

Minnesota Basketball Game of the Year 1895-2023

Year	Game of the Year	Description
1895	Minnesota Aggies 9 Hamline Pipers 3	Ray Kaighn came to Hamline as physical director and athletic director and coach in 1894. By February 9, 1895, he had arranged a basketball between the Aggies from the St. Paul campus of the University of Minnesota and his Hamline students. There were 9 on a side and the ceilings were 9 feet high, but this was and is considered to be the 1 st intercollegiate game of basketball—the 1 st game between 2 college teams—ever played anywhere in the world. The Aggies also won a rematch 9-6.
1896	Minneapolis YMCA 6 Minnesota Gophers 3	The Gophers went 0-5 against the Aggies and 2-1 against the Minneapolis Y. Yet the Y won the inaugural Twin Cities Basketball League title, while the Aggies finished 2 nd at 6-2. One would think that the Y's 2 wins over the Gophers, both by a score of 6-3, might have clinched the title.
1897	Minnesota Aggies 25 Minnesota Gophers 1	The Aggies must have improved between 1896 and 1897—first, because they won the title of the Twin Cities league in its 2 nd year after finishing 2 nd in 1896. Secondly, they beat the Gophers 5 times in 1896 but by an average of just 7-3. In 1897, they beat the Gophers twice by an average of 22-2.
1898	Red Wing Company G 22 Minneapolis YMCA 19	This game for all intents and purposes marked Red Wing's senior men's teams as being among the state's most elite teams. They would have notable success over the next 20 years.
1899	Minnesota Gophers 20 Minnesota Aggies 9	The Gophers were 3-10-1 against the Y when they beat them in their next to last game of 1899. Even more satisfying, however, was their 1 st -ever win over the Aggies after 10 losses by an average of 12-3. Yet it was Macalester who won the 4 th TC league title.
1900	Minnesota Lady Gophers 12 Stanley Hall 6	The Lady Gophers won their 1 st game over the well-known girls orphanage located in Minneapolis.
1901	Minneapolis YMCA 14 Red Wing Athletic Club 12	Red Wing's top senior men's team changed its identity several times between 1898 and 1907, but it consisted of the same men, the so-called "Steady Seven." They were Company G, they were the Athletic Club, they were the Foresters, they were the Red Men. No matter, they were always "the Steady Seven." Over all those years, they won about 50 games at home while losing only one. In 1901 they were the Athletic Club, and they lost to the Minneapolis YMCA, led by George Tuck, 14-12.
1902	Minnesota Gophers 32 Yale 23	Yale was regarded as the best team in the east, and over the holidays of 1901 and 1902, they barnstormed throughout the west. Yale came to town from Madison, WI, where they had beaten Wisconsin 35-20. The Gophers played Yale on their home court, the University Armory, and won 32-23. Forwards William Deering and Roy Ireland and center George Tuck did the scoring, while guard Michael Kiefer had 2 late steals that iced the win. The Gophers went on to finish 15-0 with an average margin of 36-9, and were widely regarded as the best team in the country. They were probably even better in 1903

		at 13-0 and 41-9, but lacking a signature they were not as widely regarded as #1.
1903	Stillwater 26 Minneapolis Central 21	Stillwater won the 1 st championship of the 1 st high school conference, the Tri-City, encompassing schools in Minneapolis, St. Paul and Stillwater. Stillwater finished 12-1, losing only to Superior Normal (the college), and was the 1 st high school to claim a mythical state title.
1904	Minnesota Gophers 28 Crawfordsville, IN, HS 23	Sandwiched between road wins at Purdue (32-22) and Ohio State (31-18) was a game with the legendary Indiana high school, Crawfordsville. The Gophers won but the game was closer than either Purdue or Ohio State or 6 other games on the Gophers schedule that year.
1905	Columbia 27 Minnesota Gophers 15	The Gophers got another shot at the east's top team but lost at Columbia 27-15. The Gophers finished 7-7, including 5-5 on an eastern road trip.
1906	Red Wing Red Men 20 Stockton, CA 14	"The Steady Seven," now playing as the Red Men, toured the west, winning 26 games in 32 days. Their most eagerly awaited match was with Stockton, reputed to be the champions of California. They lost 6 other games, but the Red Men rose to this occasion, beating the champions of California 20-14.
1907	Minnesota Gophers 27 Chicago 10	The Big 10 offered a basketball championship for the 1 st time, and the Gophers rose to this occasion, winning 6 of 8 conference games, including a championship-clinching 21-10 shellacking of Chicago in their final game.
1908	(tie) Minnesota Gophers 9 Columbia 8, and Minnesota Gophers 16 Columbia 11	Columbia was no longer rated #1 when they came to Minnesota to play 2 games against the Gophers. Fact is, the Gophers were having a tough time, too, finishing 11-7 but just 2-6 in the Big 10. But, they rose to the occasion to sweep these 2 games from Columbia.
1909	Chicago 27 Minnesota Gophers 2	The Gophers were 5-1 and scoring an average of 27 points per game when they went to Chicago to play the 2-time defending (mythical) national champions. Chicago devastated the Gophers 27-2 and went on to a 3 rd straight national title.
1910	Minnesota Gophers 15 Chicago 10	The Gophers got their revenge on Chicago in their opening game of the 1909-1910 season, winning at home 15-10. They finished 2 nd in the Big 10 at 7-3.
1911	Madison high school 29 Ada 10	Madison defeated highly-regarded New Ulm, then arranged match games that ran the gamut from A to Z. 1 st , they played Zumbrota, the self-proclaimed champions of southern Minnesota, and won. Then they played Ada, claimants to the championship of northern Minnesota, and won easily, 29-10.
1912	(tie) Wisconsin 22 Minnesota Gophers 12, and Wisconsin 29 Minnesota Gophers 26	The Wisconsin Badgers swept the Gophers in 2 games in 1912. There was no shame in that, however, as the Badgers swept all 12 Big 10 games and finished 15-0 overall.
1913	Fosston 29 Mountain Lake 27	Fosston won the 1 st Minnesota state championship by virtue of "some very clever teamwork."
1914	Stillwater 30 Winona 4	Stillwater had been favored to win the 1 st state title in 1913 but came a cropper to Mountain Lake in the semis. They left

