

CLASS AA

HILL-MURRAY PIONEERS

Adversity struck the Hill-Murray Pioneers this season and they responded in a fashion only their closest observers would expect and that was another trip to the state tournament. For the fourth straight season, the Pioneers advanced to the show. After winning the state title last year, the Pioneers started this season with a bang and waltzed into Braemar Arena and defeated the top-ranked Edina Hornets 3-1.



Zepeda



Westerhaus

The win propelled them to a 9-1-0 start in their first 10 games, until they were suddenly forced to regroup with a younger group of players. With coach Bill Lechner leading the way, the Pioneers came out of the box with a 1-1 tie against the Tartan Titans. Lechner's team hit its share of bumps in the road, yet finished strong with an 18-9-1 record.

Tyler Zepeda (23-24-47) was a great player entering the season and became even better in the wake of adversity. He never pouted or questioned what might have been. He led by example and played the game with verve and passion, evidenced by his two big time goals in the Section 4AA finals against Stillwater. Zepeda is arguably one of the fastest skaters in the state -- he can flat out fly.



Casto

But Zepeda is not alone among top scorers as Jeff Westerhaus (15-14-29) has scored his share of big goals and sophomore Ben Bahe (9-19-28) has stepped up with a



Photo by Tim Kolehmainen

Hill-Murray's Jordan Johnson (16) rushes the puck from his defensive position earlier this season at the X.

productive campaign.

Defensively, Chris Casto has been a horse and has been helped by the clutch Jordan Johnson who scored the game-winner against Stillwater on an end to end rush to send the Pioneers to state. It is the second time in two years Johnson has figured in the game winning goal of the section finals. Goalie Tim Shaughnessy enters the tournament with a 14-9-1 record.



Johnson

Lechner has stepped behind the

bench for 19 seasons and his teams always have a chance to win. They will be disciplined and all row the boat in the same direction. Never count out the defending state champions as they already have proven they can do what they set their minds to. The Pioneers will be making their 23rd state tournament appearance and will enter play with designs on going 3-0 for the weekend for the second straight season. ■

Program info

Conference: Classic Suburban
 Section: 4AA
 Record: 17-9-1
 State trips: 1975, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 83 Champs, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 91 Champs, 92, 93, 97, 99, 2000, 02, 06, 07, 08 Champs, 09
 Coach: Bill Lechner
 Assistants: Pat Schafhauser, Tony Ciro, Mark Tolfesbol

Top players

Scorers	G	A	Pts
Tyler Zepeda	23	24	47
Jeff Westerhaus	14	16	30
Ben Bahe	8	19	27
Jack Walsh	12	12	24
Ryan Holler	8	14	22

Goalies	W-L-T	GA	SV
T. Shaughnessy	13-9-1	2.16	.903

Full roster

#	Name	Gr	Pos
1	Basil Sampair	11	G
2	David Bruchu	11	F
6	Chris Casto	11	D
7	Tyler Zepeda	12	F
10	Andy Faust	9	F
12	Ryan Holler	10	F
14	Zach LaValle	8	C
15	Kevin Becker	10	F
16	Jordan Johnson	11	D
17	Ben Bahe	10	F
18	Craig Meier	12	F
19	Jeff Westerhaus	12	F
20	John Phillippi	10	D
21	Jack Walsh	11	F
22	Willie Faust	11	F
25	Jonathan Stadler	12	D
26	Loren French	10	F
27	J.D. Cotroneo	10	D
28	Kevin Schulze	10	D
33	Tim Shaughnessy	10	G

Road to the X

Section 4AA quarterfinals, 2/28
Hill-Murray 3, North St. Paul 1

Johnson 1 goal, 1 assist
 Shaughnessy 25 saves

Section 4AA semifinals, 3/4
Hill-Murray 5, White Br Lk 4 OT

Zepeda 2 goals, 2 assists

Section 4AA finals, 3/6
Hill-Murray 5, Stillwater 4 OT

Zepeda 2 goals

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