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The members of the Luverne girls' hockey team gather at the blue line after the introductions at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul prior to the start of the Class A quarterfinals.

Magical hockey 2019-20 season results in trip to state for Luverne Cardinal girls

By John Rittenhouse

Great things can happen when a group of athletes band together to achieve a shared objective.

In a nutshell, that's exactly what the Luverne High School girls' hockey team did during the 2019-20 season.

The Cardinals were able to live in the moment and produced positive results during their 20-4-1 regular season, but that wasn't their objective.

The girls knew what happened in the postseason would define what the team truly accomplished this winter, and nothing less than a trip to St. Paul would satisfy every player on the roster.

"Looking back on it now, we really did have a strong season," said Cardinal coach Tony Sandbulte.

"The girls were determined to get to the state tournament, and they got there."

The easiest way to meet their objective was to play well dur-

ing the regular season and earn a favorable seed for the Section 3A Tournament.

The Cardinals completed that task.

After winning three of the first five games of the season, LHS went on a seven-game winning streak to cap its pre-Christmas schedule with an 11-2 record.

The Cards won their eighth straight game at the Herb Brooks Holiday Classic in Blaine late in December before recording a win and a tie in the final two games to return home with a 12-3-1 record on New Year's Day.

With one month remaining in the regular season at that point, the Cardinals were a strong finish away from gaining positive positioning for the postseason.

The Cardinals got the job done by winning eight of their final nine games.

Luverne's impressive regular season featured a perfect 10-0

record against Section 3A opponents and a second-place finish in the Big South Conference with a 12-2 showing.

Luverne was rewarded for its effort in the regular season by earning the No. 1 seed and an all-important bye for the first round of the Section 3A Tournament.

The Cardinals couldn't afford a letdown during section play to accomplish their objective.

They passed that test by outscoring their two opponents by a combined score of 10-4 to capture the program's second section title in program history.

Mankato East, a team that defeated LHS in overtime in last year's semifinals on the way to capturing the section championship, emerged as Luverne's first postseason opponent.

The Cardinals doubled up the score on Mankato East (6-3) at

State/continued on page 4



Luverne junior center Rozilyn Oye takes the ice prior to the start of the state quarterfinal game against Breck at the Xcel Energy Center.



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State/continued from page 3

the Blue Mound Ice Arena to earn their first berth in the Section 3A championship game since 2016.

Another Mankato squad, the West High Scarlets, proved to be the final obstacle in Luverne's path to the state tournament.

The teams battled to a draw at one through two periods of the Section 3A championship game, but the Cardinals netted three unanswered goals in the final 17 minutes of play to claim their section championship.

Luverne did accomplish its advantage by winning the section crown, but the euphoria the team experienced by defeating Mankato West didn't extended to the state tourney.

LHS squared off against a pair of teams that were ranked among the top five Class A squads competing in the state tournament in St. Paul, where the Cardinals were outscored 16-5 during two losses that completed a 22-6-1 season.

Breck, the state's No. 1-ranked team, notched an 8-1 victory over the Cards in the quarterfinals.

South St. Paul, the state's fifth-ranked team, handed the Cards an 8-4 setback in the consolation semifinals.

"It was what I would call an eye-opening experience for our girls at the state tournament, especially in that game against Breck," Sandbulte said.

"As coaches, we are really proud of how hard our girls played in those games. They kept on working hard, and I think we represented Luverne and Section 3A well."

There's no shame in losing games to state-ranked teams in St. Paul.

In fact, the experience could help the 2020-21 team in the near future.

LHS will miss the contributions seniors Claire Baustian and Isabel Smeins made to the program throughout their careers, but the balance of the roster will return to the team next winter.

That means the Cardinals will enter the 2020-21 campaign as the section favorites, and they will be a marked team every time they take the ice in the surrounding area.

With that being revealed, now is not the time to be looking into



Luverne junior wing Rylee Gee battles for the puck with Breck forward Aiko Sims during the state quarterfinals in St. Paul.

the future.

It is time to look back at what was a sensational 2019-20 hockey season for the Cardinals.

With the thanks going to the featured generous advertisers that make this special section possible, we at the Star Herald share this comprehensive look at the recently completed season.

State/continued on page 5



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John Rittenhouse photo/0227 ssp 17

Luverne sophomore forward Billi Connell disrupts the progress of South St. Paul's Lillie Ramirez during a state game at the TRIA Rink in St. Paul. Connell led the Cardinals with two goals during the tournament. She netted Luverne's lone goal against Breck and the first of Luverne's four goals against South St. Paul.

State/continued from page 4

**Nov. 8
Luverne 10,
Morris-Benson 1**

The Cardinals started the 2019-20 season in impressive fashion by coasting to a nine-goal victory over the Storm in Benson.

Luverne dominated play on both sides of the ice during a debut that featured a five-point effort by Reghan Bork.

Kamryn Van Batavia and Claire Baustian recorded hat tricks during the win.

Luverne gained the upper hand early as Shelby Kracht and Baustian netted one goal each in the first 6:32 of the contest.

Bork, who notched four assists in the contest, made it 3-0 before Van Batavia completed a four-goal opening stanza with 33 seconds remaining.

Luverne upped the lead to 6-0 when Van Batavia and Baustian netted goals in the first 9:47 of the second period, but M-B snapped Luverne's six-goal run with 4:10

remaining in the stanza.

LHS regained a six-goal cushion (7-1) when Mallory Nelson registered an unassisted goal with 26 seconds left in the second period.

Van Batavia and Baustian completed their hat tricks by registering unassisted tallies in the first 6:58 of the third period.

Regan Feit netted a goal in the third period as well.

Mallory Von Tersch made eight saves for an LHS squad that out-

shot the Storm 32-9 in the game.

Nelson added two assists to the winning cause, while Van Batavia notched one assist.

**Nov. 9
Luverne 6,
Prairie Centre 0**

The Cardinals completed a weekend sweep of a pair of road games to open the season when they skated to a six-goal win over the Blue Devils in Sauk Rapids.

Luverne sported a command-

ing 49-1 advantage in shots on goal and scored six goals in the first two periods of play to set the stage for a convincing win.

Cheyenne Schutz recorded a one-save shutout in goal during her first appearance of the season in net for LHS.

Kamryn Van Batavia produced her second hat trick of the season and Claire Baustian notched two assists and recorded three points

State/continued on page 6

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State/continued from page 5

to lead the offense.

