

## What If? Mythical Two-Class Tournaments

The MSHSL debated its state tournament format almost annually from 1930 until it finally abandoned its single class format for a two-class format in 1971. One can hardly avoid asking the obvious question: What if the state tournament had started out with two classes right from the beginning? What small town teams might have distinguished themselves if they had been given that opportunity?

We've simulated a two-class tournament by looking at state tournament scores—plus, regional scores, which become available as of about 1931, and results of Catholic and independent as well as national tournaments. We've determined who the top two large school and the top two small school teams were (*not from the same region*) each year since the inception of the state tournament in 1913. Now and again, our mythical two class tournament finalists actually played one another in the state tournament. More likely, they have not, but they might have common opponents, and so we're able to determine a likely score for these mythical matchups as well.

In the following table, **the actual MSHSL state champion is shown in boldface**. All four of our mythical finalists participated in the state tournament unless we say otherwise. *Class assignments are based on the school's assignments today, unless otherwise indicated. The exception is that Minneapolis and St. Paul schools are presumed to have been "large" schools throughout the single class era. Our choice for the best overall team in the state is shown in italic. If they are the same team, they are shown in boldface italic.* For region assignments, during the Single Class Era we will use the regional alignment of 1933-1970 even in the period before 1933, but of course the class alignments of today (2022).

### The Single Class Era

Year	Class A	Class AA
1913	<b>Fosston</b> 29 Mountain Lake 27. This was the actual state title game.	<i>Duluth Central</i> 28 Stillwater 18. Central finished 3 <sup>rd</sup> in the national tournament and was very likely the best team in the state. Stillwater was the pre-state tournament favorite but lost to Mountain Lake by 7.
1914		

	Fosston 29 Howard Lake 15. Fosston won twice at state, Howard Lake lost in the 1 <sup>st</sup> round.	<b>Stillwater</b> 30 Winona 4. The actual state final.
1915	Fosston 29 Mountain Lake 23. Mountain Lake was runner-up, but Fosston gave champion Red Wing a closer game.	<b>Red Wing</b> 34 Bemidji 15. Red Wing crushed everybody. Bemidji won 1 game.
1916	<b>Virginia</b> 39 Slayton 10. This is an actual 1 <sup>st</sup> round game. Rush City was better than Slayton but is from the same region as Virginia.	Austin 25 St. Paul Mechanic Arts 17. Virginia beat Austin by 3.
1917	Mountain Lake 22 Fosston 12. Rochester defeated Mountain Lake by 11, Fosston by 21.	<b>Rochester</b> 25 St. Cloud 23. This was an actual 1 <sup>st</sup> round game.
1918	<b>Waseca</b> 35 Detroit Lakes 12. This is an actual quarter-final game. Lake City was better than Detroit Lakes but was from the same region as Waseca.	Albert Lea 20 Duluth Central 10. Waseca beat Albert Lea by 4, Duluth Central by 14.
1919	Fosston 30 Waseca 19. Albert Lea crushed everybody, including Fosston by 19. New Ulm beat Waseca by 1.	<b>Albert Lea</b> 37 New Ulm 8. The actual state final.
1920	Morton 18 Fulda 9. Morton lost to Stillwater by 4, and Stillwater lost to champion Red Wing by 2. Fulda lost to Mankato by 4, and Mankato lost to Red Wing by 11 in the actual state final.	<b>Minneapolis Central</b> 21 <b>Red Wing</b> 19. Central won 2 games at the national tournament against vastly better competition than Red Wing faced in Northfield.

