

League Enrollment Information

Enrollment materials for the 2023-2024 season of The Great Northwest Basketball League have been posted on our website. These include:

- This League Enrollment Informational Posting ("Posting").
- 2023-2024 Meet Hosting Form.
- The 2023-2024 Team Enrollment Forms for each grade and gender.
- 2023-2024 Power Rating Chart and Top 32 ranked teams per grade (based on performance in the 22-23 season for purposes of determining invitations and seeds for the League Championship Tournament).
- The 2023-2024 League Rules and Attachments.
- Enrollment Form and Rules for the 3rd and 4th grade Non-Competitive League which runs from mid-October through mid-December.

All coaches enrolling teams in The Great Northwest Basketball League, should read this League Enrollment Informational posting thoroughly. We realize that this Posting, the Hosting Form, Enrollment Forms and League Rules are rather lengthy. However, we strongly encourage you to read all four documents. It's important particularly if you are a new coach in The Great Northwest during the 2023-2024 season to familiarize yourself with primary League operations. That's the purpose of this Posting – it highlights key registration issues and will answer the most often-asked questions.

Enrollment Deadlines

Meet Hosting Forms are due on August 4 for all grades.

The deadlines for submitting the Team Enrollment Forms reflect the order in which we prepare the meet schedules for each grade. We will have the schedule for each grade completed approximately 45 days after the registration deadline for that grade. The deadlines for submitting the Team Enrollment Forms for the various grades are as follows:

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| • 8th grade girls – August 11 | • 5th and 4th grade girls – September 15 |
| • 7th grade girls – August 18 | • 5th and 4th grade boys – September 22 |
| • 6th grade girls – August 25 | • 8th grade boys – September 29 |
| • 6th grade boys – September 1 | • 7th grade boys – October 6 |

All boys teams, and 6th, 5th and 4th grade girls teams, please remember that, even though your Team Enrollment Forms aren't due until late August through early October, if you intend to host, **we still need your Meet Hosting Form by the deadline of August 4.** While these teams have more time to register, we appreciate receiving as many early registrations as possible for all grade levels to help facilitate schedule preparation.

If your community wants to host a boys meet, or one for 6th, 5th or 4th grade girls, and you miss the August 4 deadline, we **MIGHT** – there are no guarantees – be able to accommodate your desire to host **if** we need the space and **if** you're able to host on a date that works for the League. However, if you're involved with an 8th or 7th grade girls team, we will actually begin scheduling for those grades by August 25, thereby making a late request to host very difficult, if not impossible, to accommodate.

Meet Formatting Options

The Great Northwest Basketball League offers all teams in all grades, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8, the opportunity to play three games at each meet. If the meet is held on one or two courts, four teams will be placed in a pool and will play each other on a round robin basis for 1st to 4th place. If the meet is held on three courts, teams are split into two groups of three teams each, with all teams from one group playing the three teams in the opposite group. At the conclusion of play, teams are ranked from 1st to 6th place using the League's tie breaker system.

Please note that the only time The Great Northwest will schedule a mini-meet (four teams on one surface) is if a small community literally has only one playing surface in their community, or under certain special circumstances with permission from the League (see Item #2 in the Meet Hosting Form).

2023 – 2024 Meet Fee Structure

The cost to play in a regular League meet during the 2023-2024 season will be \$125. Host teams will receive a hosting credit of \$60 per team hosted.

A small number of teams still have an outstanding unpaid balance for the 2022-2023 season. If you have an outstanding balance, you need to address this immediately. **We will not process 2023-2024 enrollment applications from any coach, team or program until the unpaid balance is settled.**

Enrollment Materials

The following is a brief discussion of the enrollment forms used by teams playing in the League.

When filling out the Meet Hosting Form and/or the Team Enrollment Form, please read the materials carefully - - do not simply answer the questions. The forms are filled with information you will need to accurately answer the enrollment questions.