Anika Boll gave the Cards a 1-0 lead 1:36 into the game.

Van Batavia and Shelby Kracht added goals 37 seconds apart in the final three minutes of the first period to give the Cards a 3-0 cushion.

Van Batavia scored her second goal of the game 60 seconds into the second period before completing her hat trick with 10:19 remaining in the stanza to push the lead to 5-0.

Baustian wrapped up the scoring in the game when she registered an unassisted tally with 9:09 left in the second period.

Reghan Bork contributed one assist to the winning effort.

The Cardinals experienced a successful home and Big South Conference debut when they upended the Trojans at the Blue Mound Ice Arena.

Luverne outshot the Trojans 38-22 and never trailed in the contest, but it was a very competitive game.

Worthington fell behind 2-1 in the opening stanza only to knot the score at two when Hannah Berriescored 1:31 into the second period.

The game remained deadlocked until 6:07 remained in the second stanza, when Claire Baustian found the net for LHS to give the Cards a 3-2 edge.

Baustian's goal ignited what proved to be a run of three unanswered goals to end the game for LHS.

Kamryn Van Batavia and Regan Feit scored one goal each in the final 3:03 of the third period to give the Cards a three-goal victory.

Van Batavia opened the scoring with an unassisted goal during a short-handed situation at the 10:23 mark of the first period.

Worthington tied the game at one with a power-play goal from Kya Nikel 1:13 later, but Shelby Kracht scored for LHS with 5:58 remaining in the stanza to give the Cards a 2-1 edge.

Mallory Von Tersch stopped 20 of the 22 shots she faced in goal for Luverne.

Brynn Thier led the Cards with two assists, while Billi Connell,



John Rittenhouse photo/0227 ssp 11

Luverne sophomore forward Reghan Bork recorded one assist in each of Luverne's games at the state tournament. Bork started the season as a defenseman before moving to a forward position to give LHS more scoring potential.

State/continued on page 7



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FROM THE CHRIS+DOC SHOW



John Rittenhouse photo/0227 ssp 7
Luverne center Claire Baustian reaches for an airborne puck during a state game against South St. Paul at the TRIA Rink. Baustian is the team captain.

State/continued from page 6

Rozilyn Oye, Reghan Bork, Baustian and Van Batavia registered one assist each.

Nov. 16
Litchfield-Dassel-Cokato 4, Luverne 3

The Cardinals fell out of hockey's unbeaten ranks when they lost a one-goal game in overtime to the Dragons in Litchfield.

The tightly contested battle featured both teams scoring one goal

in each of the first three periods of play to force an extra session.

L-D-C's Alyssa Olson settled the issue when she registered her second goal of the game 1:29 into overtime.

The Dragons led 1-0 when Emily Johnson scored seven minutes into the first period.

Kamryn Van Batavia netted the next two goals to give the Cardinals a 2-1 edge.

Van Batavia netted a power-

play goal with 4:40 remaining in the first period after being set up by Reghan Bork.

An unassisted tally by Van Batavia gave the Cards a one-goal lead 32 seconds into the second period.

L-D-C knotted the score at two when Sophia Hillmann notched a power-play goal with 2:10 remaining in the second period.

A power-play tally by Olson 3:53 into the third period gave

L-D-C a 3-2 edge that was erased when Bork scored for Luverne 39 seconds later.

Rylee Gee received an assist for Bork's game-tying goal.

Luverne outshot the Dragons 32-24 in the contest.

Cheyenne Schutz made 20 saves in net for the Cards.

The Cardinals received their first Big South Conference setback of the season when they took on the Eagles at the Blue Mound Ice Arena.

New Ulm sported a commanding 31-10 advantage in shots on goal during the contest, but the Cardinals remained in contention the entire night.

The Eagles gained a 1-0 lead

Nov. 19
New Ulm 2, Luverne 1

State/continued on page 8

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John Rittenhouse photo/0227 breck 10

Luverne junior defenseman Brynn Thier defends a shot by Breck’s Josie Lang during the state quarterfinals at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul.

State/continued from page 7

when Ally Steffensmeier registered an unassisted goal with 50 seconds left in the first period.

Luverne tied the score at one 51 seconds into the second period, when Rozilyn Oye tapped a rebound into the net for her first goal of the season.

New Ulm scored what proved to be the final goal of the night when Julia Helget found the net with 14:13 remaining in the second stanza.

Cheyenne Schutz turned in a 29-save effort in goal for the Cards.

Kamryn Van Batavia and Shelby Kracht received assists for Oye’s goal.

**Nov. 21
Luverne 12,
Windom 2**

The Cardinals turned in an outstanding offensive performance when they took on the Eagles in Windom.

Luverne exploded for 12 goals in the game, including 10 in the first two periods of play, to lift the Cardinals to a 10-goal victory.

Shelby Kracht, Claire Baustian, Kamryn Van Batavia, Billi Connell and Rylee Gee led the offensive assault by scoring two goals each.

Van Batavia led the Cards with four assists, while Gee, Connell, and Brynn Thier added three as-

sists each to the effort.

Kracht, Baustian and Anika Boll scored one goal each in the first 9:56 of the game to give the Cards a 3-0 lead.

Windom’s Abby Ignaszewski snapped the run with a power-play tally that came with 3:04 remaining in the opening stanza, but Van Batavia countered for Luverne with 1:50 remaining in the period to give the Cards a 4-1 cushion.

Van Batavia’s tally in the first period ignited what turned into a nine-goal run for LHS.

Luverne scored six times in the second period, and five of those

goals came in the first 7:24 of the stanza.

Connell and Gee found the net twice during the first eight minutes of the second stanza, while Van Batavia added another tally.

Baustian capped the seven-goal second period with 3:50 remaining to give the Cards a 10-1 advantage heading into the third period.

Kracht registered a power-play goal and Rozilyn Oye scored in the first 6:33 of the third period to end Luverne’s 12-goal night.

Madyson Fredin netted Windom’s second power-play goal of the night to cap the scoring

with 57 seconds remaining in the contest.

Oye, Baustian and Reghan Bork contributed two assists to the winning effort, while Morgan Ahrendt and Mallory Nelson kicked in one assist each.

Mallory Von Tersch made 12 saves for an LHS squad that sported a 35-14 advantage in shots on goal in the game.

