



The Reporter photo by Keith Vandervort

n-Campbellsport girls hockey team celebrates its WIAA state championship Saturday. The WarBirds defeated

# WarBirds beat Superior to capture WIAA title

By Brad Hartmann  
SPECIAL TO THE REPORTER

MADISON — Going to the state tournament is a dream for many young athletes, but winning a championship is nothing short of a dream come true for the Fond du Lac-Waupun-Campbellsport girls hockey team as it defeated Superior, 2-1, at the Alliant Energy Center in Madison for the title Saturday.

"It was a great hockey game," said WarBirds coach Mike Cowan. "Pretty much all of our games have been by one goal. You have to give our defense and forwards credit for winning the battles and not giving them the great opportunity to score on us."

Less than 24 hours after coming off a hard-fought 3-1 victory against Onalaska, the WarBirds (16-5-2) were back at it.

Many WarBirds went into the game with bumps and bruises, but they managed their first state cham-

pionship.

"This is just one more step for our program," Cowan said. "We are extremely happy winning the third (girls) trophy and our first trophy overall."

The dream almost turned into a nightmare in the first period as the Spartans (12-11) got the early advantage by keeping the puck on the WarBirds' side throughout the period. But it was the defense of Theresa Cowan and Nicole Drews that stepped up to help out goalie Lauren Post.

Post entered the game with a knee injury suffered during the Onalaska game, but she wouldn't sit out of the biggest game of her career.

"This was the best game that I have played," Post said. "I knew I had to play, suck it up, do my best, and hope for the best. I always play better when it's a big game."

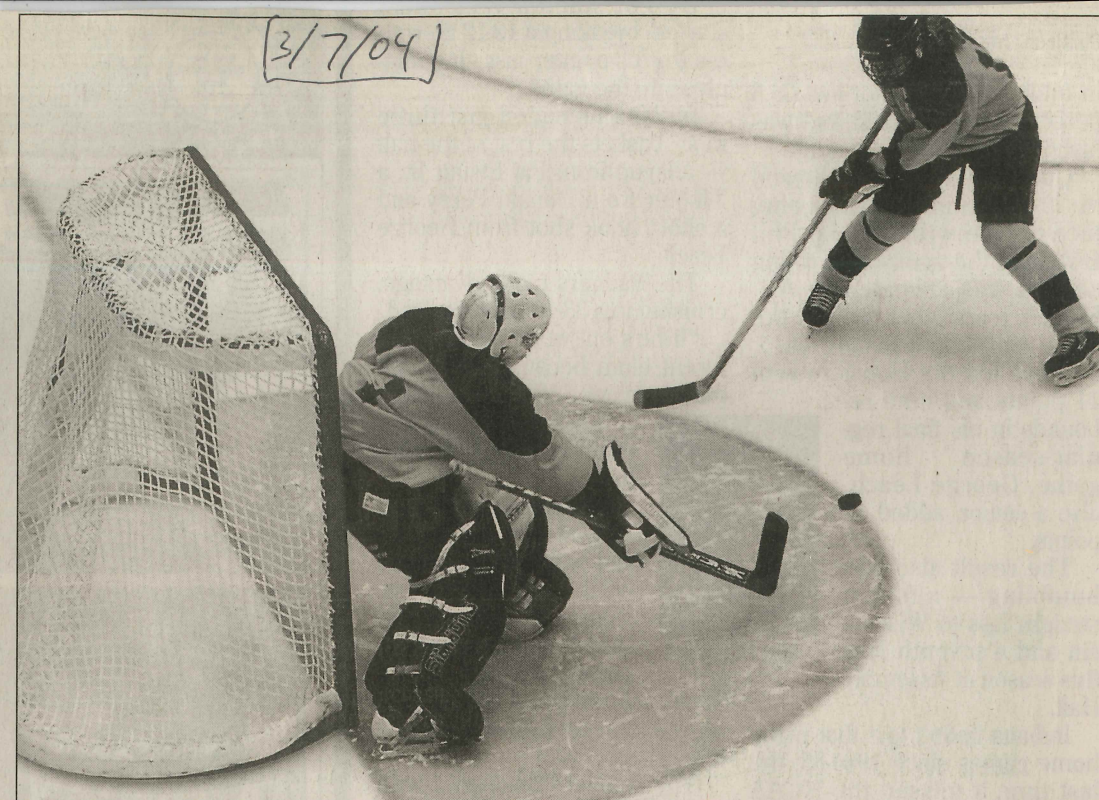
Post was determined not

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The Reporter photo by Keith Vandervort

WarBirds' coach Mike Cowan gathers his team during a timeout near the end of Saturday's title game.



The Reporter photo by Keith Vandervort

WarBirds goalie Lauren Post deflects a shot Saturday during the WIAA state championship game against Superior.

## CHAMPS

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to let the Spartans score on her. She deflected shots off her stick, knee pads and skates to keep the game scoreless after one period.

"By Superior not getting on the board was huge because they came out in the first period and played a great period against us," Cowan said. "We weren't able to get anything going until the second period where the girls came out and took control of the game."

The WarBirds were focused and energized to start the second period and 28 seconds into the session went on a power play. Maggie Bresser put the WarBirds on the scoreboard with an assist from Theresa Cowan and Drews.

"We talked in the locker room and we had to get the job done," Bresser said. "We were

on a power play. Our power play worked for us against Onalaska and we had to get it to work again. I was playing in front of the net and tipped it in. We had to play big "D" and after you get up by one it's all about the defense."

With 6:01 remaining in the period, the WarBirds added to the lead as Theresa Cowan showed that she can not only defend the goal and dish out assists, but she score as well.

Brittany Schleicher got the assist.

"I didn't know I scored the goal until after I got off the ice from falling," Theresa Cowan said.

The Spartans cut the WarBirds' lead in half, as Kacey Van Damme sailed down the ice and

passed the puck to Taylor Van Damme for the score with 1:44 remaining in the second period.

"(Theresa) Cowan and I have been practicing together for a long time and I think we have come along way through-

out the season," Drews said. "I felt really bad that they scored. They got a break and I couldn't catch up. The other defenders fell down and Superior happened to put it in."

In the final minute of the third period, the Spartans had several opportunities to tie the game and send it to overtime, but Post had different ideas.

The WarBirds celebrated the thrilling victory by dumping Gatorade over Coach Cowan's head as they received the WIAA State Championship trophy.

"It feels special being the captain and helping the team win this year," said Missy Schleicher. "Holding the trophy is the greatest feeling in the world. I have been waiting my whole high-school career to hold the trophy and now I got it and now I am a senior. It doesn't get any better than that."

Both goalies played well as Jamie Prendergast had 17 saves and Post made 23, improving her state-tournament save record to 93 saves in four games.



Lauren Post