- **Meet Hosting Form.** All communities, associations or school districts are ***strongly encouraged*** – although not absolutely required – to submit a Meet Hosting Form covering **all** teams from their community or school district. Our strong preference is that each community submits **one unified form** for all the boys and girls teams from that community or school district. (We do not expect a parochial school to be included in a community's general submission. For example, we do not expect Rice Lake St. Joseph to be part of the Rice Lake submission, or McDonnell Central to be part of the Chippewa Falls submission.) We realize that in some communities, the boys and girls operate under very different organizational umbrellas and prefer to submit separate forms. Nevertheless, it's easier for two programs in the same community to talk to each other.

One of the things we accomplish with this approach is more flexibility on host dates. For example, let's say the boys program in a community is willing to host two meets and the girls program one meet. Each provides us with optional dates they've "reserved." We would expect teams in the same community using the same facilities to switch those reserved dates with each other if it works out best for the League schedule. ***Communities that do this help immensely to facilitate League efficiency.***

The earlier you submit your Meet Hosting Form, the more likely that you'll get to host on your preferred date. Communities submitting Meet Hosting Forms shortly on or before the August 4 deadline may not receive the choice of date(s) they want to host. For example, let's assume you have a 7th grade girls "A" team and they want to host on December 9, but you don't submit your hosting form until August 4. If, at that time, we've already exceeded the number of meets the

League can accommodate on that date, or at least in your area and at your ability level, we will not be able to accommodate your request to host on that date. At that point, you'll either need to secure an alternate host date that works into the schedule or you'll be unable to host.

Every season, at several grade levels, we have too many or too few communities that want to host. Preferential treatment will be given to those communities that submitted their hosting forms early (along with other considerations, such as the total number of meets hosted by that community relative to meets played). Bottom line: submitting your hosting form on July 11 is better than July 15, and July 25 is better than August 4.

- **Team Enrollment Form. One form must be completed for each separate team.**

It is **critical** that Team Enrollment Forms be filled out by, or in consultation with, the coach actually coaching the team – not solely a varsity coach or association contact. If you choose to have someone other than the actual head coach of the team complete this form, that team will still be obligated to the choices made. (Please read the information below regarding dropping meets.)

- **Confirmation of Receipt.** Within two weeks after you submit your Team Enrollment Form, you will receive an emailed notice acknowledging receipt. This is your proof that we've received your 2023-2024 Team Enrollment Form. If you do not receive this email confirming receipt of your form within two weeks of submitting it, please contact Tracie Tilton at tracie@gnbl.org or 715-749-9048 to make sure we've received it. If we have no email address for the coach, we will email the main community contact. ***If you do not have an emailed receipt, you have no proof that your team is registered.***
- **Power Rating Chart.** If you are enrolling a team that played in the League last season, you can see how your team was rated by checking the League's Power Rating Chart on our website (gnbl.org) and clicking on "The Great Northwest" then "Top 32/Pwr Rtgs." The Power Rating Chart lists the ratings of all teams that played in at least one meet during the 2022-2023 season. Note that all teams are referred to by the grade the players will be in during the 2023-2024 season - - not last season (2022-2023). ***If you are enrolling the same team, your ultimate rating will be the one listed in the Power Rating Chart, unless you provide an explanation as to why it should be changed.***

If you are enrolling a new team for 6th, 7th or 8th grade, use games against League opponents you might have played elsewhere as a means to gauge the relative ability of your team, or gauge your team's likely ability based on general program strength.

For grades 6, 7 and 8, we've rated the Top 32 teams at each grade level based on 2022-2023 season play. Teams wanting to know why they were ranked where they were can call Terri Green at 715-386-4317 to discuss our methodology. This listing will be used in selecting teams to play in the League Championship Tournament discussed in greater detail below. Please note that teams failing to play in at least three meets are not included in the Top 32 rankings (unless those teams have already informed us that they intend to play in the League during the 2023-2024 season on a more significant basis); nor are teams that have said in the past they were not interested in playing in the League Championship Tournament.