**Nov. 23
Luverne 4,
Minnesota River 3**

The Cardinals picked up a

State/continued on page 9

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John Rittenhouse photo/0227 ssp 27

Luverne freshman goalie Mallory Von Tersch came off the bench to make 33 saves during a loss to the South St. Paul Packers in the TRIA Rink.

State/continued from page 8

tightly contested conference victory when they topped the Bulldogs by one goal at the Blue Mound Ice Arena.

The game was tied at two different occasions before Luverne produced what proved to be the decisive goal with 8:51 left in the third period.

Anna Pavlo, who registered

a hat trick for Minnesota River, erased a 3-1 deficit when she scored with 6:35 remaining in the second period before knotting the score at three with a power-play tally that came 7:03 into the third stanza.

Regan Feit became Luverne's fourth player to register a goal in the game when she scored 1:06

later to give the Cards a 4-3 lead they wouldn't relinquish.

Kamryn Van Batavia gave LHS a 1-0 edge 5:23 into the first period before Pavlo tied the game for the Bulldogs with five minutes remaining in the stanza.

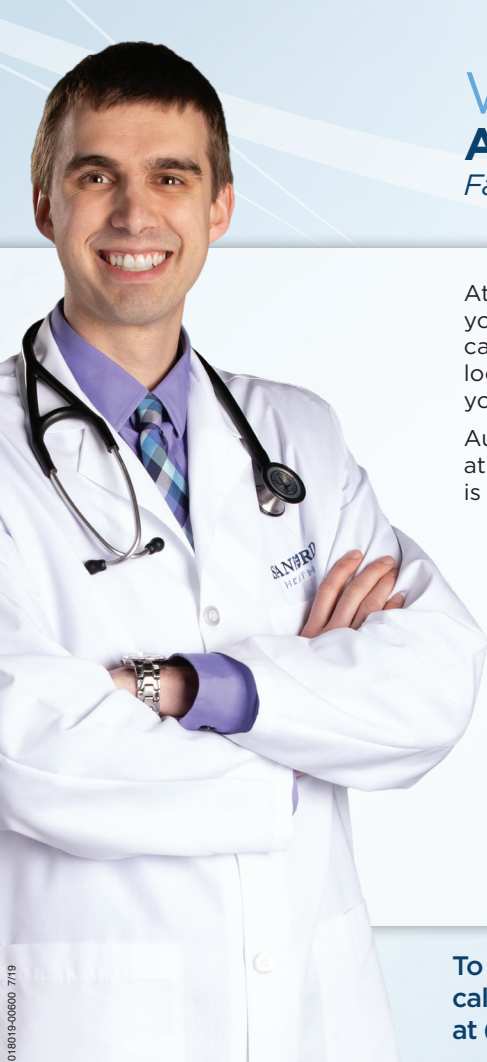
Luverne's Rozilyn Oye and Claire Baustian scored goals 41 seconds apart with less than eight minutes left to play in the second period to give the hosts a 3-1 advantage.

Luverne, which sported a 38-20

advantage in shots on goal in the game, received a 17-save effort from Cheyenne Schutz.

Rylee Gee contributed two assists to the winning cause,

State/continued on page 10



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John Rittenhouse photo/0227 breck 5

Luverne Cardinal hockey fans Eddie Edstrom (left), Jacob Bullerman (middle) and Cade VandenHoek (right) settle into their seats at the Xcel Energy Center.



John Rittenhouse photo/0227 ssp 26

Luverne junior defenseman Shelby Kracht advances the puck during a state tournament game against the South St. Paul Packers. Kracht started the season as a forward before moving to defense.

State/continued from page 9_____

while Baustian, Billi Connell, Van Batavia and Oye chipped in one assist each.

**Dec. 3,
Luverne 3,
Marshall 1**

The Cardinals opened the December portion of their 2019-20 schedule by skating to a two-goal victory in Marshall.

Luverne netted a pair of first-period goals, and that proved to be the final margin of victory as the Cardinals collected their fourth Big South Conference win of the campaign.

Kamryn Van Batavia scored two goals and Claire Baustian and Regan Feit recorded two assists to highlight the win.

Van Batavia opened the scoring 3:12 into the game after being set up by Feit and Baustian.

Bork made it 2-0 when she produced a power-play goal with

an assist going to Feit at the 7:38 mark of the opening period.

Marshall climbed back into contention when Emelia Barker registered a power-play goal with 2:44 remaining in the second period to make it a 2-1 game.

Luverne settled the issue with 11:39 left in the third period, when Van Batavia notched her second goal of the game.

Bork and Feit received assists for the final tally.

Luverne sported a 35-15 advantage in shots on goal in the game.

Mallory Von Tersch stopped 14 of the 15 shots she faced in goal for the Cardinals.

**Dec. 7
Luverne 9,
Waseca 0**

The Cardinals won four consecutive games for the first time

State/continued on page 11

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John Rittenhouse photo/breck 31

Luverne freshman forward Kamryn Van Batavia pressures a Breck puck-handler during the state quarterfinals at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul. Van Batavia scored 42 goals in the regular season, the third-best total in the state. She also was tied for sixth place in total points during the regular season with 67.

State/continued from page 9

this season when they rolled to a nine-goal victory over the Blue Jays at the Blue Mound Ice Arena. Three different LHS players netted two goals each, and Cheyenne Schutz turned in a shutout as the Cardinal goalie to highlight the win. Mallory Nelson, Reghan Bork and Billi Connell found the net

two times each during the contest. Schutz stopped every shot she faced in net for an LHS squad that sported a 36-17 advantage in shots on goal during the game. Luverne assumed control of the contest by scoring seven goals in the first two periods of play, including four goals that came in the first 10:25 of the contest.

Nelson opened the scoring at the 14:48 mark of the first period before Morgan Ahrendt gave the Cards a 2-0 lead 1:05 later. Connell and Bork recorded unassisted goals 2:50 apart later in the period to give the hosts a 4-0 lead they would take into the second period. Luverne upped its lead to 7-0

by scoring three times in the first 6:12 of the second stanza. Nelson recorded her second goal of the game 2:35 in the stanza before Rylee Gee registered an unassisted tally 1:39 later. Bork capped her two-goal showing with a power-play tally that came with 10:48 remaining in the second period.

