainbridge of Hastings 9-4 in the semifinals and his trip to the final eight was secure despite falling to Zachary Silvis of Park 11-3 in the finals.

"Sam wrestled great," Hartung said.

The biggest surprise for the Ponies probably came at 113 pounds with Cittadino Tuttle finishing with a 2-2 record to place third. In a weight class with three solid contenders, Tuttle advanced to the finals with a pin and a major decision, but was stopped by Alex Braun of Woodbury 18-3 in the finals. Needing to win one more match to advance, Tuttle was leading 5-1 late in his match against Brandon Lee of Tartan before a wild finish resulted in a 6-5 setback. Lee caught Tuttle in a cradle and rallied to keep his season going.

"He probably deserved to be in the final eight, but he had two other good wrestlers," Hartung said. "It happens. He'll learn from it."

Ben Colagiovanni posted a 3-1 record at 145 pounds, but did not get an opportunity to wrestle for true second after losing to Woodbury's Cade Johnson 8-5 in the

semifinals. Colagiovanni responded with two straight victories, including a 5-2 win over Mounds View's Joseph Muhlstein in the third-place match.

Corstian Riesselman was contender at 152 pounds, but illness led to him forfeiting the third-place match.

"Corstian was a flip of the coin," Hartung said. "We thought he could have qualified, but he got sick in the middle of the tournament. After he lost that match, he wanted to make sure he was ready for the team on Thursday."

Prior to the state prelims at SAHS, which included teams from Section 3AAA and 4AAA, the individual Section 4AAA tournament was held on Wednesday, March 17. Stillwater wrestlers were seeded first in nearly every weight class, which meant most received a first-round bye. The Ponies won 15 of the 17 matches that were actually wrestled and prevailed by pin in 14 of those.

Stillwater wasn't able to match its school-record total a year ago when 13 individuals qualified for state with 16-person brackets, but it's still a large group competing. And, of course, the team tournament remains the focus as the Ponies try to take that next step after finishing as the runner-up to Shakopee each of the past two years.

"I would say everything is right in place for us," Hartung said. "We got all of our guys for the first time all year wrestling for us. We feel good and, in my opinion, there's going to be no room for excuses. If we go in there and compete and if we don't come out victorious it means we could have competed better. But it's a group of high school kids and that's not always predictable."

## State prelims 3AAA-4AAA

### Stillwater results

#### Top two qualify for state

**106 — Dylan Dauffenbach (2-1, 2nd place):** pinned Hayden Christanson (East Ridge) :39; pinned Gunner Mullen (Park) 1:14; lost to Blake Beissel (Hastings) 5-2.

**113 — Cittadino Tuttle (2-2, 3rd place):** pinned Thomas Krueger (Eagan) 2:51; major dec. Creed Peterson (Hastings) 14-3; lost by tech fall to Alex Braun (Woodbury) 18-3; lost to Brandon Lee (Tartan) 6-5.

**120 — Sam Bethke (2-1, 2nd place):** pinned Nay Seya (St. Paul Harding) :47; dec. Jack Bainbridge (Hastings) 9-4; lost by major dec. to Zachary Silvis (Park) 11-3.

**126 — Brody Urbanski (1-2, DNP):** won by forfeit over Skylar Little Soldier (Hastings); pinned by Brad Little (Woodbury) 3:20;

pinned by Carter Whalen (Mounds View) 4:41.

**132 — Reid Ballantyne (2-1, 2nd place):** pinned Dylan Wiebusch (Park) :59; pinned Chris Zuniga (Irondale) :44; lost by injury default to Will Bents (Woodbury).

**138 — Matt Hogue (3-0, 1st place):** pinned Myles Belmore (Henry Sibley) :51; pinned Derrick Steinke (Hastings) :39; dec. Charlie Dojan (Irondale) 12-7.

**145 — Ben Colagiovanni (3-1, 3rd place):** pinned Cael Viesselman (East Ridge) 3:12; lost to Cade Johnson (Woodbury) 8-5; major dec. Myles Lee (St. Paul Harding) 9-0; dec. Joseph Muhlstein (Mounds View) 5-2.

**152 — Corstian Riesselman (2-2, 4th place):** pinned Logan Calumpit (East Ridge) :26; pinned by Austin Kalina (Eagan) 3:07; dec. Enock Moindi (Henry Sibley) 4-0; forfeit.

**160 — Anthony Tuttle (3-0, 1st place):** pinned Jon Wollan (Henry Sibley) 1:40; dec. Tanner Holt (East Ridge) 7-0; pinned Nolan Myers (Hastings) 1:03.

**170 — Hunter Lyden (3-0, 1st place):** pinned Cam Steffel (East Ridge) :29; pinned Donald McKenzie (Henry Sibley) :18; dec. Mannix Morgan (Mounds View) 8-1.

**182 — Ryder Rogotzke (3-0, 1st place):** pinned Mee Soe (St. Paul Central) :39; pinned Brady Alquist (Mounds View) :28; pinned Mathew Sloan (White Bear Lake) :47.