- Schedule Black-Out Period will run from the registration deadline for the grade of the team you are registering *until 45 days after that deadline.*

We need to have at least 45 days from the posted registration deadline for your grade to construct a schedule. If something comes up, either before or after the registration deadline for your grade, and you can no longer play on a date(s) you selected on your Team Enrollment Form, email Tracie Tilton (tracie@gnbl.org) as soon as you are aware of an issue. If it's before your grade's registration deadline, there's absolutely no problem - - as long as you contact us right away. If it's after your grade's deadline, contact us **before** you commit to any non-League tournament or other event and ask if the change can be made. If your request is prompt and reasonable, we'll almost always accommodate you, particularly if we haven't completed the schedule for your grade. If you don't contact us in advance, and don't tell us about your conflict until after we have completed scheduling for that grade, or until you receive your schedule, the financial penalties outlined in League Rules will apply.

- **Restrictive Play Dates.** There are certain times during the season when there are very few meets for certain grades/genders – for example, March for all grade levels and genders; December for 7th and 8th grade boys or 5th grade teams; or October for 8th and 7th grade girls; as well as holidays or deer hunting openers. Nevertheless, there are teams that register to play only very early or very late, or want specific dates when there may not be any meets in their area or at their ability level. All teams must give us optional dates which could be used for scheduling. The fewer optional dates you give us for your team to play, the greater the likelihood that you'll have longer travel times to some of your meets or be scheduled in fewer meets than requested.
- **Events that may cause conflicts.** Please pay careful attention to dates when you may have a shortage of players. If deer hunting season is likely to cost you players, don't sign up to play on those dates when filling out your Enrollment Form. If your players are not likely to want to play in a meet if the local high school team is playing in the Regional or Sectional final that day, don't sign up to play on that date. If your high school team is projected to be very strong this coming season, you might also want to stay away from state tournament final dates if you have players you might lose should there be a conflict. Key dates include:
 - WIAA Volleyball Play-offs: Regionals – October 21; Sectionals – October 28; State – November 4. MSHSL Volleyball – November 11
 - WIAA Cross Country State – October 28; MSHSL Cross Country State – November 4
 - Football Play-offs in Wisconsin (Minnesota is usually a week later): Level 1 – October 21; Level 2 – October 28; Level 3 – November 4; Level 4 – November 11
 - Minnesota Deer Hunting: November 4, 11 and 18
 - Wisconsin Deer Hunting: November 18 and 25
 - High School Basketball Play-Offs:
 - February 24: WIAA High School Girls Regional Finals
 - March 2: Wisconsin High School Boys Regional Finals and Wisconsin High School Girls Sectional Finals
 - March 9: Wisconsin High School Girls State Tournament, Wisconsin High School Boys Sectional Finals and Minnesota High School Girls Section Play-offs

- March 16: Wisconsin High School Boys State Tournament; Minnesota High School Girls State Tournament and Minnesota High School Boys Section Play-offs
- March 23: Minnesota High School Boys State Tournament

Other dates that cause a significant number of conflicts for many teams are: **solo ensembles** (these are often in November or February; check with your school's music teacher, since these dates are often not included on school calendars, but students are required to attend), **holiday concerts** (or other holiday activities), **drama events** and **winter or spring break**. If any of these would cause your team to not want to play on a given Saturday, check dates with your school **before** submitting your Team Enrollment Form.

2023-2024 Game Rules

A complete set of Rules for the 2023-2024 season is posted on our website (gnbl.org). We realize that our rules are lengthy, however, each rule is there for a reason. Rather than be part of an undisciplined or disorganized League, we want coaches to embrace the benefits that come from knowing that it doesn't matter where you play in The Great Northwest, **the Rules are the same everywhere**. Please don't file complaints or ask questions unless you have made an attempt to read and understand the League Rule about which you have a concern. Coaches (not parents) can ask questions if you fail to understand a particular rule, feel that a certain rule should be changed, or believe another team is in violation of a specific rule.

Rosters, Liability Waivers and Concussion Agreements

All teams in a given grade level must submit rosters and completed waiver/concussion forms ***two weeks before their first play date or absolutely no later than the deadlines listed below***. All teams must submit the following information.