Luverne scored twice in the first eight minutes of the third period to ice the win. Connell scored an empty-net goal 1:11 into the final stanza before Regan Feit charted the final goal of the game with nine minutes left to play.

State/continued on page 12



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John Rittenhouse photo/breck 43
Luverne head coach Tony Sandbulte, who recorded his 200th-carrer victory during the regular season, takes questions at the press conference after the loss to Breck.

State/continued from page 11

Gee, Kamryn Van Batavia, Anika Boll, Sophie Holmberg, Ahrendt, Schutz, Shelby Kracht, Rozilyn Oye and Nelson chipped in one assist each to the winning cause.

**Dec. 10
Luverne 6,
Albert Lea 5**

An uprising in the third period lifted the Cardinals to a one-goal

win over the Tigers at the Blue Mound Ice Arena.

Luverne faced two-goal deficits at four different occasions in the game, but the Cardinals scored three unanswered goals in the final 7:45 of the contest to pull out an improbable victory.

LHS, which sported a 38-28 advantage in shots on goal in the game, received goals 2:19 apart from Rylee Gee and Rozilyn Oye

to knot the score at five with 5:16 left in regulation play.

Luverne senior Claire Baustian settled the issue when she netted what proved to be the game-winning goal with 39 seconds remaining.

Albert Lea led 2-0 when the first period was complete after receiving goals from Allison Dulitz and Mia Fjelsta in the final 6:43 of the stanza.

Luverne trimmed the difference to one goal (2-1) when Reghan Bork scored with 3:53 remaining in the second period, but Fjelsta netted her second goal of the game with six seconds left in the period to give the Tigers a 3-1 lead entering the third stanza.

The teams exchanged goals in the first 9:41 of the third period before Luverne went on its three-goal run to end the game.

Kamryn Van Batavia and Reghan Feit (a power-play tally) scored at the 15:50 and 10:23 marks for LHS.

Esther Yoon and Lucy Stay scored at 12:29 and 8:19 for the Tigers.

Bork and Baustian charted three and two assists respectively for the winners.

State/continued on page 13

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State/continued from page 12

Oye, Anika Boll, Billi Connell and Gee chipped in one assist each.

Mallory Von Tersch made 17 saves in the first 27 minutes of the game before giving way to Cheyenne Schutz, who made six saves and blanked the Tigers in the final 14 minutes.

Dec. 14
Luverne 2,
Mankato East 1

The Cardinals notched a trophy victory when they nipped the Cougars in overtime in Mankato.

Mankato East, which topped the Cardinals in overtime during the Section 3A finals on the way to capturing the section title last season, couldn't knock off LHS on its home ice.

Luverne outshot the hosts 30-16 and scored the final two goals of the game to secure a victory.

The teams battled to a scoreless draw through two periods of play before East gained a 1-0 lead when Kailey Newton scored at the 10:09 mark of the third period.

Luverne, however, tied the score at one when Rylee Gee found the net after being set up by Kamryn Van Batavia with 8:37 remaining in regulation play.

The game went to overtime, where LHS senior Claire Baustian settled the issue by scoring a goal with 4:28 remaining in the extra session.

Gee and Reghan Bork received assists for Baustian's game-winning goal.

Cheyenne Schutz saved 15 of the 16 shots she faced in goal for the Cardinals.

Dec. 17
Luverne 5,
Windom 2

The Cardinals defeated the Eagles for the second time this season when the teams met at the Blue Mound Ice Arena.

Windom offered a better challenge in the rematch, but the Cardinals didn't flinch as they posted a three-goal victory.

Kamryn Van Batavia led the LHS offense by scoring two goals and recording two assists.

Reghan Bork added three assists to the winning effort.



John Rittenhouse photo/breck 14

State/continued on page 14 LHS players Claire Baustian (left) and Rylee Gee (right) watch the proceedings from the bench between shifts at the Xcel Energy Center.



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John Rittenhouse photo/breck 14

Luverne junior defenseman Regan Feit (5) swipes at a puck controlled by Breck’s Olivia Mobley during a state tournament game at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul.

State/continued from page 13

LHS topped the Eagles by 10 goals when the teams met in Windom Nov. 21, but the score was tied at one when the first period of the rematch was complete.

Rylee Gee gave the Cards a 1-0 lead at the 15:15 mark of the opening stanza, but Windom’s Abby Ignaszewski tied the score with 11:17 remaining in the period.

The score remained deadlocked until LHS registered a pair of goals 43 seconds apart late in the second period.

Van Batavia gave the hosts a 2-1 edge with a power-play tally that came with 4:12 remaining in the stanza.

Claire Baustian made it a 3-1 game at the 3:29 mark.

Luverne scored twice in the first

9:39 of the third period to put the game out of reach.

Billi Connell scored 2:33 into the final period, and Van Batavia netted her second goal with 7:21 remaining to make it a 5-1 game.

Windom’s Miranda Cory scored the final goal of the contest with 2:59 left to play.

Cheyenne Schutz made nine saves in goal for an LHS squad that sported a 44-11 advantage in shots on goal during the game.

Gee and Brynn Thier added one assist each to the winning effort.

Dec. 20
Luverne 6,
Waseca 3

The Cardinals notched their final Big South Conference win

in 2019 by skating to a three-goal victory in Waseca.

Luverne dominated the Blue Jays during a 9-0 victory at the Blue Mound Ice Arena Dec. 7, but the rematch was much more competitive.

Waseca scored the first two goals of the game and led 3-2 in the second period.

Luverne, however, registered the final four goals of the contest to sweep the season series with the Blue Jays.

Waseca’s Jayde Pederson opened the scoring with 27 seconds left in the first period, and the Blue Jays led by two (2-0) when Jacklynn Jevning scored 13



John Rittenhouse photo/breck 2

Luverne assistant coach Ellen Wenninger (right) chats with some Cardinal fans behind the bench at the Xcel Energy Center.

State/continued on page 15

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John Rittenhouse photo/breck 23

Luverne sophomore goalie Cheyenne Schutz stares down a shot off the stick of Breck’s Ally Qualley during the state quarterfinals in the Xcel Energy Center.

