

St. John's rolls on

Marzec backs quick lead with shutout

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BLADE SPORTS WRITER

St. John's Jesuit swarmed all over Findlay early, using a decided edge in speed to take a three-goal lead in a district hockey final last night. The Titans then relied on goalie Tyler Marzec to knock the Trojans out.

St. John's tallied two power-play goals, sophomore Ray Morris scored twice and Marzec made 24 saves in a 3-0 shutout at a packed Tam O'Shanter.

"It's about time," Titans coach Mike Hayes said. "The last few years we've been knocking on the door. I think our guys are a little more experienced and have more poise and we got great goaltending. [Marzec's] been outstanding all year."

St. John's (27-7-3) advances to the state semifinals Saturday where it will take on Hunting Valley University School. The teams will face off at 10 a.m. at Nationwide Arena in Columbus.

Last night was the third time the Titans defeated the Trojans (24-7-0) this season and have outscored them 11-3.

"We're going to Columbus,

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baby, and I'm telling you it's not over," Morris said. "This is for the seniors."

It is the first time since 2001 that the Titans have reached the final four where it lost in the first round. St. John's outscored its opponents 31-2 to get there.

Marzec, a junior, had to be particularly sharp in the second period when he stopped 12 shots with his team getting only five on net. It was just his second shutout this season.

"I'm pumped," Marzec said. "My team did a lot to help me get this shutout. This should give us momentum and hopefully we'll take it all in Columbus."

Morris struck first for St. John's when he converted on a 2-on-1 breakaway. Senior Shane Hetrick sent a sharp cross-ice pass to Morris whose quick shot beat Sean Brown.

Andrew Heldt also assisted on the goal that put the Titans up 1-0 with 6:43 left in the first pe-

riod. It was Morris' fourth shot of the period and he finished the game with nine.

Senior defenseman Mike Henson's power play goal just 3:06 later made it 2-0. Junior Cam Hauenstein assisted on Henson's shot from the left point.

"I thought if we scored early I knew we would win," Henson said. "I felt comfortable as soon as we scored those two goals. I knew we would bring it home. It's a great feeling, being a senior and being able to go down to Columbus."

The Titans carried the play early, outshooting the Trojans 7-2 over the first six minutes and finished the period with a 13-4 advantage.

Morris notched his second of the night on a brilliant pass from senior captain Henson. Morris was parked by the side of the net and poked in Henson's dish to give St. John's a 3-0 cushion 1:45 into the second period.

"It doesn't matter who got the goals, as long as we got the win," Morris said.

Findlay then outshot the Titans 20-9 over the rest of the game as St. John's sat back.

"We made a couple of line changes and then I thought we controlled the game," Findlay coach Dan St. Jean said. "But they are a real good hockey club. You can't fall behind a team like that."

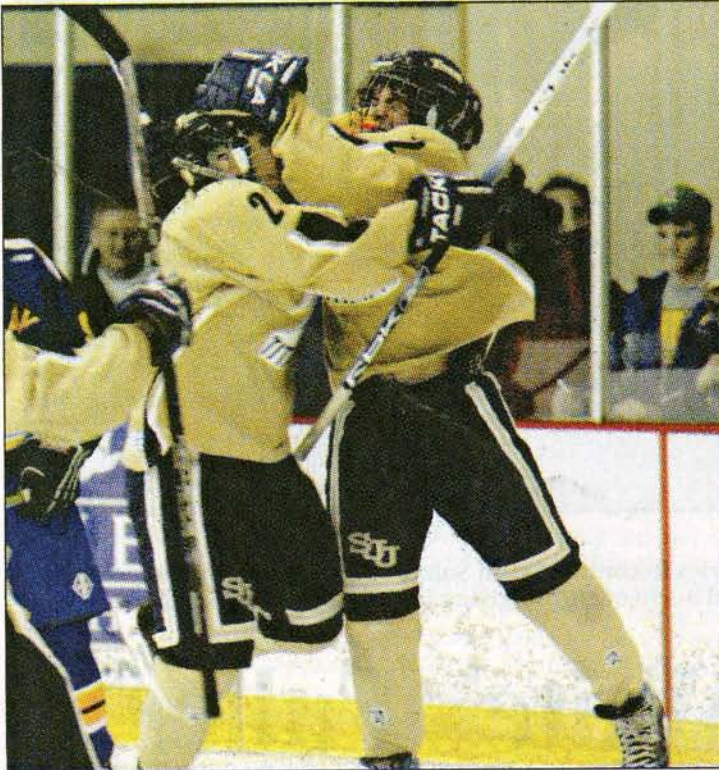
Brown, who made 33 saves last week in a 1-0 win over Northview, finished with 20 stops.

"Those two power play goals really hurt," St. Jean said. "That's tough for the goaltender."

Marzec said the having the two-goal cushion built his confidence, and Hayes agreed: "The first goal was extremely important. The first period we played as well as we could. We didn't sit back until the third period. We had only one guy pressuring. We wanted to make sure we took care of our end first."

St. John's split two games with University School, which defeated Gilmour Academy 3-2 on Friday night in the Kent district.

"I will enjoy this today," Hayes said. "I know we will have our hands full. But we've had success against all of those teams."



THE BLADE/ERIC SUMBERG

Titans Andrew Heldt and Ray Morris celebrate the first goal of

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Dan Johnson of St. John's levels Findlay's Brandon St. Jean. After grabbing a 3-0 lead, the Titans concentrated on defense and wound up with a shutout in the district final at Tam O'Shanter.