- A roster for your team. Rosters can be submitted on the "roster form" posted on the website (or a word-processed document with all of the information) and must contain each player's first and last name, jersey number, home address, school and grade during the 2023-2024 school year. Updates to this list can be submitted via email throughout the season as needed by providing the names of new players, delete names of players no longer on the team, changes in jersey numbers, changes in addresses, etc. Rosters can be returned via regular mail (GNBL, P O Box 506, Hudson, WI 54016), by email to jen@gnbl.org or by fax to 715-796-2872.
- A "Consent for Medical Treatment and Voluntary Release, Acknowledgement and Acceptance of Risks Indemnity Agreement" (hereafter "Liability Waiver/Concussion Agreement"). The Liability Waiver, the "Parent and Athlete Concussion Law Agreement" and the coach's Concussion Agreement are combined into one document to simplify the paperwork for coaches and associations. The Liability Waiver/Concussion Agreement provides legal protection to you as a coach, your school and your referees, not just those parties organizing the League. We strongly urge you to take this process seriously. Liability Waivers/Concussion Agreements **must be submitted each season for each player and each coach** – we must have a newly submitted form each season.

To submit Liability Waiver/Concussion forms online, have each parent from the team visit our website at gnbl.org, then click on "Waiver/Concussion Info" in the top menu bar. From there they can follow the online instructions. Parents must complete this process once each season (even if they filled it out last season, we need a new waiver submitted for the 2023-2024 season). If you have questions during the process, please contact Jen Myer at jen@gnbl.org.

Rosters and Liability Waiver/Concussion forms must be submitted **two weeks before the first date your team plays or absolutely no later than the following deadlines** for each grade level:

- **8th Grade Girls and 7th grade Girls – Deadline: November 1**
- **6th Grade Girls and 6th Grade Boys – Deadline: December 1**
- **8th Grade Boys, 7th Grade Boys, 5th & 4th Grade Boys and 5th & 4th Grade Girls – Deadline: January 6**
- 3rd and 4th Grade Boys and Girls teams participating in the Non-Competitive League in October, November and December, will have a deadline of November 1

All information submitted for each team or player are kept in the League's office – not circulated to meet hosts – please do not turn them in to anyone at the host community. If you have questions, please contact Jen Myer, who is handling roster, Liability Waiver/Concussion Agreements, at jen@gnbl.org. Failure to comply with these rules by not returning completed rosters or failing to complete online submission of Liability Waivers/Concussion Agreements could result in the loss of meets this year or exclusion from League play next season.

Unruly Fans and Coaches

Each year we get complaints from hosts about unruly coaches and fans. Although League Rule D-12 gives referees broad authority to deal aggressively with unruly fans and coaches, **coaches are ultimately responsible for the conduct of their team and fans**. The League will remove teams from the schedule when/if we receive multiple complaints regarding fan or coach behavior.

Combining Players from Different Communities or School Districts

All teams in the GNBL must be from a single school district; however, Rule C-1 allows **two small communities** to combine their players to form one team **only** when **both communities** lack sufficient numbers to form a team on their own. Any coach wishing to form a combined team **MUST** notify the League of this decision. This rule limits such combinations to two Wisconsin Division 4 or 5 (or Minnesota A) communities. A Wisconsin Division 3 (Minnesota AA) community will be allowed to combine with a Division 4 or 5 (Minnesota A) community only by petitioning the League when enrolling. Where combining is allowed, all kids from the grade and gender in question in both school districts must be given the opportunity to play on any combined team (it can't be only the strongest players from one or both communities, or a hand-picked team). That means sending a note home from school to every student of that gender in both communities (or some other effective form of written communication), so no one is precluded from participation. No Division 1 or 2 (Minnesota AAAA or AAA) communities can field a team in the League with players from another community, nor can two Division 3 (Minnesota AA) communities put forward a combined team. In communities with multiple public high schools (e.g., Eau Claire, Duluth, etc.), all players on a team must reside in that portion of the city that feeds into the same high school.