State/continued from page 14

seconds into the second period. Luverne found life five minutes later when Kamryn Van Batavia and Claire Baustian registered goals 32 seconds apart to knot the score at two with 10:50 remaining in the second period. Waseca regained the lead (3-2) when Pederson scored her second goal of the game at the 10:13 mark of the second period, but the Cardinals produced three power-play goals in the final 8:31 of the stanza to open a 5-3 advantage. Van Batavia, Billi Connell and Reghan Bork came through during the power-play situations for Luverne. Van Batavia came up with the lone goal of the third period to complete a hat trick with 12:18 left to play. Luverne outshot the Blue Jays 24-15 in the game.

Mallory Von Tersch made 12 saves in net for the Cardinals. Bork, Rylee Gee and Shelby Kracht charted two assists each for the winners. Rozilyn Oye and Brynn Thier chipped in one assist each.

**Dec. 30
Luverne 3,
Moose Lake 1**
The Cardinals opened the Herb

Brooks Holiday Classic by posting a two-goal victory over the Rebels at the Super Rink in Blaine. Luverne received a standout performance in net by Cheyenne Schutz and scored three goals in the final two minutes of the first and second periods to register the victory. Schutz was solid in net for the Cards, stopping 31 shots for an LHS squad that sported a 35-32

advantage in shots on goal during the game. Late-period goals by three different players gave Schutz all the support she needed to clinch the win for LHS. The first period was nearly complete when Kamryn Van Batavia and Claire Baustian recorded goals 15 seconds apart to give

State/continued on page 16

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John Rittenhouse photo/breck 40
Luverne freshman defenseman Mallory Nelson competes for the puck with Breck's Katie Theissen during the state quarterfinals. In the photo on the right, helmets of the LHS players are placed on the bench after the pregame skate before the Breck contest.

State/continued from page 15

LHS a 2-0 advantage with 1:07 remaining in the first period.

Rylee Gee upped the lead to 3-0 when she scored with 1:59 left to play in the second period.

Moose Lake's goal came from Jarnie Benzie, who found the net with 5:16 left in the third period.

Gee and Van Batavia notched two assists each for the winners.

Regan Feit chipped in one

assist.

Dec. 31 Northern Lakes 4, Luverne 1

An impressive nine-game winning streak came to an end when the Cardinals squared off against the Lightning during the second round of the Herb Brooks Holiday Classic in Blaine.

LHS led 1-0 when Kamryn Van Batavia scored 44 seconds into the contest, but Northern Lakes recorded the next four goals to saddle the Cards with their first setback since Nov. 19.

NL's Caitlyn Gutzman ignited what turned into a hat trick when she tied the game at one with a

State/continued on page 16



John Rittenhouse/breck 6



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State/cont.
from page 16

power-play goal that came with 9:36 remaining in the first period. Gutzman scored twice in the first 3:48 of the second period to give the Lightning a 3-1 advantage.

NL's Riley Fogarty completed the scoring in the game with a goal 4:07 into the third period.

LHS sported a 26-22 advantage in shots on goal in the game.

Reghan Bork recorded one assist for the Cards, while Mallory Von Tersch made 18 saves in net.

Jan. 1
Luverne 2,
University School of
Milwaukee 2

The Cardinals prevailed in a shootout to lock up second place in the Open Division at the Herb Brooks Holiday Classic in Blaine.

LHS and the Wildcats skated to a draw at two through regulation play and one eight-minute overtime session.

That result means the game will go down as a tie for both teams, but the Cards did prevail 2-1 in a shootout to earn second place in the division.

Kamryn Van Batavia and Reghan Bork netted goals in the shootout for LHS, while goalie Cheyenne Schutz made two saves in the shootout to give the Cards a win.

Luverne's Mallory Nelson opened the scoring at the 3:46 mark of the first period before Van Batavia found the net with 21 seconds left in the second period to make it a 2-0 game.

The Wildcats received a goal from Zoe Neudorfer 3:45 into the third period before Jordan Bonk knotted the score at two with a power-play tally that came with 9:19 left in regulation play.

Schutz played the entire game in goal for the Cards, but her save tally was unavailable.

Rozilyn Oye and Bork added one assist each to the winning effort.

Jan. 4
Luverne 6,
Prairie Centre 3

Luverne's first home game in



John Rittenhouse photo/breck 18

State/continued on page 18 Luverne Cardinal head coach Tony Sandbulte addresses his players during a timeout at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul.



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John Rittenhouse photo/breck 30
Luverne junior forward Rylee Gee attempts to clear the puck out of the defensive zone as Breck's Isabella Brama applies pressure in the state quarterfinals.

State/continued from page 17

2020 resulted in a victory when the Cardinals bested the Blue Devils at the Blue Mound Ice Arena.

LHS erupted for four goals in the first period and never trailed during its second game of the season against Prairie Centre.

Claire Baustian and Kamryn Van Batavia netted two goals in the game for the hosts, while Reghan Bork recorded two assists.

Rozilyn Oye sparked Luverne's first-period uprising by scoring 4:57 into the game.

Van Batavia upped the lead to 2-0 with an unassisted tally 1:02 later, but the Blue Devils received a goal from Megan Och to make it a 2-1 game with 6:43 remaining in the period.

Luverne responded with a goal from Mallory Nelson at 5:27 and a power-play tally from Baustian with 1:31 remaining to take a 4-1 cushion into the second period.

Van Batavia registered the lone goal of the second stanza with 4:48 remaining, upping Luverne's lead to 5-1.

Prairie Centre's Kayla Sayovitz snapped Luverne's three-goal run 4:53 into the third period, but

State/continued on page 19

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State/cont.
from page 18

Baustian countered for LHS with 7:43 left to play to regain a four-goal advantage (6-2) for the hosts. Robyn Gierke scored the final goal of the game for the Blue Devils with 5:49 remaining. Mallory Von Tersch made 12 saves in net for an LHS squad that sported a 47-15 advantage in shots on goal in the game. Regan Feit, Rylee Gee, Baustian and Shelby Kracht contributed one assist each to the cause.

**Jan. 7
Luverne 4,
Fairmont 1**
A big offensive game from Kamryn Van Batavia lifted the Cardinals to a three-goal win in Fairmont.

Van Batavia scored all four of Luverne's goals in a game that featured the Cardinals sporting a 40-17 advantage in shots on goal. With Van Batavia doing the scoring, Luverne opened a 3-0 lead in the game's first period. She netted unassisted goals at the 2:46 and 11:02 marks of the stanza.

Van Batavia registered a power-play goal with 4:08 remaining in the period to complete her hat trick.

