

Pacesetter Policy on Regional Participation and Advancement – 2010

What is the Pacesetter State Tournament?

The Pacesetter North Dakota Youth Basketball State Tournament will be conducted for the first time this year by Pacesetter Sports, a Midwest leader in providing youth sports programs. Teams will compete in four regions this spring with the champion and runner-up advancing to the state championships in June. The state champion and runner-up will then advance to the Great Four-State Championships at the Target Center in Minneapolis.

What is the mission of the Pacesetter state tournaments?

Pacesetter state tournaments are offered to provide school/community teams with a chance to play together in an exciting play off system that will help them build teamwork on and off the court. Today many players drawn away from their hometown teams. Pacesetter believes in offering local home-grown teams an exciting system that could take them and their families all the way to the state tournament and the Target Center in Minneapolis. Pacesetter promotes participation, effort, teamwork, and sportsmanship as teams and families build for their future.

Do all players have to be from the same school?

All youth teams in North Dakota currently in grades 5-9 are eligible to participate. All players must either attend the same school or live in the same school district. Smaller schools may combine players onto one team as long as the total enrollment of their high schools (listed in the NDHSAA handbook) does not exceed 450 students in grades 7-12 or 300 in grades 9-12. 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 teams improve for their future, and these players are a 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?

Teams from each regional tournament are invited to advance to “post-season” tournaments in the summer. The region champion and runner-up are both invited to play in the 8-team North Dakota state championship. The champions will all be placed in separate brackets with their first game against one of the runner-up teams. The champion and runner-up from the same region will be placed on opposite sides of the bracket.

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Can teams play in more than one region?

Teams are welcome to play in any region. There are several reasons for this provision: 1) The first goal is to provide teams with opportunities to play and to improve through competition. If teams are motivated to play in several regions, this system provides them with multiple opportunities. 2) Teams often have conflicts for the tournaments closer to their geographical area, so in this case they may need to travel farther in order to enter the play-off system. 3) Some tournaments may not have enough teams (min. of 4) from the local region to conduct a full tournament, so the tournament then actually depends on teams from other regions to reach the minimum and avoid cancellation. 4) Teams enjoy playing opponents they have not faced during the season, so allowing teams to travel to other regions provides the local area teams with competitive variety. 5) Allowing teams to play in other regions also strengthens the field for the state championship, providing the strongest teams with more opportunities to qualify for the state championship field.

Why not keep it simple and allow teams to play in only one region?

If all regions provided enough teams (4-16) well in advance to conduct a full tournament for every age/gender group, it would be feasible to adopt this policy, but any advantages may still not outweigh the elimination of the opportunities and benefits outlined above. Even with all regions fielding enough teams, would the benefits of simpler advancement truer to geographical region outweigh the benefits of greater opportunities for teams? That's a tough call. If that circumstance arises in the future, this policy could be re-evaluated at that time.

What happens if a team wins more than one region?

If a team wins a championship in a region other than the one closest to their school, they may still play in "their own" region, but if they then win in their own region, too, the runner-up from the first region will be invited to the state championship. Once a team wins a region, they may play in another regional, BUT they will not be allowed to eliminate a team in the first round of a region other than their own region. They would have to forfeit the first-round game, but they may then play for the consolation championship. This guideline allows teams to enter more than one region knowing they will not have to cancel their plans if they win a region.

Who should I contact with a question?

Please feel free to email me at jmccarron@psmbbn.com or call me at 320-243-7460 with any thoughts or questions. There will always be some differences of opinion on policies, but having the best interest of the kids in mind is something we all share. Thank you for your understanding, your cooperation, and your efforts in making this tournament system the best possible opportunity for our young players.

Jeff McCarron
Director