

## Rule Changes for 2011 – 2012

There are three noteworthy rule changes for the 2011-2012 season:

### Organization of 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Meets:

For the past four seasons, The Great Northwest organized winter season meets for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade teams into two divisions:

- **"Pioneer" Meets.** These were open to all 4<sup>th</sup> grade teams and, to the extent that there was space available, weaker 5<sup>th</sup> grade teams (those teams that anticipated being rated at the "B," "B-," or "C" level by season's end). Teams that opted to play in Pioneer meets were not considered for "A" or "B+" ratings, were not eligible to qualify for the League Championship Tournament and (if from Wisconsin) the Wisconsin State Invitational Championship Tournament. Teams in the Pioneer Division played three games in each meet.
- **5<sup>th</sup> Grade Meets.** These were open to all 5<sup>th</sup> grade teams and those 4<sup>th</sup> grade teams that couldn't get enough Pioneer meets (due to a shortage of hosts or opponents) to fill their schedule. Fifth grade meets were scheduled as four-game meets.

This approach had two primary shortcomings:

- Some stronger 5<sup>th</sup> grade teams opted to play in the Pioneer Division because they preferred to play only three games in a day. A few other 5<sup>th</sup> grade teams, we believe, preferred to play in the Pioneer Division simply to have easier competition.
- Some 4<sup>th</sup> grade teams complained about 5<sup>th</sup> grade teams having the discretion, essentially, to play "down" a grade level, with 4<sup>th</sup> grade teams having no choice in the matter.

To address both of these issues, for the 2011-2012 season, 4<sup>th</sup> grade teams will have three options for meet formatting, while 5<sup>th</sup> grade teams will have two choices:

- Fourth grade meets will again be three-game events, but participation will be limited to 4<sup>th</sup> grade teams only.
- Fifth grade teams will have a choice to sign up to play in either three-game meets or four-game meets. While 5<sup>th</sup> grade teams can state their preference for either three-game or four-game meets, ultimately, how many 5<sup>th</sup> grade meets will offer three games in a day versus four games in a day, will be up to the hosts. In other words, hosts on their Unified Meet Hosting Preference Form (UMHPF) will state whether they want to hold a 5<sup>th</sup> grade meet with four games (\$110 meet fee to play with a \$65 per team hosting credit) or three games (\$95 meet fee to play with a \$50 per team hosting credit). On the 5<sup>th</sup> grade Team Playing Date Preference Form (TPDPF) teams will be asked to choose what they would like to do if they can't get their preferred number of play dates with three games each – do they want to play some of their schedule in four-game meets or play fewer meets. The same question will

be asked of those teams that prefer to play in four-game meets relative to playing in some three-game meets.

- Fourth grade teams that can't fill their schedule with 4<sup>th</sup> grade meets (because there aren't sufficient hosts or opponents) will, likewise, need to declare on their TPDPF whether they want to play in 5<sup>th</sup> grade meets (at either the three-games or four-games per meet level), or play fewer meets.

We think this approach will give teams at these younger age levels more input on whether they play three games or four games in a day. Also, it will give 4<sup>th</sup> grade teams more say as to whether they will play against some 5<sup>th</sup> grade teams.

### **Tie Breaker Procedures:**

When The Great Northwest was established 17 years ago, almost all meets had eight teams playing in two pools of four. Since then, we have established the use of six-team meets to facilitate hosting for communities with three or five available courts. Also, as the League has grown, there are more seven-team meets where an opening in an eight-team meet goes unfilled, or a particular team doesn't attend because of inclement weather. The net result is that there is an increasing number of meets each season where ties are being broken between teams that didn't necessarily play each other. While the different approaches on how to break ties in the various-sized fields were addressed in the 2010-2011 League Rules, they weren't sufficiently detailed to address all eventualities. For example, under the 2010-2011 Rules, it was possible for a team in a six-team meet to lose to two other teams with whom they are tied and still finish ahead of one or both in the final standings.

As a result, for the 2011-2012 season, there will be two separately-articulated tie breaker procedures: 1) one for five and eight team meets (where all teams played each other) and 2) one for six and seven team meets (where poolmates involved in the tie likely did not all play each other). These are the same tie breaker rules that we employed at the 2011 Wisconsin State Invitational Championship Tournaments, where they worked very well.

The new (2011-2012) tie breaker procedures are detailed in Paragraph B-10 of League Rules (which will be posted on June 17, 2011). They can be summarized as follows:

- Eight or five team meets (where all poolmates play each other). After pool play is completed, the teams being ranked are seeded using the following five criteria, in this order:
  - 1) Overall pool record.
  - 2) Where two teams tie that have an identical pool record, the winner of the head-to-head match-up wins the tie breaker.
  - 3) Where three teams tie, the team with the most net tie breaker points gets the top seed. If after applying criterion 3, only two teams remain tied, the team that won

the head-to-head matchup will get the higher remaining seed. If after applying all the above criteria, the top three teams are still tied because they have the same number of net tie breaker points, go to criterion 4.

- 4) Fewest defensive points in all pool games.
  - 5) Most points scored in all pool games.
- Seven or six team meets (where teams do not play all other teams) after play is completed, the teams being ranked are seeded using the following seven criteria, in this order:
    1. Overall record.
    2. Where two teams that played head-to-head have an identical play record, the winner of the head-to-head match-up wins the tie breaker.
    3. Where three teams tie, and one of the teams defeated the other two, that victorious team wins the tie breaker (if the two remaining teams played each other, go back to criterion #2, otherwise proceed to criterion #5).
    4. Where three teams tie and one of the teams lost to the other two, that losing team gets the lowest seed of the three teams involved in the tie (if the two remaining teams played each other, go back to criterion #2, otherwise proceed to criterion #5); where two teams tie that did not play each other, or where three or more teams tie where one team did not defeat all the other teams involved in the tie, go to criterion 5.
    5. Net tie breaker points (if after identifying the tie breaker winner, the remaining teams that are still tied played each other, go back to criterion #2, if not, proceed to criterion #6).
    6. Fewest defensive points given up to opposing teams in all games.
    7. Most points scored in all games.

In addition to changing the wording in the League Rules on this point (that will be posted on June 17, 2011), there will be detailed communications to all hosts to make certain they are aware of these changes. The biggest change in the tie breaker procedures for long-term Great Northwest members, is in what happens in a three-way tie, where each team involved in the tie beat one of the two other teams and lost to the other. Under the old rule, if all three teams had identical win/loss records, the team with the most tie breaker points got the highest place, the team with the second most tie breaker points the second highest place, and the team with the fewest tie breaker points the lowest place. Under the 2011-2012 revised Rules, the team with the most tie breaker points still gets the highest place, but after that, which team gets the second highest and third highest place, is determined by head-to-head results – not net tie breaker points.

### **Technical Fouls:**

Since the founding of the League, a technical foul has always resulted in three free throws and possession of the ball (see Paragraph D-13 of League Rules). Since this rule differs from both WIAA middle school, WIAA high school and Wisconsin State Invitational Championship Tournament Rules, it often causes confusion for those referees who work games at multiple levels. For that reason, we have decided to change League Rules for the 2011-2012 season to match both WIAA high school and Wisconsin State Invitational Championship Tournament Rules: two free throws and possession of the ball. While we realize that still differs with WIAA middle school rules, we don't see those rules being followed in many (if any) traveling youth basketball events anywhere in the state and believe the two shot/possession penalty used at the high school level is the preferred option. Again, this change will be reflected in Paragraph D-13 of the 2011-2012 Great Northwest Rules, which will be posted on June 17, 2011.