LHSupped the lead to 4-0 when Van Batavia scored her final goal with 9:53 left to play in the second period.

Fairmont avoided being shut out when Emily Sokoloski found the net with 4:36 remaining in the game.

Cheyenne Schutz made 16 saves in goal for the Cardinals.

Reghan Bork and Rylee Gee contributed two and one assists respectively to the winning effort.

**Jan. 9
Luverne 9,
Morris-Benson 0**

The Cardinals clobbered the Storm for the second time this season when the teams squared off at the Blue Mound Ice Arena.

Reghan Bork turned in a four-goal effort offensively and Mallory Von Tersch registered a 14-save effort in net to highlight a nine-goal conquest.

Luverne scored three goals in all three periods of the game and sported a 48-17 advantage in shots on goal when the contest was complete.

Bork opened the scoring 1:27 into the game and Kamryn Van Batavia made it 2-0 39 seconds later.

Anika Boll found the net with 10:11 remaining in the opening period to give the Cards a 3-0



John Rittenhouse photo/breck 33

Luverne sophomore forward Billi Connell turned in a solid offensive showing during the state tournament. Connell scored two of Luverne's five goals during the games against Breck and South St. Paul.

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John Rittenhouse photo/breck 21

Luverne junior Rozilyn Oye forces Breck’s Emily Zumwinkle to pass the puck during a state game at the Xcel Energy Center. Oye registered two points during the tournament, recording one assist against Breck and scoring one goal against South St. Paul.

State/continued from page 19

cushion they would take into the second stanza.

LHS proceeded to net three unassisted goals in the second period to double its advantage (6-0).

Bork opened the scoring 2:07 into the stanza and Brynn Thier

added a goal four minutes later. Shelby Kracht capped the scoring in the second stanza with 4:14 remaining.

Bork registered Luverne’s fourth consecutive unassisted tally 4:25 into the third period. Claire Baustian joined the scor-

ing spree with 9:01 remaining before Bork capped her four-goal effort with 5:11 left to play.

Rozilyn Oye and Rylee Gee finished the game with two assists each.

Van Batavia, Baustian and Regan Feit added one assist each to

the winning effort.

Jan. 16
Luverne 4,
Mankato West 0

The Cardinals slayed a Section 3A foe when they registered a four-goal win over the Scarlets at

the Blue Mound Ice Arena.

Luverne’s Kamryn Van Batavia registered a hat trick and Cheyenne Schutz recorded a 14-save shutout in goal to highlight the win.

State/continued on page 21



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John Rittenhouse photo/ssp 15

Luverne sophomore forward Reghan Bork moves the puck around the stick of South St. Paul's Alyiah Danielson at the TRIA Rink in St. Paul.

State/continued from page 20_____

Van Batavia accounted for Luverne's first three goals of the contest.

She opened the scoring 8:37 into the second period before scoring her second goal of the period with 5:36 remaining.

Van Batavia completed her hat trick 2:26 into the third period.

Reghan Bork netted a power-play goal with 10:27 left to play to cap the scoring in the game.

Luverne, which outshot the Scarlets 41-14, received two assists from Shelby Kracht.

Claire Baustian, Regan Feit and Rozilyn Oye added one assist each to the winning cause.

Big South Conference win of the season when the Cards rolled to a six-goal victory over the Bulldogs in Le Sueur.

Three different players netted two goals each, and the Cardinals sported a 38-16 advantage in shots on goal during the victory.

Rozilyn Oye, one of the two-goal producers during the game, gave the Cards a 1-0 cushion when she registered an unassisted tally with 58 seconds remaining in the first period.

LHS netted four goals in the first 10:08 of the second period to gain control of the contest with a 5-0 lead.

Rylee Gee ignited the second-period uprising by scoring 3:11 into the stanza.



John Rittenhouse photo/breck 13

Jan. 20
Luverne 7,
Minnesota River 1
Luverne picked up its ninth

State/continued on page 22

Luverne junior defenseman Brynn Thier keeps a close watch on a developing play during a game against Breck at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul. The Cards lost the game to the Mustangs.



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John Rittenhouse photo/breck 9

The Luverne Cardinal players gather around goalie Cheyenne Schutz prior to the beginning of the state game against Breck in the Xcel Energy Center.

State/continued from page 21_____

Gee also scored the final goal of the run with 6:52 left in the period. Reghan Bork added a power-play tally at the 13:41 mark of the second period and Kamryn Van Batavia found the net at 9:19. Minnesota River’s Karina Leske scored her team’s lone goal of the game with 1:37 left in the second stanza. Oye and Van Batavia each found the net once in the first 2:29 of the third period to complete the scoring in the game. Cheyenne Schutz saved 15 of the 16 shots she faced in goal for the Cardinals. Van Batavia, Shelby Kracht and Anika Boll chipped in one assist each to the effort.

Jan. 23
New Ulm 4,
Luverne 1
The Cardinals lost an opportunity to move into a tie for first place in the Big South Conference

standings when they lost a three-goal game in New Ulm. In what was a rematch of a game played in Luverne on Nov. 12 (New Ulm prevailed 2-1), the Cardinals could have saddled the Eagles with their first league setback during the rematch. New Ulm didn’t let that happen. The Eagles scored four unanswered goals to end the game and outshot the Cardinals 49-17 during the victory. Luverne led 1-0 when Rylee Gee scored after being set up by Kamryn Van Batavia 1:12 into the second period. The rest of the game belonged to New Ulm, which received two-goal efforts from Jayda Helget and Molly Scheid to up the team’s BSC record to 11-0. Helget tied the score with her first goal of the game 4:56 into the second period before giving the

State/continued on page 23



John Rittenhouse photo/ssp 1

Luverne junior defenseman Shelby Kracht and South St. Paul’s Bailey Vesper catch their breaths prior to a faceoff during the game in the TRIA Rink in St. Paul.

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A bouncing puck captures the attention of Luverne forwards Kamryn Van Batavia (left) and Reghan Bork (right) at a state game against South St. Paul in the TRIA Rink. John Rittenhouse photo/ssp 14

State/continued from page 22

Eagles a 2-1 edge with a power-play tally that came with 6:54 remaining in the second stanza. Scheid iced the win for New Ulm by scoring twice in the game's final 3:47.

Cheyenne Schutz made 45 saves in goal for the Cardinals.

