

2025 Pacesetter 5-State Youth Basketball Playoffs: MN-IA-ND-SD-WI

Frequently Asked Questions • *Notes by Jeff McCarron, Director*

What is Pacesetter Sports? *Celebrating our 45th 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 an average of 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 have been ranked weekly for the Associated Press, Pacesetter has also provided basketball newsmagazines in other 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. 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 45 years as we provide programs for over 12,000 players annually.”

MINNESOTA: 5-region playoff system

What are the Pacesetter Minnesota Region Playoffs?

The Pacesetter Minnesota Youth Basketball State Tournament for 2025 will involve a 5-region playoff system for grades 4-7 leading to the over-all Minnesota state championships. All teams that enter the region playoffs will play 3-4 games in one day. The five region champions and three wild card teams will advance to the Minnesota Youth Basketball State Tournament.

How will Wild Card teams be selected?

Wild Card teams will be invited based on the number of teams playing in the region and the competitiveness of the teams “not winning” their region.

Can Minnesota teams play in more than one region?

YES. Teams may play in any region and in more than one region.

Can a team win more than one region?

YES. However, once a team wins a region, they will not be allowed to play in another region – unless they are already registered for a region being held on the same weekend.

What is the Pacesetter Minnesota Youth Basketball State Tournament?

GRADES 4-7

The Pacesetter Minnesota State Tournament for grades 4-7 will be played on Saturday, March 29 and feature an 8-team bracket of regional qualifiers. All teams will play three games at state with the top two teams advancing to the Great Five-State Championship at the Target Center in Minneapolis.

GRADES 8-9

The Pacesetter Minnesota State Tournament for grades 8-9 will be an open tournament in St. Cloud on SAT-SUN, March 29-30. All Minnesota 8th-9th grade teams are invited to play. For brackets with 16 or fewer teams, the tournament will be

held on Saturday only. For brackets with more than 16 teams, the tournament will be held on Saturday and Sunday with teams playing 4 or more games.

What is the Pacesetter MIT?

All regional teams in grades 4-7 will be invited to play in the Pacesetter MIT (Minnesota Invitational Tournament) on Sunday, March 30. Each MIT bracket will be limited to 16 teams so that teams will play 3-4 games in one day. The MIT is a competitive “Best of the Rest” state tournament.

“GREAT STATE” – Pacesetter Great Five-State Championships

Invitations to IA-ND-SD-WI teams

Teams from IA-ND-SD-WI will be invited to play in the Pacesetter Great Five-State Championships, which include a minimum of one game for each team on the main Target Center floor, which is the home court for the Minnesota Timberwolves (NBA) and Minnesota Lynx (WNBA) and the Minnesota High School state championships.

QUESTIONS FOR ALL 5 STATES

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.

Do we have to fill out a roster and waivers if we play more than once?

Your online roster and waivers will be honored for each tournament. However, teams do need to bring a paper roster to each tournament or fill one out at each tournament.

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 name, grade, gender, players’ names, and the school they attend. Be sure to bring your updated paper roster to the tournament.

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 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 held in cooperation with the 3-time world champion Minnesota Lynx and Minnesota Timberwolves. Players and parents from these teams will be treated to a special weekend that will provide them with a chance to meet teams from the five-state area, play in a highly 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 special fan activities. It is a unique weekend with lifetime memories.

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

The state champion and runner-up from Minnesota and six high-level invited teams from IA-ND-SD-WI will receive bids to the Great Five-State Tournament 8-team fields. Pacesetter will be holding “Great State” qualifying playoffs in Wisconsin and Iowa and cooperating with Willie Mac in SD and the Jr. Grand Am in ND to make the invitations. These tournaments will be announced on each state’s Pacesetter page on the Pacesetter website. Teams interested in playing may

contact office manager Tracey Haines at pacesettersportsmbbn@gmail.com or Director Jeff McCarron at jmac8144@yahoo.com for further details.

Do all players have to be from the same school?

All youth teams in grades 4-9 are eligible to play with certain restrictions. All players on a team must either be enrolled in the same school, or live or attend school in the same city, the same school system, or the same tribal community. Two or three 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. If any combining schools are not adjacent to the other school or schools, Pacesetter must approve the combination

All tribal communities with a high school in their tribal community must abide by the school guidelines. Only tribes without a high school in the tribal community may play as one tribal community. Multiple tribal communities without a high school 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.

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 to make this tournament system a success.

Jeff McCarron
Director