		nothing to chance in 1914, winning 3 games by 57-11, 32-19 and 30-4. Their average margin of victory (40-11) was a state tournament record for more than 100 years.
1915	Red Wing high school 21 Red Wing Company L 19	The heyday of senior men's basketball in Red Wing was just about over, and the heyday of Red Wing high school basketball had arrived when, on New Year's Day in 1915, the high school beat Company L 21-19.
1916	Virginia 33 Austin 30 (OT)	This semi-final game was regarded as perhaps the best game ever played in the Northfield tournament years (1913-1922). Virginia went on to win the final 20-9 against St. Paul Mechanic Arts.
1917	Minnesota Gophers 31 Iowa 19	The Gophers won their 4 th Big 10 title, still the most by any Big 10 team. A 31-19 win over Iowa in their final game clinched it.
1918	Waseca 29 Duluth Central 10	For many many years, it was thought that 2 unbeaten teams had never played for the Minnesota state title and that Woodbury vs. Coon Rapids in 1983 marked the 1 st time that this had happened. Wrong. Waseca and Duluth Central were both unbeaten going into the 1918 final. Waseca won easily as 2 Duluth starters had been knocked out by injuries in the 1 st 3 rounds of play. One of them was the first Black to play in the state tournament, 6-foot-3 junior post "Boots" Watts.
1919	Minnesota Gophers 26 Illinois 9	The Gophers completed an unbeaten 13-0 season, and clinched the Big 10 and (mythical) national title with their easy win at Illinois in their final game.
1920	Crawfordsville, IN 21 Minneapolis Central 16	Crawfordsville finished 2 nd in the national high school tournament; Central settled for 3 rd place. Central's Martin Norton won all-America honors.
1921	Indiana 24 Carleton 23	Indiana beat the Minnesota Gophers 25-23, then stopped in Northfield on their way back to Indiana to play Carleton, now coached by Indiana grad Everett Dean. Indiana beat Carleton 24-23.
1922	Lexington, KY 37 Duluth Cathedral 26	Duluth Cathedral won 2 games at the national tournament, then lost to the eventual champions from Lexington, KY, 37-26.
1923	Aurora 24 Austin 14	Aurora won the state title.
1924	Carleton wins at Michigan State	Over a period of 30 years, Carleton beat Iowa, Michigan State, Minnesota and Wisconsin a total of 5 times, all on the road. In 1924, they won in East Lansing.
1925	St. Paul Mechanic Arts 21 St. Thomas 21	They thought that St. Thomas had won 21-20, but later a scoring error was found. The game was tied 21-21, but the teams had long since left the gym. There would be no OT. Rather, there would be a tie. Both teams went on to win their respective championships—of the MSHSL and the Catholic league. Mechanic Arts even won 2 games at the national tournament to get to 17-0-1 before finally losing in the tournament quarter-finals.
1926	Gaylord 13 Gilbert 9	Some people complained about the lack of action in basketball in the 1920s and 1930s. We call it "the dead ball era." This must have been exactly that kind of game, but

		nobody seemed to mind. Gaylord won its 7 th straight upset, going all the way back to its district semi-finals, and it was as if every small town had won, except Gilbert. Fans were so excited that they passed a hat in the lobby of the Kenwood Armory and raised \$500 to help pay for Gaylord's trip to the national tournament in Chicago, where Gaylord became the 2 nd Minnesota champion to win 2 national tournament games.
1927	Henning 28 Chisago City 18	Later, some people called it the Class B tournament but technically it was a tournament for graded schools that had a high school department. Henning won the 5 th and final tournament behind the exploits of "giant center," Otto Rortvedt.
1928	Ohio State 48 Minnesota 40	Construction of the U of M Fieldhouse, which later became Williams Arena, was completed in 1928, and Ohio State beat the Gophers 48-40 in their 1 st game in their new home.
1929	Jesse M. Stasch 27 Holy Cross Church 25	The Minnesota senior men's AAU tournament was a big deal from the 1920s to the 1940s. There was, after all, no real professional ball at the time, not in the Midwest. So if a fellow wanted to play after college, this was it. Besides, there was a national tournament that the state champions could go to. A team sponsored by Jesse Stasch clothiers won in 1929. It consisted mostly of Mpls. Edison grads and was led by Edison coach Ray Parkins.
1930	Ascensions 31 Davis Hunt Club, Kansas City 24	The Ascensions, representing the north Minneapolis Ascension Catholic church, were the most dominant of the senior men's team, and in 1930 they won one of the very rare victories for Minnesota men in the national AAU tournament.
1931	DeLaSalle 23 Jasper, IN, Academy 21	DeLaSalle won 5 games including the final, 23-21 over Jasper Academy, to win the national Catholic tournament in Chicago. Ray Buffalo, reported to be a full-blooded member of the Chippewa tribe, was their star. This (DeLaSalle's win) did not represent a trend, however. From 1932 to 1941, when the tournament was disbanded, Minnesota teams went 3-20.
1932	Thief River Falls 21 Chisholm 15	Thief won the state title with the best record yet, 23 wins and no losses, by a state champion.
1933	Carleton 34 Wisconsin 29	The Carleton coach now was a Wisconsin grad, Marshall Diebold, and in 1933 he had the experience of beating his alma mater on their home court. As noted above, it was one of 5 wins over Big 10 opponents for Carleton over a 20-year period.
1934	Dominium Electric 27 Rock Spring Sparklers 20	The Sparklers were the 2 nd leading senior men's team after the Ascensions, while the Dominiums had never won a thing. But, in 1934, Marty Rolek completed his high school career at Mpls. Edison and, while still a high school student, joined the Dominiums. His team went on to dominate the 1934 playoffs. Rolek then left the Dominiums to go to the U of M, where he led the Gophers to the 1937 Big 10 title and won all-America honors himself. The Dominiums returned to obscurity.
1935	Carleton 29 Minnesota Gophers 26	Another of those 5 Carleton wins over Big 10 opposition, this one at the U of M Fieldhouse.
1936	Buhl 41 Minneapolis Edison 32	Basketball fans and coaches and journalists all agreed through the 1920s and 1930s that a 20 percent shooting

