

CLASS A

HUTCHINSON TIGERS

After falling to upset Section 3A winner Litchfield/Dassel-Cokato in last year's tournament, Hutchinson was anxious to prove to the rest of the state that it was the best team in the section this winter.

Mission accomplished.

The Tigers shut down three straight foes to win the Section 3A title, getting strong play from junior goalie Zak Swenson and defenseman Joey DeMeyer. Swenson held the Tigers in during the first two periods of the section final against top-seeded New Ulm while his teammates got on track. DeMeyer made sure he had plenty of help, seemingly rarely leaving the ice over the entire game.

Both will be needed at the X Wednesday as the Tigers drew the new bane of Section 3A: Warroad. The Warriors sent Litchfield packing last year and now get Hutchinson in the quarterfinals this year.

Don't be fooled into thinking Hutchinson is a defense-only team, though. Led by snipers Riley Bengsten and Mitchell Cowger, the Tigers can also light the lamp. Bengsten exploded in the section playoffs, tallying eight of the Tigers' 11 goals, including hat tricks in the first two games. He paces the team with 38 goals, while Cowger has a team-best 37 assists. They've combined to score more than half of Hutch's goals on the season.

Jesse Baune and Michael Hantge provide some scoring depth, as each tallied double-figure goals this



Photo by Lyle Diekmann, Litchfield Independent Review

Hutchinson was led into the state tournament by the scoring prowess of Riley Bengsten and Mitchell Cowger (right).

year. Sophomore Logan Hahn helps with an offensive game from the blue line.

Still, it's a tall order for the Tigers against the state's most storied Class A program. Hutch has made four appearances in the Class A tourney, the last in 2000 when this year's players were in elementary school.

The Tigers finished fourth in the tough Missota Conference losing twice to Holy Angels and Red Wing and splitting with New Prague. But

Hutch is the only one still alive in the tournaments. The Tigers also lost to Prior Lake and Willmar in January, while tying the St. Paul Saints during a winter holiday tournament. ■

Program info

Conference: Missota
 Section: 3A
 Record: 19-7-1
 State trips: 1995, 97, 2000, 09
 Coach: Matt Telecky
 Assistants: Ross Windling, Nick Nelson, Josh Karg

Top players

Scorers	G	A	Pts
Riley Bengsten	38	24	62
Mitchell Cowger	24	37	61
Michael Hantge	11	19	30
Logan Hahn	5	22	27
Jesse Baune	12	7	19

Goalies	W-L-T	GA	SV
Zak Swenson	19-7-1	2.46	.906

Full roster

#	Name	Gr	Pos
1	Caleb McLain	12	G
2	Michael Hantge	11	F
3	Trace Adams	9	F
4	Riley Bengsten	12	F
5	Blake Boardson	11	F
6	Joey DeMeyer	12	D
7	Tanner Grina	11	F
8	Lucas Doelger	12	D
9	Brent Neubauer	11	D
10	Ted Getzke	11	F
11	Peter Ewing	12	F
12	Gabe Goodwater	11	F
13	Andrew Carlson	12	F
14	Mitchell McLain	10	D
16	Joe Meier	11	F
18	Jordan Johnson	10	G
19	Logan Hahn	10	D
20	Jesse Baune	12	F
27	Mitchell Cowger	12	F
33	Zak Swenson	11	G

Road to the X

Section 3A quarterfinals, 2/27 Hutchinson 3, Windom Area 1

Bengsten 3 goals
 Swenson 23 saves

Section 3A semifinals, 2/28 Hutchinson 5, Willmar 1

Bengsten 3 goals, 2 assists

Section 3A finals, 3/6 Hutchinson 3, New Ulm 1

Bengsten 2 goals, 1 assist
 Swenson 30 saves