Non-Weather Related Cancellations

One of the biggest problems each year in preparing schedules are teams that do not plan carefully when completing their Team Enrollment Form regarding the dates on which they are available to play. In order to avoid large scale changes, the League has always had a policy for how to charge teams for dropped meets. The policy for the 2023-2024 season is identical to the one used during past seasons. Meets can't be dropped with less than ten days notice without paying full price for that meet. Rule C-12 reads as follows:

- Teams that drop a meet with at least ten days notice will be required to pay 50% of the cost of that meet if they indicated on their Enrollment Form that they were available to play on that date. Teams that find out that they have a conflict on a given date after they've submitted their Enrollment Form, but before the schedule for that grade is completed (see discussion of the "Black-Out Period" on the Team Enrollment Form), can effectively amend their registration by sending the League notice in writing via e-mail to tracie@gnbl.org or terri@gnbl.org.
- To the extent the League schedules a team in meets exceeding the distance guidelines outlined in Rule B-7, that team will be allowed to make more than one schedule change with more than ten days notice, free of charge, to get the team in line with the guidelines stated in this Rule. Also, when the League posts schedules, if the League made a mistake and scheduled a team on a date they said they couldn't play, the League will make this schedule change with no charge.
- Teams providing less than ten days of notice will be required to pay the full cost of that meet.
- Teams providing less than 48 hours notice, or no notice at all, unless for weather or serious health-related reasons, risk immediate expulsion from the League as provided for in Rule A-5.

League Championship Tournament

League Championship Tournaments are two-day, 32 team events. The top 32 ranked teams at each grade level automatically qualify (each qualifying team will receive an invitation via email to the head coach). Dates and locations for the six League Championship Tournaments (6th through 8th grade boys and girls) will be set sometime in July. Teams ranked below #32 will receive an invitation to be included in the field if a team ranked ahead of them declines to play due to a conflict.

Wisconsin State Invitational Championship Tournament (WSICT)

The Wisconsin State Invitational Championship Tournament (WSICT), which The Great Northwest plays a part in organizing, has become Wisconsin's premier youth basketball event. Our Minnesota participants have an opportunity to play in a similar event in their state each spring.

Sixth, seventh and eighth grade (2023-2024) League teams that attended the 2023 WSICT this past spring and performed well, will be invited to the 2024 event. Seventh and eighth grade League teams that are highly ranked will also be invited in 2024, depending on where they rank relative to other League teams at their community's size (i.e., WIAA Divisions 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5). Generally speaking, if you're from a WIAA Division 1 or 2 community, you need to have an "A" or high "B+" rating and have qualified for the LCT to get a WSICT invite; while WIAA Division 3, 4 and 5 teams can often qualify if "B+" rated, even if they didn't make the top 32. Applications for the 2024 WSICT will be emailed in waves to eligible teams in November and December.

Invitations to the 5th grade WSICTs will be based almost entirely on 2023-2024 performance in the 5th grade division of the League. Many of the invitations for the 5th grade WSICT won't be extended until later in the process (December and early January) because there is less historical information on which to base an assessment of a team's relative strength. Invitations are automatically sent to all 5th grade teams whose coaches give them an "A" or "B+" rating.

Sixth, seventh and eighth grade teams that are invited to the LCT and decline are **not** guaranteed a spot in the WSICT. As with the other major traveling Leagues in the state, The Great Northwest uses the LCT to determine who its best teams are and, therefore, who should be included in the WSICT field.

Team coaches can also fill out an “Interest Form” for the WSICT if they feel their team is performing at higher than a “B” or “B-“ level. The Interest Form can be found on the website at gnbl.org, by clicking on “WSICT Info” then the tab for “New Teams: If Interested...”

If your community is in Wisconsin and has one or more strong teams that may qualify for the Wisconsin State Invitational Championship Tournament (WSICT), consider hosting a meet in March that could be used as a warm-up for your team (and others) for the WSICT. Every year WSICT participants complain that there are few places to play in March to keep their teams sharp. The 2024 WSICT dates and locations have not been finalized, however, they will most likely be held the weekends of February 10 and 11 or February 17 and 18 for 6th and/or 5th grade girls along with March 23 and 24, April 6 and 7, and April 13 and 14 for the other grades with two or three tournaments on each of those weekends. Dates and locations of all 2024 WSICTs will be posted on our website as soon as they are confirmed (usually in July or early August). More information is available on the website at gnbl.org, then click on “WSICT INFO.”