		percentage was pretty good. So, when Buhl shot 50 percent from the field and beat a favored Mpls. Edison team 41-32, well, people were impressed. Buhl was upset the following night by Wadena, however, 28-27.
1937	Minnesota Gophers 34 Northwestern 33	Since winning their most recent Big 10 (and national) championship in 1919, the Gophers had gone just 69-134 in the conference. Suddenly, in 1937, they went just 4-3 in their non-conference schedule, but then won 8 of their 1 st 10 Big 10 games. They got Northwestern at home with a chance to clinch the title and beat the Wildcats 34-33 to finish 10-2, 14-6. Marty Rolek won all-America honors.
1938	Minnesota 56 Long Island U 41	After their surprising Big 10 title in 1937, the Gophers started the 1937-1938 season strongly, winning their 1 st 4 games, then 2 games at Madison Square Garden, 56-41 over Long Island U and 36-31 over NYU. They entered the Big 10 season at 7-1, but promptly lost their 1 st 3 conference games. They then won 9 straight but fell one game short of Purdue.
1939	Mountain Lake 37 Minneapolis Marshall 31	Mpls. Marshall was favored to win the 1939 state title. The Minneapolis city conference was after all the state's toughest. But Mountain Lake surprised Marshall in the finals 37-31 to become another in a modest line of "Cinderella" champions.
1940	Ascensions 41 Holy Cross 23	The Ascensions won the state AAU title yet again. They would win their final state title the following year, then disband after Pearl Harbor.
1941	Buhl 31 Red Wing 29	Buhl won its 1 st of 2 straight state titles in a nip 'n tuck game that neither team ever led by more than 2 points.
1942	Bemidji State 41 San Diego State 32	San Diego State was the defending NAIA national champion, but Bemidji State sent them packing 41-32 in the 1942 tournament. Bemidji then lost to Central Missouri State, while Hamline went on to win their 1 st of 3 national titles.
1943	Washington Bears 42 Rock Spring Sparklers 21	After the Ascensions disbanded, their captain John Kundla joined the Sparklers and brought most of his Ascensions players with him. In 1942, they won the city title, unbeaten, but there was no state or national AAU tournament. So they entered the 1943 World Professional Basketball Tournament. They beat the Chicago Studebakers 45-44 but then ran into the eventual champions, the Washington Bears, a got manhandled 42-21. The Bears were an all-Black barnstorming team, most of them former members of the New York Renaissance. They were led by Dollie King, who led NYU to an NIT title in 1939 and a 34-game winning streak from 1938 to 1940. They won the 1943 title with an undefeted record. In 1946 King would become the 1 st Black player in the NBA. Despite the loss, the 1943 Sparklers were the greatest aggregation ever of basketball talent on one Minnesota team to that time.
1944	Minneapolis Patrick Henry 51 Crosby-Ironton 42	Mpls. Patrick Henry and big Jim McIntyre took Minnesota high school basketball by storm in 1944 and 1945. McIntyre at 6-9 as a senior was 3½ inches taller than any boy who had ever played in the state tournament. He broke the single game scoring record 3 times in 6 games, raising the record from 27 to 29 to 36 and then to 43 points, and he broke the tournament scoring record of 77 points with 86 and 100. More than that, he shot better than 50 percent at a time when 20 to

		<p>25 percent shooting was thought to be pretty good. Not anymore.</p> <p>Still, there were opponents who made Henry work for it. Crosby-Ironton was one in the 1944 final, getting within 41-39 with 5 minutes remaining. Then in 1945, Bemidji gave Henry its toughest game in the 1st round as Henry led just 33-32 at the half.</p>
1945	Minnesota Gophers 45 DePaul 36	George Mikan of DePaul was one of America's greatest players, and he led DePaul to the NIT title in the spring of 1945. But, the following December, Mikan and DePaul came to Minnesota to play the Gophers, and the Gophers freshman center Jim McIntyre held Mikan to 11 points, the lowest total of his college career.
1946	Lynd 58 Crosby-Ironton 47	Crosby-Ironton was rated #1 while Lynd was an unknown quantity. But, Lynd stunned C-I and Minnesota basketball fans with a modern fast break, and ran straight into the hearts of tournament fans. Fans loved the running game, and Lynd became the most talked-about tournament team ever that didn't win the title. Lynd guard Pat Clarke threw the 1 st known behind-the-back pass.
1947	Mankato State 52 Arizona State-Flagstaff 46	Mankato State won 4 games in the NAIA national tournament by an average score of 59-51, including Arizona State-Flagstaff in the semi-finals, to get to the finals against Marshall. Marshall beat Mankato 73-59, and Mankato settled for 2 nd place. Mankato natives Dewey Nelson and Don Olson and Mountain Lake's Henry Epp starred.
1948	Harlem Globetrotters 61 Minneapolis Lakers 59	The Minneapolis Lakers won the NBL and World tournament titles, but the big game of the year was the 1 st in a long series of exhibitions against the Harlem Globetrotters. The Trotters won on a long set shot by Ermer Robinson as time expired.
1949	(tie) Phillips Oilers 52 Hamline 38, and Phillips Oilers 49 Hamline 46	The Phillips Oilers were the dominant power in the so-called industrial league, consisting of teams supported by major businesses of different kinds. The Oilers had 7-footer Bob Kurland, who had led Oklahoma State to 2 NCAA titles and a famous win over George Mikan and DePaul. They were selected en masse to represent the U.S. in the Olympics in 1948 and 1952 and won Gold both times. In 1949, they came to Minnesota to play Hamline. Phillips won both games, but Vern Mikkelson outscored Kurland 16-14 and 18-14.
1950	Fort Wayne 19 Minneapolis Lakers 18	The Fort Wayne Pistons had had precious little success against the powerhouse Lakers and so on November 22, 1950, they decided to hold the ball. The strategy worked like a charm and Fort Wayne beat the Lakers. The conventional wisdom is that the NBA adopted the 24-second clock because of this game, but the fact is that the shot clock was only adopted some 4 years later.
1951	Minnesota Gophers 61 Kentucky 57	The U of M Fieldhouse was remodeled and christened Williams Arena, and it hosted the NCAA Final 4 in the spring of 1951. In December, the national champions from Kentucky returned to play the Gophers, who pulled a 61-57 upset as Ed Kalafat scored 30 points.
1952	Hopkins 46 Mountain Lake 45	

