

2024 Pacesetter Holiday Classic Basketball Tournament

Frequently Asked Questions • Notes by Jeff McCarron, Director

What is Pacesetter Sports? Celebrating our 46th Year!

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 joined in 2018. Starting with Minnesota Basketball News in 1994, where the Top 10 teams are ranked weekly for the Associated Press, Pacesetter has also provided newsmagazines periodically for 5 states. Website: www.pacesettersports.net

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 basketball and volleyball camps and tournaments for players, coaches, and parents and enhance these sports and events with news coverage. I am from a small town, Sherburn, MN (pop.approx.1100), just 10 miles from the Iowa border, and three of my high school and college coaches were from South Dakota and North Dakota. This regional background is the reason we are focusing our efforts in this five-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 a success for over 40 years as we continue to provide programs for over 12,000 players each year.”

What is the Pacesetter Holiday Classic?

The Pacesetter Youth Basketball Classics provide in-season tournaments to help teams develop and strengthen their teams for post-season play. All teams will be able to play 3-4 games in one day at each tournament. The Classic tournaments are also open to teams from other states and Canada.

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.

Can I add players or update my roster?

Yes, if you have already submitted your roster and need to make changes or add eligible players, you can do so by emailing pacesettersportsmbbn@gmail.com. Please provide your team's name, grade, gender, each player's name, and school he/she attends. Be sure to bring your updated paper roster to the tournament.

Are teams separated by class?

Teams are not separated by class. Teams will be seeded based on their team rating in an attempt to divide the strongest teams and balance the bracket as much as possible. 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 for all teams as the day progresses.

Do all players have to be from the same school?

All youth teams in grades 4-8 are eligible to enter the Classic tournaments. All players on a team must either be enrolled in the same school, live or attend school in the same city, the same school system or the same tribal community. Smaller school teams may combine, however, to form one team if the combined enrollment of these schools for grades 9-12 is 400 or fewer. Teams that combine should be neighboring schools.

All tribal communities with a high school in their tribal community must enter as a high school and abide by the school guidelines. Only tribes without a high school in the tribal community may play as one tribal community. Tribal communities may not combine to play as one team.

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. If any combining schools are not adjacent to the other school or schools, Pacesetter must approve the combination.

If a team wins a Classic, can they advance to the Minnesota Youth Basketball State Tournament?

No. All Classic tournaments are in-season events. The Pacesetter Playoffs will then be held as post-season qualifying tournaments in five Minnesota regions. Teams may play in more than one region.

Information on Pacesetter’s 5-State Playoffs for MN-ND-SD-IA-WI

What is the Pacesetter Minnesota Youth Basketball State Tournament?

The over-all Minnesota Youth Basketball State Tournament features eight teams in grades 4-7 that have advanced from the Region Playoffs. Teams in grades 8 and 9 will bypass the Region Playoffs and register for State directly. All teams will play 3-4 games at state with the top two teams advancing to the Great Five-State Championship at the Target Center in Minneapolis.

What is the Pacesetter MIT?

Teams in grades 4-7 that participated in the regionals are invited to play in the Pacesetter MIT (Minnesota Invitational Tournament). This highly-competitive tournament with brackets of up to 16 teams is held on the Saturday before the over-all Minnesota State Championships.

What is the Great Five-State Championship?

Eight qualifying teams from five states are invited to play in the Pacesetter Great Five-State Championship, which is sponsored by the 3-time world champion Minnesota Lynx and Minnesota Timberwolves. Players and parents from these teams will be treated to a weekend that will provide them with a chance to meet teams from the five-state area, play in a competitive play off 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 Lynx game and often join in fun fan activities. It is a special weekend with lifetime memories.

Which teams qualify for the Pacesetter Great Five-State Tournament?

The state champion and runner-up from Minnesota and the state champions from Iowa, Wisconsin, North Dakota, and South Dakota will each receive an automatic bid to the Great Five-State Tournament. The remaining two invitations will be wild card selections based on the size of the field and performance of other teams competing from all five states.

Who should I contact with a question?

Please feel free to email either Tracey Haines, office manager, at pacesettersportsmbbn@gmail.com or me at jmac8144@yahoo.com or call us at 320-243-7460 with any thoughts or questions.

Thank you for your cooperation and your efforts.

Jeff McCarron
Director