

## STATE HOCKEY FINAL



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Padua's Mike Stokar, left, fights for the puck with Toledo St. John's Jesuit's Andrew Heldt during the first period of the state hockey final at Nationwide Arena in Columbus.

# Padua's dreams put in check

## St. John's outplays Bruins to win title

TIM WARSINSKEY  
Plain Dealer Reporter

COLUMBUS — History was not on Padua's side Sunday in Nationwide Arena.

ST. JOHN'S	6	Arena.
PADUA	4	

The Bruins have one of the most successful hockey programs in Ohio, but their quest for a fourth state title fell short in a 6-4 loss to St. John's Jesuit.

The Titans (29-7-3) captured the first state championship for metropolitan Toledo while ending a string of seven consecutive titles won by Cuyahoga County schools. St. John's, an all-boys Catholic school, also won the 1999 state final, but later forfeited to Bowling Green because of an ineligible player.

"It is kind of a relief to bring this one back for Toledo," St. John's senior forward Andrew Heldt said. "There's a lot of willpower when you have that many people to play for."

It wasn't Padua's decision to start freshman Evan Phenny in goal, or the quality of the Bruins' play that cost them a chance to win the state title. They limited their mistakes and demonstrated typical resilience, but simply were outplayed over the long haul.

"They never let us be the team we are," Padua coach Doug Hauser said. "That's how you win state championships."

Padua senior Zack Stryffeler, who scored twice, said St. John's was too thorough for Padua to get the upper hand.

"They had three lines who could skate well," he said. "Their goaltender played an extraordinary game. Things didn't go our way and they capitalized on our mistakes. All you can do is tip your hat to them."

Padua actually outshot the Titans, 31-29, thanks to a 15-8 advantage in the third period when the Bruins poured it on with shots from every angle. The sec-

## BEYOND THE ICE STATE TOURNAMENT INSIDER

### Quote of the day

"I put a young man in a position that anybody his age shouldn't be put in, and he exceeded my expectations. Three of the goals he never saw. He was screened." — Padua coach Doug Hauser on the play of freshman goalie Evan Phenny, who allowed five goals against 16 shots in 20 minutes, five seconds.

### Folding in the crease

In Saturday's 3-2 state semifinal victory, Padua had two goals disallowed because a Bruin was in the crease. Replays of St. John's forward Cam Hauenstein's goal that gave it a 3-1 lead showed his left foot was in the crease when he shot, but officials missed the call.

### Seeing Red

St. John's beat Padua twice in three games this season and finished 8-3-1 against Greater Cleveland's elite Red North Division, including a victory over champ University School in the semifinal. The Red North produced the previous seven state champions. "The Red North isn't the Red North it used to be," St. John's coach Mike Hayes said.

### Top guns

Mike Stokar led Padua with five points (two goals, three assists) in the two state games. Zack Stryffeler had two goals and two assists, and Joe Sposit registered one goal and three assists.

### He'll be back

Hauser said he will return for his 25th season next year. He is six victories shy of becoming the fourth Ohio coach to win 500 games.

— Tim Warsinskey

ond period was the difference. St. John's outshot Padua, 10-4, and it outscored the Bruins, 2-0, to take a 5-2 lead.

Padua (28-10-1) appeared finished when Titans junior forward Cam Hauenstein scored his third goal for a 6-2 lead with 12:47 remaining in the third period. It was the only goal allowed by Padua junior Antonio Bucca, who replaced Phenny five minutes into the second period.

As it did often this season, Padua's offense responded. Stryffeler scored 18 seconds later on a feed from behind the net by Nick Allega.

A series of Titans penalties led to Padua's next goal. Padua senior Mike Stokar scored a backdoor goal during a 4-on-4. Stokar took a crossing pass from Joe Sposit, who registered his third assist, and the Bruins cut St. John's lead to 6-4 with 8:20 to play.

In the first period, St. John's took a 3-2 lead. Hauenstein scored 40 seconds into a power

play with 10:05 remaining, touching off a three-goal burst in less than a minute. The Titans' Ray Morris scored again off the ensuing faceoff. Padua came right back and Chris Coyle netted a pass from behind the goal by Justin Phenny with 9:07 remaining.

After Padua killed a 5-on-3, it began its first power play with 5:07 remaining in the first, but Hauenstein scored a short-handed goal on a rebound. Replays showed Hauenstein's left foot was in the crease when he scored.

Padua reduced the margin to one goal with 58 seconds remaining in the first on a goal by Stryffeler off a no-look pass from Stokar. St. John's Heldt scored 28 seconds into the second period for a 4-2 lead, and Dan Johnson added a power-play goal five minutes later.

To reach this Plain Dealer reporter:  
twarsinskey@plaind.com,  
216-999-6177