		Hopkins edged Mountain Lake, then won by 11 and 13 to win the 1 st of 2 straight state titles. Mountain Lake center Maynard Meyer outscored Hopkins star Dave Tschimperle 16-13.
1953	Red Wing 92 Braham 73	Red Wing defeated Braham 92-73 in the Region 4 final, breaking the previous record for most points in a regional game by a ridiculous 49 points. Unbeaten Red Wing then drew defending champion Hopkins in the 1 st round of the state tournament and lost 59-47. Red Wing scored a state tournament record 84 points in the consolation semis and 77 more in the consolation final.
1954	North Carolina State 85 Minnesota Gophers 84	The Gophers played in the Dixie Classic in Raleigh, NC, in December, and advanced to the finals with wins over Wake Forest and Duke. Bill Simonovich and Dick Garmaker each scored 24 points and Chuck Mencil 22 in the final, but North Carolina State scored with 9 seconds left to get a one-point win.
1955	Minnesota Gophers 59 Purdue 56 (6OT)	It was just one month later that the Gophers played a much lower-scoring and also a much longer game...and won. The game was at Purdue, and the Boilermakers opted to play quite deliberately against Minnesota's high scoring team. Regulation ended at 47-47. In each of the 1 st 3 OT, Purdue won the tip, held the ball for 5 minutes and missed a shot as time ran out. The Gophers won the tip in the 4 th OT, but Purdue got a quick steal and held the ball for another 5 minutes. Each team scored a bucket in the 5 th OT, but then Purdue held the ball once more. Purdue finally started shooting in the 6 th OT. The Gophers trailed by 3 but made 4 quick baskets to win 59-56. The 6 OT tied the college record, but has since been broken.
1956	Minneapolis Roosevelt 101 Blue Earth 54	The average winning score at the state tournament had increased from 20 points in 1920, to 40 in 1942, to 53 in 1946, and to 65 in 1953. Now, Minneapolis Roosevelt defined a theoretical high by pushing the single game scoring record to 101 points in 1956.
1957	Minneapolis Roosevelt 73 Bemidji 70 (OT)	Now Roosevelt came into the tournament as the defending champion and the prohibitive favorite, but needed OT to beat Bemidji 73-70 in the 1 st round.
1958	Minneapolis Lakers 111 Harlem Globetrotters 100	The Lakers and Globetrotters played for the 8 th and final time at Chicago Stadium in 1958. The Lakers won 111-100 for a 6-2 record in what had been a great rivalry.
1959	Boston Celtics 173 Minneapolis Lakers 139	The Lakers had struggled since George Mikan retired in 1954. Now they drafted Elgin Baylor and their regular season victories increased from 19 to 33, and they made the playoffs again after missing out in 1958. But, a month before the playoffs began, the mighty Celtics had beaten the Lakers 173-139, setting NBA records for most points by one team and most points by 2. Sure enough, the Celtics swept the Lakers 4 games to none in the playoffs.
1960	Edgerton 63 Richfield 60 (OT)	Edgerton became the most iconic state champion ever—the smallest school from the smallest town ever to win a single-class title—by beating heavily favored Richfield 63-60 in OT while scoring just one FG in the final 11 minutes (4 th quarter plus OT). In 3 tournament games, Edgerton made 59 FG; its opponents made 71. But Edgerton made 82 FT, while all of

		their opponents together only attempted 54. Edgerton vs. Richfield also featured the 1 st ever state tournament matchup of 2 1,000 point scorers—Edgerton's Dean Veenhof and Richfield's Bill Davis.
1961	Duluth Central 51 Bemidji 50	Bemidji coach Bun Fortier never won a state title, but he won a bunch of games that he probably had no business winning. This was almost one of them. Heavily favored Central had won 2 tournament games 74-52 and 75-53 while Bemidji won by 9 and 6. But, in the final, Bemidji trailed by one and had the ball, but the ball suddenly got slippery in those last few seconds and the Lumberjacks never got off a shot.
1962	(tie) Minnesota Gophers 104 Indiana 100; and Indiana 105 Minnesota 104	We have already seen scoring rise near the theoretical level in Minnesota's high school. Now it did so in the Big 10, splitting a pair of games with Indiana in which both teams broke the century mark in both games. In the Gophers win, Ray Cronk and Eric Magdanz combined for 55 points and 3 other Gophers scored in double figures.
1963	Marshall 75 Cloquet 74	Bloomington came into the state tournament as the clear favorite, but fast-breaking Cloquet won 87-67 and became the favorites themselves. Marshall shocked the Lumberjacks 75-74 in the final on a pair of FT in the final seconds. Many state tournament fans called it the greatest final ever.
1964	Augsburg 72 Duluth Branch 71	It was never a surprise when the MIAC beat the Northern conference in the District 13 final to determine who would advance to the NAIA national tournament. But the so-called Duluth Branch, now called UMD, had won the MIAC title in 1958, 1959 and 1962 before moving back to the Northern conference in 1963. Now, in 1964, they met former MIAC rival Augsburg in District 13 and came up short. It was the 2 nd of 3 straight NAIA bids for Augsburg and 6-10 center Dan Anderson.
1965	(tie) Michigan 91 Minnesota Gophers 78, and Michigan 88 Minnesota Gophers 85	The Gophers, led by Lou Hudson and Archie Clark, had gone from 12-12 in 1963 to 17-7 in 1964. Now, in 1965, they set their designs on a Big 10 title. They finished 19-5 and 11-3 in the conference, but lost twice to the Michigan Wolverines and settled for 2 nd place.
1966	Edina 62 Henning 55 (3OT)	Edina was undefeated but clearly not the powerhouse they would become in 1967 and 1968. They beat Windom 60-59 in the 1 st round of the state tournament, then Henning in 3OT and finally Duluth East 82-77 in yet another OT in the final.
1967	(tie) St. Cloud State 41 Gustavus Adolphus 38; and St. Cloud State 79 Gustavus Adolphus 64	The District 13 playoff became a 2-game total points playoff in 1967, and St. Cloud State became just the 2 nd Northern conference team ever to win a District 13 playoff from the MIAC champion. St. Cloud went on to beat Millersville, PA, 88-77 in the 1 st round but lost to Dickinson State, ND, in the 2 nd .
1968	Moorhead 108 St. Paul Highland Park 89	Moorhead set a state tournament record with 108 points in its 1 st round win over St. Paul Highland. They also set records for most points in a quarter (37 in the 2 nd) and in a half (65 in the 1 st), and the 2 team's total of 197 points was also a record by a wide margin. Moorhead advanced to the state final for the 2 nd straight year, but with the same result—a decisive loss to the Edina Hornets.

