

2018 South Dakota Youth Basketball State Tournament

Frequently Asked Questions • Notes by Jeff McCarron, Director

What is Pacesetter Sports?

Pacesetter Sports was created in 1980 to provide high-level coaching through low-cost basketball camps for players of all ages. Pacesetter grew from offering 8 camps in 1980 to over 100 camps annually throughout North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. In 1992 Pacesetter began offering low-cost varsity/JV tournaments. Since 1993 Pacesetter Sports has conducted a youth basketball state tournament system for Minnesota teams with over 600 teams playing annually. In 2010 Pacesetter added state tournaments in Iowa, North Dakota, and South Dakota with the top two teams from each state advancing to the Pacesetter Great Four-State Championship at the Target Center in Minneapolis. Wisconsin is joining the Pacesetter Playoffs in 2018.

What is the background and mission of Pacesetter?

Message from Jeff McCarron, Pacesetter Director

Our mission at Pacesetter is to provide high-quality, low-cost camps and tournaments for players, coaches, and parents. I am from a small town, Sherburn, MN (pop.approx.1100), just 10 miles from the Iowa border north of Estherville - corn and bean country. Our high school team had a "Hoosiers" experience by winning the last single-class state basketball championship in Minnesota in 1970. I had a chance to be on MN Gopher football and basketball teams 1970-72, but when playing both sports was no longer allowed, I decided to play both in the North Central conference at Augustana 1973-75. I have met many players and coaches and fans from the four-state area since that time. My high school coach was from North Dakota (Tolna), and my college coaches were both from South Dakota. One coach, John Thomas, made the cut for the 12-player roster of the Boston Celtics and got me started teaching championship fundamentals at his camps in 1976. I started Pacesetter in 1980. This background is the reason we are focusing our efforts in this four-state area and the reason we focus on helping "Hometown Teams". We love basketball, small towns, teaching kids and providing high-quality experiences at an affordable cost. I thank our staff and all who have participated in making Pacesetter possible for 37 years.

What is the Pacesetter South Dakota State Tournament?

The Pacesetter South Dakota Youth Basketball State Tournament will be limited to 16 teams in each age/gender division. All teams that enter the state tournament will play 3-4 games in one day. The top teams will be invited to play in the five-state tournament at the newly renovated Target Center in Minneapolis!

What is the Great Five-State Championship?

The top teams, champions and/or runner-up from each state are invited to play in the Great Five-State Championship. Players and parents from four states will be treated to a special summer weekend that will provide them with a chance to meet teams from the five-state area, play in a highly-competitive tournament in a world-class setting, and enjoy activities off the court as well in the Twin Cities. All Great State tournaments are held in conjunction with Minnesota Lynx WNBA games, so players and families attend a game and often join in special fan activities.

Are teams separated by class?

Teams are not separated by class. We will seed the teams roughly based on their team rating in an attempt to balance the bracket and divide the strongest teams. We look at the previous year's bracket to help assess the strength of returning teams. We do not place a WEAK team against a STRONG team. As the tournament progresses, all teams will be playing teams that have fared the same, whether winning or losing, so the competition becomes more balanced as the day progresses.

What if there are fewer than four teams entered?

For this tournament system, top teams always advance to the next stage: top teams from state advance to Great State. So, we are always seeking one-two teams. If we have three teams, we will offer teams a 3-team Playoff with teams playing a double round-robin format of half games, followed by full games, so all three teams play two half games and two full games for the equivalent of three full games. Teams are refunded 1/3 of the fee under this format. If we have two teams, the teams are offered a Best of Three format, playing it off like an NBA/WNBA series with the first team to win two games declared the winner. Teams will have the option to play the third game even if one team starts 2-0. Teams are refunded 1/2 the fee under this format. If only one team enters, that team will be declared the winner and automatically advance to the next stage.

How are the brackets created? How long will the tournament be?

The format is set for all teams to play 3-4 games. All tournaments with 4-6 teams will involve some shorter pool play games that will be used for seeding into the main tournament. All tournaments with 7-16 teams will play only full games with single elimination from the championship. Teams that lose in the first round will play in the consolation bracket.

We will do our best to avoid scheduling any back-to-back games. If we do, we will allow a rest period. We will also try to play the games as efficiently as possible. Coaches and parents need to be aware that larger tournaments with over 8 teams will require most of the day to complete in order to give teams some time to rest in between games. Teams should schedule some meetings, meals, trips to sites around the area or relaxation time to give the day some positive structure during all "down" time. Managing "down time" well can help build teamwork and mold great "teams".

Do all players have to be from the same school?

All youth teams in grades 4-9 from South Dakota are eligible to enter the state tournament playoffs. All players on a team must either be enrolled in the same school system or live or attend school in the same city, the same school district or the same tribal community. Smaller schools, however, may combine to form one team if the combined enrollment of their high schools grades 9-12 is 400 or fewer. Schools that combine should be from neighboring schools.

Some exceptions include private schools whose "feeder" schools are located in another school district, schools or programs consolidating for the following year and transfer students who have officially enrolled. In these circumstances, players are allowed to play together with their future teammates if the connection is official. The philosophy behind this decision is that the whole system is designed to help "hometown teams", or area community-based teams, improve with their future teammates, and these players are part of that future. A player who is "thinking" about transferring to another school would not be allowed to play for that school.

May players play at an older or younger grade level?

Players may play at an older grade level, but older players may not play at a younger level.

May players play on more than one team?

Players may play at more than one grade level and may even play at two grade levels on the same day if that is the decision of their coaches and parents.

Who advances to Pacesetter “Post season” tournaments?

The top teams in the South Dakota State Tournament will advance to play the top teams from Minnesota, Wisconsin, North Dakota, and Iowa in the 8-team Great Five-State Championships in June or July. Those dates will be posted on our website when they have been finalized.

Who should I contact with a question?

Please feel free to email either Tracey Haines, office manager, at tracey@pacesetternet.com or me at jeff@pacesetternet.com or call us at 320-243-7460 with any thoughts or questions.

Thank you for your cooperation and your efforts to make this tournament system a success.

Jeff McCarron
Director