**195 — Roman Rogotzke (3-0, 1st place):** pinned Paul Vang (St. Paul Harding) :27; pinned Blake Clemons (Hastings) :25; pinned Jacob Solheim (Mounds View) 1:52.

**220 — Zachariah Hunter (4-1, 2nd place):** pinned JC Melendez (Park) :57; lost to Austin LeFlay (Hastings) 6-4; pinned Theron Cartier (White Bear Lake) 3:31; pinned Jack Kelley (Eagan) 1:42; pinned Denis Tokin (Woodbury) 2:26.

**285 — Andrew Rantila (1-2, DNP):** pinned by Diego Villeda (Eagan) 3:50; major dec. Tyler Miller (Hastings) 16-7; pinned by Patrick Lavin (Irondale) :52.

## Section 4AAA

### Stillwater results

**106 — Dylan Dauffenbach:** bye; pinned Logan Arends (Tartan) 3:26.

**113 — Cittadino Tuttle:** bye; pinned Christian Carlson (White Bear Lake) :34.

**120 — Sam Bethke:** bye; dec. Brady Swenson (Mounds View) 11-8.

**126 — Brody Urbanski:** pinned by Michael Rasmussen (Irondale) 3:53; pinned Ali Charif (White Bear Lake) 1:42; pinned Dylan Larson (Centennial) 3:11.

**132 — Reid Ballantyne:** bye; pinned Jose Laurides (Tartan) :48.

**138 — Matt Hogue:** bye; pinned Tyler Brock (White Bear Lake) 1:18.

**145 — Ben Colagiovanni:** bye; pinned Romer Pugh (Irondale) 4:20.

**152 — Corstian Riesselman:** bye; pinned Donte Hubbard (North St. Paul) 1:50.

**160 — Anthony Tuttle:** bye; pinned Azeil Bestmen (Irondale) 1:16.

**170 — Hunter Lyden:** bye; pinned Brandon Mohrland (Tartan) 1:15.

**182 — Ryder Rogotzke:** bye; pinned Owen Hackett (Centennial) :10.

**195 — Roman Rogotzke:** bye; pinned Adrian Rios-Wolfram (North St. Paul) :40.

**220 — Zachariah Hunter:** bye; pinned Theron Cartier (White Bear Lake) 3:08.

**285 — Andrew Rantila:** pinned Alex Johnson (Tartan) 1:42; pinned by Patrick Lavin (Irondale) 5:01.

# FIELD

(Continued from page 15)

gather in the evening to find out whether the scores they produced in the morning are good enough to land them on the virtual awards stand.

"I believe we can win the whole thing. I really do," Dennis said. "But it's gymnastics so anything can happen. It's not like soccer where if you give up a goal you can fix it. They don't have to be great or have their best night, they just need to get through everything and complete all their routines and that would put them in contention to win the whole thing."

## Team standings

1. Stillwater 147.0; 2. White Bear Lake 141.325; 3. Mahtomedi 140.725; 4. Mounds View/Irondale 140.25; 5. Roseville 139.9; 6. St. Paul Central 121.975; 7. Tartan 114.175; 8. North St. Paul 111.9.

## Individual results

**Vault (Stillwater 37.425) —** \*1. Katelyn McDowell (St) 9.575; \*2. Kendall Rogers (St) 9.45; 3. Julia Clark (MV/Ir) 9.35; T4, tie, \*Abbey Bush (Mah) 9.3 and Liberty Quast (St) 9.3; 9. Norah Bates (St) 9.1; 10. Heather Wiehe (St) 9.1.

**Uneven bars (Stillwater 37.175) —** \*1. Erica Stanton (St) 9.6; 2. Grace Squires (WBL) 9.575; \*3. Ashley Peterson (St) 9.475; \*4. Abbey Bush (Mah) 9.325; 6. Norah Bates (St) 9.225; 11. Katelyn McDowell (St) 8.875; 17. Kendall Rogers (St) 8.225.

**Beam (Stillwater 35.775) —** 1. Laney Gunderson (WBL) 9.75; \*2. Ashley Peterson (St) 9.325; \*3. Katelyn McDowell (St) 9.25; \*4. Lia Zimmerman (WBL) 9.125; 10. Norah Bates (St) 8.775; 14. Kendall Rogers (St) 8.425; 25. Evelyn Johnson (St) 8.1.

**Floor (Stillwater 36.625) —** \*1. Savannah Huber (Mah) 9.475; \*2. Ashley Peterson (St) 9.45; 3. Laney Gunderson (WBL) 9.425; \*4. Avery Dox (MV/Ir) 9.425; 8. Kendall Rogers (St) 9.275; 12. Norah Bates (St) 9.0; 14. Evelyn Johnson (St) 8.9; 15. Katelyn McDowell (St) 8.875.

**All-around —** \*1. Laney Gunderson (WBL) 36.9; \*2. Julia Clark (MV/Ir) 36.9; \*3. Grace Squires (WBL) 36.625; 4. Katelyn McDowell (St) 36.575; 5. Norah Bates (St) 36.1; 8. Kendall Rogers (St) 35.375.

\* Individual state qualifier

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