1969	(tie) St. John's 53 Winona State 50; and St. John's 66 Winona State 61 (OT)	St. John's made it 17 wins for the MIAC to just 2 for the Northern conference in the District 13 playoffs. The Johnnies lost their only NAIA game to Henderson State, AK, 78-76.
1970	Sherburn 78 South St. Paul 62	Sherburn was not only the final state champion in the single-class format, they were also the champions of irony. The single-class tournament would be abandoned after this because, well, the small towns just couldn't compete anymore. Yeah, right.
1971	St. Thomas 64 Augsburg 63	Another close call, another win for the MIAC. It was the 2 nd of 3 straight such wins for the Tommies, but in this year they lost their only game to #1-seeded Kentucky State 100-66.
1972	Ohio State 50 Minnesota Gophers 44	The Gophers opened the 1972 Big 10 season 4-0 under new coach Bill Musselman. Then, 1 st -place Ohio State came to town. One thing led to another. Late in the 1 st half 7-foot Ohio State center Luke Witte elbowed Gopher guard Bob Nix in the head. With 47 seconds left, Clyde Turner was called for a flagrant foul against Witte. Corky Taylor and Ron Behagen jumped on Witte and bloodied him up. In the ensuing "basketbrawl" Buckeyes Mark Wager and Mark Minor were also injured, and were taken to the hospital along with Witte. Taylor and Behagen were suspended for the rest of the season, but the Gophers went on to win the Big 10 at 11-3, much to the disgust of most Big 10 fans not located in Minnesota.
1973	Iowa 79 Minnesota Gophers 77	The Gophers were 20-2 and ranked #3 in the nation when Musselman flew to Florida to interview for the Gators job. He turned the down, but the distraction proved to be disastrous. The 1 st -place Gophers lost to the 9 th -place Hawkeyes at home, then to 10 th -place Northwestern to drop into 2 nd place. Only one team per conference went to the NCAA tournament in those days, so the Gophers settled for the NIT where they won just one game.
1974	Glencoe girls 46 Wadena 29	Glencoe won the 1 st -ever girls state title in 1974 to finish 21-0 and with a 54-game winning streak overall. The 1974 and 1975 tournaments were considered "unofficial" at the time, however, and only came to be included on the list of state title games sometime after the year 2000.
1975	Little Falls 54 Chisholm 50	Little Falls won the last of the overall championships but while they were the Class AA champions, Little Falls, with a population of about 7,500, had hardly struck a blow for the big cities.
1976	Bloomington Jefferson 60 Hibbing 51	Jefferson, with 6-7 Steve Lingenfelter, and Hibbing, with 6-10 Kevin McHale, staged the most eagerly awaited matchup of big men since Simonovich and Halldorson in 1951. Hibbing won the 1 st half 32-25, but Jefferson won the 2 nd half and the game 35-19 and 60-52. Lingenfelter outscored McHale 26-21 but McHale went on to have somewhat the better post-high school career.
1977	Minnesota Gophers 66 Marquette 59	Marquette and coach Dick McGuire would go on to win the NCAA title in 1977, but not until losing to the 0-27 Minnesota Gophers, 66-59, and at home, no less. The Gophers were on probation, but challenged the probation in court—and lost. Gopher fans thought they went 24-3, but the NCAA said no, they were 0-27.

1978	Minnesota Gopher women 64 Grandview 62	In the early days of women's basketball, small religiously affiliated colleges seemed to have gotten a head start on the bigger schools. One was Grandview, IA, which beat the Gopher women at Williams Arena 69-36 in 1976. As a measure of the Gophers improvement, they won at Grandview 64-62 in 1978.
1979	New York Mills girls 61 Albany 52	They say you've got to beat the best to be the best. New York Mills had won 2 straight state titles, but now they found a worthy opponent to help determine just how good they really were. Well, they were really good, beating a very good Albany team 61-52 as the Mills' Janet Karvonen outscored Albany's Kelly Skalicky 38-23.
1980	Virginia 58 Minnesota Gophers 55	Emerging from probation, the Gophers fell to 11-16, 6-12 in 1979, then showed significant improvement in 1980 with Kevin McHale leading the way. At 10-8 in the Big 10, they missed out on the big dance, but wangled an invite to the NIT where they won 4 games, including a 65-63 win over Illinois, to get to the final against Virginia and their superstar Ralph Sampson. Virginia held on to win 58-55, but Gopher fans thought that this had been a pretty successful season.
1981	Kansas 67 Minnesota Gopher women 61	The Gopher women won their 1 st and only Big 10 tournament to this day, and thus got an invitation to the national tournament, then administered by the AIAW. They lost to Kansas 67-61 and Lynette Woodward in the regional final. Woodward went on to become the 1 st women to play for the Harlem Globetrotters.
1982	Minnesota Gophers 57 Iowa 55 (3OT)	The Gopher men won the Big 10 title at 14-4 as Darryl Mitchell was the Big 10 MVP and Trent Tucker earned all-America honors. Randy Breuer, who was the Big 10 MVP in 1983, became just the 3 rd Minnesota man to win a state title and a Big 10 title as a Minnesota Gopher. The biggest win came in Iowa City, where the Gophers beat Iowa 57-55 in 3OT as Mitchell made 2 late, game-winning FT for the 2 nd straight game.
1983	Woodbury 56 Coon Rapids 50 (OT)	This was thought to be the 1 st time that 2 undefeated teams had ever met for the state title, but it was discovered somewhat later that Waseca and Duluth Central had both been unbeaten in 1918. Still, this was a hell of a game.
1984, 1985	White Bear Lake 51 Minneapolis North 47 White Bear Lake 67 Minneapolis North 62	For the 2 nd and 3 rd straight year, 2 unbeaten teams met for a state title. White Bear Lake defeated Mpls. North both times, both times coming from behind in the 4 th quarter to do so.
1986	Bloomington Jefferson 52 Duluth Central 51	Jefferson won its 3 rd state title and denied Duluth Central a 5 th title in a nip 'n tuck battle.
1987	Blaine 62 Moorhead 56 (5OT)	Blaine and Moorhead set a state tournament record that still stands with a 5 OT battle in the Class AA semis. Blaine, surely exhausted, was no match for Jefferson, who won their 2 nd straight and 4 th overall title the next night.
1988	Concordia (Moorhead) women 65 St. John Fisher 57	Concordia, led by guard Jessica Beachy, went 21-1 in the MIAC, 26-5 overall in 1987 but lost in the NCAA D3 final. In 1988, they again went 21-1 in the MIAC but defeated unbeaten St. John Fisher 65-57 to win the NCAA title at 31-1.