**Jan. 28
Luverne 8,
Worthington 0**

The Cardinals bounced back

from taking their second Big South Conference loss of the season by registering an eight-goal league win in Worthington.

Luverne received two-goal efforts from three different players and a shutout performance in goal to highlight the rout.

Cheyenne Schutz made 13 saves in net for an LHS squad that sported a 39-13 advantage in shots on goal during the contest.

Kamryn Van Batavia, Rylee Gee

and Rozilyn Oye netted two goals each for the winners.

Van Batavia opened the scoring at the 10:16 mark of the first period and capped a three-goal first period for LHS with 40 seconds remaining.

Oye scored her first goal in between the Van Batavia tallies.

LHS added five goals in the first 8:22 of the second period to complete the scoring in the game.

Gee netted an unassisted tally

36 seconds into the stanza and recorded the final goal of the second period with 8:38 remaining.

Reghan Bork and Claire Baustian scored goals 2:57 apart before Oye completed her two-goal effort with 11:15 remaining in the period.

Gee, Baustian and Billi Connell charted two assists for the Cardinals.

Mallory Nelson and Shelby Kracht chipped in one assist each

to the winning effort.

**Jan. 30
Luverne 7,
Fairmont 0**

The Cardinals completed a sweep of their annual season series with Fairmont by skating to a seven-goal victory over their Big South Conference foe.

Sophomore Reghan Bork reg-

State/continued on page 24



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John Rittenhouse photo/ssp 9

Luverne sophomore goalie Cheyenne Schutz makes a save on a shot off the stick of South St. Paul's Justice Rambaum during a state game in the TRIA Rink.

State/continued from page 23

istered a hat trick and Kamryn Van Batavia scored two goals to lead an LHS offense that sported a 34-21 advantage in shots on goal in the game.

Mallory Von Tersch was equally impressive in goal as she stopped all 21 shots she faced in the game.

LHS had to battle to pull out a three-goal win in Fairmont earlier in the month, but the Cardinals dominated the rematch.

LHS scored six goals in the first two periods of play and added a third-period tally to win the game handily.

The Cardinals gained control of the contest with a four-goal first period.

Rozilyn Oye opened the scoring with a short-handed tally 6:16 into the contest before Rylee Gee netted a power-play goal 4:40 later to make it 2-0.

Bork scored twice in the final 3:43 of the opening period to give the Cards a commanding 4-0 cushion.

LHS extended the lead to 6-0 with Van Batavia netting a pair of second-period goals.

The freshman wing recorded a short-handed, unassisted goal with 4:50 remaining before putting another puck into the net with 2:23 remaining in the stanza.

Bork completed her hat trick 1:04 into the third period with an unassisted tally.

Oye and Bork finished the game with two assists each.

Gee and Van Batavia charted one assist each.

Jan. 31
Luverne 5,
Marshall 3

The Cardinals wrapped up a 20-4-1 regular season by topping the Tigers at the Blue Mound Ice Arena on the last day of January.

It was Luverne's second two-goal win of the year against its Big South Conference rival, and the Cardinals locked up second place in the league with a 12-2 mark.

The game was a competitive contest.

Kaitlynn Timm's second goal of the game for the Tigers, a power-play tally with 5:34 remaining in the third period, knotted the score at three.

LHS responded to the challenge by scoring two goals in a span of seven seconds as the period progressed to ice the victory.

Kamryn Van Batavia and Rylee Gee, who netted two goals each for the winners, came up with the key goals late in the game.

Van Batavia registered a power-play goal with 3:06 left to play, and Gee provided an insurance tally at the 2:59 mark.

Regan Feit ignited a two-goal first period for Luverne 2:31 into the game.

Van Batavia made it 2-0 with 8:07 remaining in the stanza.

Marshall fought back to knot the score at two late in the second

State/continued on page 25



John Rittenhouse photo/ssp 19

Freshman goalie Mallory Von Tersch made appearances in the net during both of Luverne's games in the state tournament.

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John Rittenhouse photo/breck 39

Luverne freshman keeps pressure on Breck senior forward Sophie Fagley during the Minnesota State Class A quarterfinal-round game in St. Paul.

State/continued from page 24_____

period.

Tessa Gannott recorded a short-handed goal with 5:18 left in the second stanza before Timm tied the score with 2:49 left in the period.

Gee regained the lead (3-2) for the Cardinals with 1:06 left in the second period.

Luverne, which received a 13-save effort from Cheyenne Schutz, outshot the Tigers 48-16.

Van Batavia, Shelby Kracht and Rozilyn Oye contributed two assists each to the winning effort.

Gee chipped in one assist.

Feb. 8
Luverne 6,
Mankato East 3

The Cardinals qualified for the championship game of the Section 3A Tournament for the first time since the 2015-16 season when they doubled up the Cougars at the Blue Mound Ice Arena.

Top-seeded Luverne outshot No. 4 M-E 40-18 and received a four-goal performance from Reghan Bork to eliminate the defending section champions.

Kamryn Van Batavia gave the Cards a 1-0 lead 34 seconds into the game before Bork netted her

first goal with 47 seconds left in the first period.

The Cougars trimmed the difference in half (2-1) when Kaylee Eykyn scored her first of two goals with five seconds left in the first period, but the Cards were able to answer the challenge.

LHS scored three goals in the first 8:04 of the second period to open a 5-1 advantage.

Bork ignited the rally with a power-play tally 4:52 into the stanza and scored again 2:06 later to make it 4-1.

Rozilyn Oye scored the final goal of the run at the 8:56 mark of the stanza.

The Cougars tried to climb back into contention when Jess Eykyn and Kaylee Eykyn scored goals in the final two minutes of the second period to make it a two-goal (5-3) difference.

Luverne, however, shut out ME in the third period and padded its lead to 6-3 when Bork recorded a power-play tally with 16:37 remaining in the game.

Cheyenne Schutz stopped 15 of the 18 shots she faced in goal for the Cardinals.



John Rittenhouse photo/Breck 24

Luverne's Rozilyn Oye advances the puck during the state game against Breck in St. Paul.

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John Rittenhouse photo/Breck 26

Luverne freshman Kamryn Van Batavia led the 2019-20 Cardinal girls in total points during a 22-6-1 season that came to an end at the state tournament.

