

2026 Minnesota State Volleyball Tournament – Grades 7-8-9

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. In 1985, volleyball camps were added. Pacesetter grew from offering 8 camps in 1980 to over 100 camps annually throughout North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. Since 1993 Pacesetter Sports has conducted a youth basketball state tournament system for Minnesota teams. Pacesetter added state tournaments in Iowa, North Dakota, and South Dakota in 2010 and Wisconsin in 2018, with the top teams from each state advancing to the Pacesetter “Great State” Championship at the Target Center in Minneapolis. In 2018 Pacesetter began the Minnesota Volleyball State Tournament for grades 7-8-9 to give teams an exciting post-season state championship.

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. We support all schools and communities. I thank our staff and all who have participated in making Pacesetter possible for 47 years!”

7th, 8th & 9th Grade

What is the Pacesetter Minnesota Volleyball State Tournament?

The state tournament is open to all girls’ teams. Each bracket will include up to 16 teams for Grades 7 and 8, and up to 8 teams for Grade 9. All teams will play 3-4 matches in the State Tournament.

Are teams separated by class?

Teams are not separated by class. Teams will be seeded roughly based on their team rating in an attempt to balance the bracket and divide the strongest teams. 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.

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

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

Matches will be scheduled in a manner that avoids long breaks between matches as much as possible. Games will also be played as efficiently as possible. **Matches will start up to 20 minutes ahead of schedule when possible.** Coaches and players should be aware of the progress of the match proceeding their own match. Always be certain you have played your last possible match before leaving the tournament permanently. Coaches and parents need to be aware that larger tournaments with over 8 teams will require more time to complete. Managing “down time” well can help build team chemistry and mold great “teams”.

Do all players have to be from the same school?

All youth girls' teams in grades 7, 8 and 9 from Minnesota are eligible to enter the state tournament playoffs. All players on a team must be enrolled in the same school. Smaller schools, however, may combine to form one team if the combined enrollment of their high school 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 yet 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 should I contact with a question?

Email Tracey, office manager, at pacesetterssportsmbbn@gmail.com or call us at 320-243-7460 with any questions.

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

Jeff McCarron: Director