1989	Duke 87 Minnesota Gophers 70	The Gophers were pretty good after their 1982 Big 10 title until 1986, when several Gopher players were implicated in a rape in Madison, WI, and it was back to square one. Now, coach Clem Haskins was the designated savior. The Gophers were just 6-30 in the Big 10 in Clem's 1 st 2 years, but in 1989 they started to get it together. They went 9-9 in the Big 10 and 19-12 overall, good enough for an NCAA tournament bid. They beat Kansas State and Siena before running into perennially powerful Duke, losing in the Sweet 16 87-70.
1990	Minnesota Gophers 82 Syracuse 75	Now the Gophers were 11-7 in the Big 10, their best since 1982, and plenty good for another NCAA bid. It looked like 1989 all over again, as they beat Texas-El Paso and Northern Iowa, but now drew the perennially powerful Syracuse Orangemen. But, this time they shocked Syracuse 82-75, then lost to Georgia Tech just 93-91, one game short of the Final 4. Some said the Syracuse game was the best game in Gopher history.
1991	St. Thomas women 73 Muskingum 55	Beginning in 1991, the St. Thomas women won 8 MIAC titles in 12 years, made 4 Final 4 appearances and went 217-22 (.908) in the MIAC. Their peak came right at the start, as they beat Eastern Connecticut 91-55 and Muskingum 73-55 to win the 1991 title behind coach Ted Rivero and star Laurie Trow.
1992	Luther, IA 61 St. Thomas women 60	As defending national champions, the Tommies women waltzed through the MIAC unbeaten, and built their overall winning streak to 40 games. Favored to repeat as national champions, however, they lost to Luther, IA, 61-60 in the national semis.
1993	Minnesota Gophers 62 Georgetown 61	After their NCAA tournament runs of 1989 and 1990, the Gopher men went 13-23 in the Big 10 the next 2 seasons, and lost their only NIT game in 1992. 1993 was better—9-9 and 22-10, good enough at least for another NIT bid. The Gophers beat Florida, Oklahoma, USC and Providence to advance to the final against the intimidating Georgetown Hoyas. But, the Gophers beat the Hoyas 62-61 to win their 1 st NIT title.
1994	Minnesota Gopher women 81 Notre Dame 76	The Gopher women struggled mightily from the mid-'80s to the early '00s. The one exception to that was the Carol Ann Shudlick era, or at least her junior and senior seasons. Those were the only winning seasons from 1985 to 2002. Not only that, but in 1984 the Gophers finagled an NCAA tournament bid and beat Notre Dame at South Bend 81-76. Unfortunately, the next game, a 98-72 loss to Vanderbilt was Shudlick's last game as a Gopher, but she was named national player of the year.
1995	Minneapolis North 54 Staples-Motley 52	The MSHSL played a Sweet 16 format in 1995 and 1996. Sid Hartman said that surely it would return the state tournament to its former glory. Well, the play was pretty good, sometimes even glorious, as in the 1995 final won by Mpls. North 54-52 over Staples-Motley. But, state tournament attendance dropped and so was the Sweet 16 after 2 years.
1996	Minneapolis North 67 St. Thomas 65	North was heavily favored in the 2 nd Sweet 16 tournament, but trailed St. Thomas 65-61 inside of one minute. Khalid El-Amin hit a 3, St. Thomas missed a FT, and El-Amin hit another 3 at the final buzzer, and North did indeed go on to repeat as state champion.

