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Meridian wins first state title

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After rolling through the round robin untested, Meridian found itself facing a familiar foe in the state high school hockey tournament finals.

Meridian faced Boise in the tournament finals at Qwest Arena in November and in the Boise city championships. And like the last two title games, Meridian came out on top with a 3-1 win Sunday afternoon at Tautphaus Park for the first state title in school history.

"We've been battling them all year long," Meridian head coach Gary Chapman said. "We've probably played them 10 times. We've had three championship games against Boise, so we know what to expect from them."

To claim the state championship, though, Meridian had to search for leaks in Boise goalie Eric Lyons, who made 62 saves.

"I told the kids to not get frustrated," Chapman said. "Keep peppering him with shots and get those rebounds."

Meridian's Brad Moorhouse was the first one to put a chink in Lyons' armor with 10:30 left in the second period.

Moorhouse collected a rebound and slipped a shot toward Lyons. He managed to get a piece of it, but the puck trickled in for a four-on-four goal.

Taylor Crawford gave Meridian a two-goal lead when he and Devon Harris broke down the ice on a two-on-one. Crawford passed to Harris for the first shot, which Lyons stopped, but Crawford buried the rebound.

Boise answered back with less than 30 seconds remaining in the period when Charles Guthrie fired a shot from the blue line and Tommy Stolz redirected the shot in traffic in front of the net.

Boise continued the pressure in the third period and took a two-man advantage with a minute left with its goalie pulled and Meridian's Kevin Costello in the penalty box.

But Greg Chapman iced the game with an empty-net goal with 23 seconds left.

If it hadn't been for Greg Chapman's last goal, Gary Chapman said he wasn't sure his team could have held on.

The state title is a first in school history, but Meridian lost in the finals last year to Boise in Sun Valley and to Timberline two years ago in Idaho Falls.

"I guess the third time is the charm," Gary Chapman said.

Meridian 7,

Bonneville-Hillcrest 3

Before Bonneville-Hillcrest had a chance to break a sweat, Meridian took a 1-0 lead.

Meridian's Devon Harris scored 17 seconds into the game in a win that propelled Meridian to the title game.

"They just play a faster hockey than we're used to," Bonneville-Hillcrest coach Gary Bowden said. "Every one around here has lost to them and just the thought of that is intimidating. They play a notch above the rest of us, and it showed in the score."

Josh Forbush scored two goals for Bonneville-Hillcrest but he couldn't hold off Meridian as seven different players recorded goals.

Bonneville-Hillcrest's Jared Hergesheimer scored the final goal with 0.3 seconds left and assisted on Forbush's first goal.

Boise 1, Sun Valley 0

Boise advanced to the championship game thanks to a shutout from goalie Eric Lyons. He stopped 19 shots to keep the goal clean.

The two were headed to a scoreless overtime until Boise's Charles Guthrie scored the game winner with 7:53 left in the third period.

Tommy Stolz and Josh Bruni assisted on Guthrie's goal.

Idaho Falls 5, Salmon 3

Salmon's Garret Stahl opened the scoring, and it was the best thing that could have happened to Idaho Falls.

The Tigers then woke up and scored the next five goals to put the game out of reach in a battle of two fourth-place teams from pool play.

"We did this all weekend," Idaho Falls coach Robert Johnson said. "We played to competition. Most of the time we played down. I'm sure the kids took them lightly and figured it was a game we'd win easily. It was probably good to get first goal scored on them."

All three Idaho Falls seniors, Jake Johnson, Bryce Ponce and Brandon Proctor, scored a goal in their last home game. Johnson added an assist and Jared Latham had a goal and an assist.

Salmon's Levi Aldous scored two third-period goals to lead his team.

Mountain View 6, Skyline 2

Skyline took a 2-1 lead in the second period on a goal from Dylan Ridgeway, but Mountain View's Chris Hjorth erased the lead with three unanswered goals.

Hjorth started with an unassisted, shorthanded goal with 3:40 left in the second period. He then added an even-strength goal in the second with 1:53 left and another shorthanded goal in the third period.

"We gave up a 3-on-5 shorthanded goal and that kind of took the wind out our

sails," Skyline coach Craig Herrmann said.

Hjorth finished with four goals in a game of two third-place teams from pool play.

Dylan Ridgeway led Skyline with a goal and an assist. Cole Behm recorded Skyline's other goal.