State/continued from page 25

Bork, Van Batavia, Regan Feit, Brynn Thier and Mallory Nelson added one assist each to the winning effort.

**Feb. 11
Luverne 4,
Mankato West 1**

The Cardinals locked up their first Section 3A championship since 2016 when they posted a three-goal victory over the Scarlets at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter.

The game was a tightly contested battle between top-seeded

Luverne and No. 3 MW through two-plus periods.

Luverne, however, scored three goals in a span of 3:04 in the third period to claim the second Section 3A title in program history.

Senior Claire Baustian scored twice for an LHS squad that sported a 39-21 advantage in shots on goal in the game.

Cheyenne Schutz was solid in goal for the Cardinals, stopping 20 shots overall and 12 alone in the first period.

Baustian opened the scoring with a power-play goal that came

with 2:05 remaining in the first period.

The Scarlets erased Luverne's 1-0 lead when Molly Grundhoffer tied the score with an unassisted tally 4:08 into the second period.

The score remained deadlocked at one until Luverne's three-goal eruption in the third period.

Reghan Bork ignited the rally when she netted the go-ahead goal with 7:24 remaining in the game.

Baustian capped her two-goal effort with 4:55 left to play to

make it a 3-1 game, and Kamryn Van Batavia converted a penalty shot 30 seconds later to cap the scoring.

Reghan Feit contributed two assists to the winning cause.

Rylee Gee, Rozilyn Oye and Van Batavia chipped in one assist each.

**Feb. 19
Breck School 8,
Luverne 1**

Luverne's first state-tournament game in four years turned into a humbling experience when

the Cardinals squared off against the Breck School during the Class A quarterfinals at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul.

The Mustangs entered the clash as two-time defending state champions and drew the No. 1 seed for the state tournament after being ranked No. 1 in Class A at the end of the regular season.

Breck lived up to its billing by erupting for eight first-period goals to set the stage for a seven-goal victory.

State/continued on page 27



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State/continued from page 26

LHS had no answer for Breck seniors Olivia Mobley and Ally Qualley as both players registered hat tricks in the opening stanza.

Mustang freshman Ava Lindsay added two goals to the winning effort.

Qualley, who led the state with 44 assists during the regular season, opened the scoring 55 seconds into the game.

Mobley, who produced the state's second-highest goal total of 52 tallies during the regular season, scored twice in a span of 4:19 to make it a 3-0 game 7:21 into the contest.

Qualley registered her second goal of the game at the 9:12 mark of the period before Lindsay found the net for the first time with 8:54 remaining to up the lead to 5-0.

Qualley completed her hat trick with a power-play goal at the 6:49 mark of the stanza.

Lindsay produced her second goal with 5:47 left before Mobley finished her hat trick with 3:16 remaining in the period.

With an 8-0 lead and a 25-4 advantage in shots on goal in the opening period, Breck opted not to take another shot during the game.

LHS didn't register a shot on goal in the second period, but they put three shots on net and recorded their lone goal of the game in the third period.

Billi Connell put the Cardinals on the scoreboard 2:45 into the final period after being set up by Reghan Bork and Rozilyn Oye.

Cheyenne Schutz started the game in goal for the Cardinals and made 17 saves in 25 chances in the first two periods.

Mallory Von Tersch played the final period without facing a shot.

Feb. 20
South St. Paul 8,
Luverne 4

Luverne's 22-6-1 season came to an end with a four-goal loss to South St. Paul during the consolation semifinals staged at the TRIA Rink in St. Paul.

The Cardinals played with the Packers in a first period that ended with SSP sporting a 2-1 edge.

The Packers, however, scored

five consecutive goals in the second and third periods to open a 7-1 advantage before winning by four goals at game's end.

SSP entered the game as the tournament's fourth seed and was ranked fifth in Class A at the end of the regular season.

The Packers flashed their talent by outshooting Luverne 60-19 in the contest.

SSP received a hat trick from junior Ella Reynolds and two goals each from senior Brynn Sexauer and sophomore Lillie Ramirez to set the stage for victory.

Packer Gabbie Madison netted the first goal of the game 8:08 into the contest before Ramirez made it 2-0 with 6:56 seconds remaining in the stanza.

Luverne gained a boost in confidence when Billi Connell scored with 39 seconds left in the opening period to make it a 2-1 game.

SSP exploded for four goals in the first 4:53 of the second period to gain control of the game.

Ramirez found the net 49 seconds into the stanza before Sexauer registered consecutive goals 43 seconds apart to give the Packers a 5-1 cushion.

Reynolds scored her first goal of the game 4:53 into the second period to cap SSP's scoring in the stanza.

Reynolds upped SSP's lead to 7-1 when she scored 3:22 into the third period, but Luverne countered with a three-goal run to trim the difference to 7-4 with 3:10 left to play.

Rylee Gee started the spurt by netting an unassisted tally with 8:06 remaining and Kamryn Van Batavia scored 1:14 later to make it 7-3.

Rozilyn Oye capped the 2-0 run with 3:10 remaining in the game.

Reynolds completed the scoring for SSP with 2:36 left to play.

Regan Feit turned in a two-assist effort for the Cardinals, while Connell and Reghan Bork notched one assist each.

Cheyenne Schutz started the game in goal and saved 19 of the 25 shots she faced before giving way to Mallory Von Tersch in the second period.

Von Tersch was peppered with 35 shots and made 33 saves.



John Rittenhouse photo/ssp 5
Luverne junior defenseman Regan Feit advances the puck from behind the net during an 8-4 loss to South St. Paul at the TRIA Rink in St. Paul. The game ended Luverne's magical season.



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Congratulations Cardinals!



Section 3A Champions State Tournament Qualifiers



JOHN RITTENHOUSE PHOTO

Team members pictured include (front row, from left) Brenn Siebenahler, Rozilyn Oye, Claire Baustian, Regan Feit, Reghan Bork, Anika Boll, Kamryn Van Batavia, Cheyenne Schutz, (middle row) Morgan Ahrendt, Shelby Kracht, Rylee Gee, Mallory Von Tersch, Mallory Nelson, Brynn Thier, Krystyn Skindelien, Sophie Holmberg, (back) Billi Connell, assistant coach Ellen Wenninger, Isabel Smeins, coach Tony Sandbulte and student manager Alyssa Campbell. Missing is student manager Jocelynn Mann.

*We're proud to support
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