1997	Wabasso 117 Red Lake 113 (OT)	Wabasso averaged more than 100 points per game during the regular season, and scored 99 points in its 1 st state tournament game. Surprisingly, Red Lake was willing to run with the Rabbits, but Wabasso led 81-62 after 3 periods and 102-92 with 1:15 left. Red Lake's Gerald Kingbird scored 13 points in the final 57 seconds to force OT. In OT Red Lake took its 1 st lead since 10-8, but Wabasso came back to win 117-113. The 117, 113 and 230 points were of course tournament records, but it was Red Lake who scored a record 43 points in the 4 th quarter. By tournament's end, Wabasso had scored a record 274 points, but Hancock outscored them 60-58 in the Class A final.
1998	Anoka-Ramsey Community College women 73 DuPage (IL) 48	Anoka-Ramsey won 5 NJCAA titles, the 1 st coming in 1994, and Minnesota schools won 6 in a row from 1994 to 1999. Rainy River and Central Lakes won the next 2 titles, then Anoka-Ramsey 3-peated in 1997, 1998 and 1999. In 1997 they won 3 games by an average of 91-48. In 1998, ARCC won their last 2 games by an average of 92-64. Fergus Falls won in 2001, MCTC in 2004 and Anoka-Ramsey again in 2005, for a total 9 titles by Minnesota junior colleges in 12 years.
1999	Washington (St. Louis) 74 St. Benedict's women 65	St. Ben's again went 21-1 in the MIAC and 28-2 overall, and beat St. Thomas 76-68 in the MIAC playoffs in the final game of Tommies coach Ted Rivero's tenure. The Bennies won 3 NCAA tournament games by an average of 71-59, but lost to Washington University of St. Louis in the final. It was the 2 nd of 3 straight titles for Washington.
2000	Minnesota Timberwolves 101 Indiana 100	The Timberwolves had of course struggled right from the day of their founding, though they did play better than .500 ball in 1998 and made the playoffs in 1997, 1998 and 1999. They had their 2 nd winning season in 2000, and the biggest win was a 101-100 win over Indiana on a last-second banked-in 3 by Malik Sealy. Shortly after the 2000 season ended, Sealy was killed by a wrong-way driver.
2001	Lakeville girls 53 Woodbury 52 (OT)	2 suburban schools on-the rise. Lakeville won the Class AAAA title in 2001 and 2002, Woodbury won in 2003. Lakeville North then won in 2010 after the split of Lakeville into North and South. For now, Lakeville center Liz Podominick looked like one of the best players in the state.
2002	Minnesota Gopher women 92 Wisconsin 85	The Gopher women, led by Lindsay Whalen, enjoyed just their 3 rd winning season since 1985 and their 1 st 20-game winning season since 1983. The game that put them on the map was a 92-85 win at #5-ranked Wisconsin, which enabled the Gophers to move into the top 25 at #23.
2003	Minnesota Gopher women 68 Stanford 56	The Gophers improved from 22-8 to 25-6 but as a 6 th -seed, they were assigned to play their 1 st 2 NCAA games at perennially powerful Stanford. They beat Tulane 68-48 in the 1 st round, then shocked the Cardinal 68-56 in the 2 nd . They lost to Texas in the regional semi-finals, however, 73-60. Whalen was named all-American.
2004	Minnesota Gopher women 82 Duke 75	The Gophers fell from 13-4 to 9-7 in the Big 10 as Lindsay Whalen broke a hand and missed 11 games. She came back just in time for the NCAA tournament, however, and the #7 seeded Gophers the #2 and #3 seeds in the Mideast region.

		Now they would face the #1 seed and also the #1 ranked team in the country, Duke. The Gophers won 82-75 as Whalen scored 27 points. The big star was Shannon Bolden from Marshall, however. She tied Duke's all-American Alana Beard with 10 points apiece, but Bolden did it on just 3 FG attempts to Beard's 14.
2005	Hopkins 71 Eastview 60 (OT)	<p>Hopkins won the Class AAAA title in the craziest finish ever at the state tournament. The Royals trailed Eastview by 2 with 3 seconds remaining in the 1st OT, and the Royals had the ball on their own baseline. They threw a three-quarter court pass that Blake Hoffer caught in a mad scramble as he was falling to the floor. He threw the ball at the basket with 2 hands while seated on the 3-point line. It went in. After that, Hopkins was not going to lose, and did not lose.</p> <p>Hoffer's shot was the shot of the year on ESPN. He was invited to come and demonstrate the shot on the <i>Today Show</i>. He made that one, too.</p>
2006	Winona State 74 Mankato State 71 (OT)	Winona State won the NSIC title and Mankato State the NCC title. They met in the D2 regional semi-finals. Mankato was favored and led most of the way, by as many as 16. But Winona roared back and took the lead on a steal and stuff by David Zellman. They prevailed 74-71, then won 4 more games including a 73-61 win over Virginia Union for Minnesota's 1 st men's national title since 1951.
2007	Winona State 69 Minnesota Gophers 64	After winning the NCAA D3 title in 2006, Winona State came to Williams Arena to play the D1 Gophers. How often does a D3 beat a D1? Not often. But they did this time.
2008	Jordan girls 79 Crookston 74	The Class AA girls featured some great talent in 2008. Most people thought the semi-final between Crookston and Jordan would be for the title, and Crookston (29-1) was the obvious favorite. Instead, Jordan surprised the Pirates as Britney Chambers scored a tournament record 47 points. Then, Albany shocked Jordan 62-52 in the final. Both Chambers and Crookston's Camille Wahlin went on to win all-conference honors in college, Chambers at Kansas State and Wahlin at Iowa.
2009	Mankato State women 103 Franklin Pierce 94	Mankato State won the NCAA D2 championship 103-94 over Franklin Pierce, NH. They won 4 games by an average of 68-55 to advance to the final. Mankato's Heather Johnson was the tournament MVP, and Alex Andrews and Joanne Noreen also made the all-tournament team.
2010	St. Paul Johnson 86 Hopkins 78	Johnson beat Hopkins in a fast-paced, high-powered holiday matchup. Both teams went on to win state titles, Johnson in Class AAA at 32-0, Hopkins in AAAA at 31-1.
2011	St. Thomas 78 Wooster 54	The Tommies won 5 relatively close games to get to the national finals, then broke loose for an easy 78-54 win over Wooster. The 24-point margin tied the record for the biggest margin in a D3 final at that time. Tyler Nicolai was tournament MVP.
2012	Osseo 87 Hopkins 86 (3OT)	Hopkins failed to get a 4 th straight state title, but if you wanted to win in Class AAAA, you still had to get past the Royals to do it. Osseo did it in 2012 in the semi-finals in one of the weirdest games, statistically, ever played. Hopkins outscored

		Osseo on 3-pointers 33-0, but Osseo won the battles in the paint (points in the paint, rebounds) by a wide margin.
2013	Minnesota Lynx 86 Atlanta 77	The Lynx won their 2 nd WNBA title, going 26-8 in the regular season, then sweeping 7 straight playoff games without a loss. The 7 th win, 86-77 at Atlanta, clinched the finals at 3 games to none.
2014	Lakeville North 84 Hopkins 82	Once again, you had to go through the Hopkins Royals to win the Class AAAA title. This time, it was Lakeville North who beat Hopkins in the finals as J.P. Macura torched the nets for 43 points.
2015	Minnesota Lynx 80 Indiana 77	The Lynx now won their 3 rd WNBA title despite winning the fewest games in the regular season (22-12) since 2010. But they swept their 1 st 2 playoff series 4 games to 1, and faced the Indiana Fever in the finals, the same Indiana Fever who had beaten them in the 2012 finals. With the series tied at one game apiece, Maya Moore hit a 3-pointer from the top of the key as time expired to win game 3 80-77. The Lynx lost game 4 but won game 5 and the championship.
2016	Minnesota Gopher women 112 Northwestern 106 (2OT)	The Gopher women won 20 games for the 3 rd straight year. Along the way, they survived the Northwestern Wildcats in a wild 112-106, 2 OT game. The game is remembered for Rachel Banham's Big 10 record 60 points.
2017	Minnesota Lynx 85 Los Angeles Sparks 76	Lynx fans know that their team really won 5 WNBA titles, not 4. In the final minute of the 5 th game of the 2016 finals, the L.A. Sparks were awarded a bucket that clearly came after the shot clock had expired. At the next stoppage of play, the officials announced that while the basket was no good, it was now too late to disallow it. It had to be done immediately. Oops. So when the Lynx and Sparks met in the 2017 finals, revenge—against the Sparks, against inept officiating, against the league—was in the air. The finals again went to a 5 th game that was played in Williams Arena because the Target Center was hosting a circus or monster trucks or something. The Lynx gutted out a tough 85-76 win that was closer than the score. It was their 5 th title. No, really.
2018	Cretin-Derham Hall 79 Apple Valley 78	In the closing seconds of the 1 st half of the Class AAAA final, Cretin's Daniel Oturu threw Apple Valley's Tre Jones to the floor. He was assessed a personal foul, and the Eagles made a FT for a one-point half-time lead. Because of that foul, Oturu sat out large portions of the 2 nd half with 4 fouls until Apple Valley led by one with some 4 seconds remaining. As it happened, Oturu got a stuff at the buzzer for the win. Then when the all-tournament team was named, Oturu's name was somehow missing. The MSHSL said, well, the media picks the all-tournament team, but no one could find a single member of the media who hadn't voted for Oturu. Oh, well, then, it was a committee decision, the MSHSL said. What committee was that, and who is on it? The MSHSL wouldn't say. Oturu was held accountable for his actions. The grown-ups in the MSHSL, on the other hand, refused to be accountable.
2019		

	Minnesota Gopher men 59 Wisconsin 52	The Gopher men got off to a great start in 2018-2019, and when they won at Wisconsin they were 12-2 and ranked in the top 20. Unfortunately, they slumped to 10-12 the rest of the way.
2020	Eden Prairie 78 Minnehaha 64	Minnehaha had 2 national players of the year in Jalen Suggs (2020) and Chet Holmgren (2021), and the Minnehaha folks were quoted saying that theirs was the greatest team in Minnesota history. Eden Prairie went 28-0, however, and beat Minnehaha on their home floor. In fact, it was one of 3 losses by Minnehaha that year, the others coming to Cretin and Hopkins. You can't be the greatest team ever if you're clearly not the best team of your own season.
2021	Chaska girls 67 Hopkins 62	Hopkins won the girls Class AAAA title in 2004, 2006, 2011-2013, 2015 and 2019, and finished 2 nd in 2005 and 2016-2018. If you wanted to win the Class AAAA title, you had to go through Hopkins to do it. Sounds familiar! Well, Chaska did it, beating Hopkins 67-62 in the 2021 semi-finals, then beating Rosemount 45-43 in the final.
2022	Minnesota Gopher men 75 Michigan 65	The Game of the Year is the Minnesota Gopher men winning at Michigan 75-65 on December 11 (OK, 2021) to run their record to 9-1. Yeah, things went downhill from there. But this was one of the most unbelievable wins ever and, just for a moment, hope sprung eternal. The game came in the 2021-2022 season and so therefore is the best game of 2022.
2023	St. Michael-Albertville girls 71 Hopkins 70	Hopkins had beaten St. Michael twice during the regular season, but the Knights ran out to a 42-25 halftime lead. Hopkins rallied in the 2 nd half but fell just short. Tess Johnson starred for St. Michael, while Hopkins' record in state championship finals in the 21 st century went to 8-5.

Multiple Awards (Minnesota teams)	Multiple Awards (non-Minnesota teams)
Minnesota Gophers 21-17 Minnesota Gopher women 8-1 Hopkins 2-3 Carleton 3-1 Minneapolis North 2-2 Winona State 2-2 Red Wing senior men 2-2 Minneapolis Lakers 1-3 Minnesota Lynx 3-0 St. John's 2-0 Minnesota Aggies 2-1 Minneapolis YMCA 2-1 Red Wing 2-1 St. Thomas University 2-1 Duluth Central 1-2 Mountain Lake 1-2 Hamline 0-3 Ascensions 2-0 Bloomington Jefferson 2-0 Buhl 2-0 Minneapolis Roosevelt 2-0 St. Cloud State 2-0 Stillwater 2-0	Wisconsin 2-2 Indiana 2-1 Chicago 1-2 Columbia 1-2 Iowa 1-2 Michigan 2-1 Ohio State 2-0 Phillips Oilers 2-0 Crawfordsville IN HS 1-1 Harlem Globetrotters 1-1

White Bear Lake 2-0 Augsburg 1-1 Henning 1-1 Mankato State 1-1 Moorhead 1-1 St. Thomas women 1-1 St. Thomas Academy 0-1-1 Austin 0-2 Bemidji 0-2 Crosby-Ironton 0-2 Gustavus Adolphus 0-2 Hopkins girls 0-2 Holy Cross church 0-2 Minneapolis Central 0-2 Rock Spring Sparklers 0-2	
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