<p>1921</p>	<p>Sandstone 27 Fosston 25. Fosston lost to New Ulm by 5, Sandstone to Central by 9. Central defeated New Ulm 19-15 in the actual state final. So, this one might have gone to OT.</p>	<p><b>Minneapolis Central</b> 24 Red Wing 20. Red Wing lost in the first round due to two starters being sick with the flu. So, we're hypothesizing that a healthy Red Wing team was the #2 team in the state.</p>
<p>1922</p>	<p><i>Duluth Cathedral</i> 29 Madison 25. Cathedral defeated Duluth Central by 15 and 12 in the regular season. Red Wing defeated Central by 5 and Madison by 7 at state. On the other hand, national champion Lexington, KY, beat Cathedral by 7 and Madison by 1 in the national tournament. Still, Duluth Cathedral was very likely the best team in the state.</p>	<p><b>Red Wing</b> 27 Mankato 19. Mankato lost to runner-up Madison by 1.</p>
<p>1923</p>	<p><b>Aurora</b> 20 Hancock 7. This was an actual semi-final game. Duluth Cathedral was probably the #2 small school but is from the same region as Aurora.</p>	<p>Austin 19 St. Cloud 15. Austin lost to Aurora by 10 in the finals, St. Cloud lost to Aurora by 14 in the quarter-finals.</p>
<p>1924</p>	<p><i>Duluth Cathedral</i> 31 McIntosh 18. Two Harbors beat McIntosh 31-18 en route to the MSHSL state title, but Cathedral had beaten Two Harbors twice in 1923, and we believe they would have done so again in 1924. They are of course in the same region.</p>	<p>Minneapolis South 25 Moorhead 14. This the score of an actual semi-final game. South finished as runner-up to Two Harbors.</p>
<p>1925</p>	<p>Henning 15 Ceylon 14. There were no small schools in the MSHSL tournament, so these are two teams that played in the so-called</p>	<p><b>St. Paul Mechanic Arts</b> 12 Wayzata 9. This was an actual 1<sup>st</sup> round score. Mechanic Arts tied St. Thomas during the regular</p>

	<p>"Class B" tournament that was held from 1923 to 1927. Both lost by 2 points to Chisago City (Chisago is now Class AAA and thus ineligible for our mythical tournament.)</p>	<p>season, though observers had thought that St. Thomas won 21-20. The discrepancy was discovered and the game declared a tie long after the teams had gone on their ways. Both went on to win their state tournament. They are in the same region, so only one could appear in our mythical tournament.</p>
1926	<p><b>Gaylord</b> 13 Gilbert 9. This was the actual state final.</p>	<p>Moorhead 17 Buffalo 14. Gaylord beat Moorhead by 4 and Austin by 12. Buffalo beat Austin 18-12 for 3<sup>rd</sup> place, so gets the nod for 4<sup>th</sup> place overall (and 2<sup>nd</sup> in Class AA).</p>
1927	<p>Henning 26 Appleton 20. Once again we like Henning from "Class B." After losing to Chisago 12-10 in a 1925 semi-final, this time Henning defeated Chisago 28-18 in the final. Appleton took 4<sup>th</sup> in the MSHSL tourney.</p>	<p><b>Minneapolis South</b> 23 Faribault 17. This was a semi-final score. Excelsior finished 2<sup>nd</sup> but is from the same region as South.</p>
1928	<p>Virginia 28 Appleton 13. Virginia lost to Moorhead by 1.</p>	<p><b>Moorhead</b> 29 Minneapolis South 26. South was banned from the tournament for using an ineligible player. Moorhead defeated Minneapolis runner-up Edison 29-16 in the final.</p>
1929	<p>Ely 24 St. Cloud Cathedral 21. Ely took 5<sup>th</sup> place, Cathedral was Catholic champion.</p>	<p><b>Moorhead</b> 20 Red Wing 16 (OT). This is the actual championship final.</p>
1930	<p><i>St. John's Prep</i> 24 Chisholm 19. Chisholm finished 3<sup>rd</sup>, St. John's was the Catholic</p>	<p>Minneapolis North 21 <b>St. Paul Mechanic Arts</b> 19. Mechanic Arts won the MSHSL</p>

	<p>champion defeating Cretin 23-18 in the final. Cretin split 2 games with St. Paul Mechanic Arts, with a scoring margin of 43-37 favoring Cretin.</p>	<p>title. North went to the national tournament instead and won one game. There was no TC Game this year.</p>
1931	<p><b>Glencoe</b> 15 Chisholm 14. This was an actual semi-final game.</p>	<p><i>DeLaSalle</i> 24 Moorhead 19. De won the national Catholic championship. Moorhead finished 5<sup>th</sup> in the MSHSL tournament. Buffalo was better--the runner-up to Glencoe—but is from the same region as De.</p>
1932	<p><b>Thief River Falls</b> 21 Chisholm 15. This was the actual state final.</p>	<p>Winona 29 Mankato 10. This was the actual 3<sup>rd</sup> place game.</p>
1933	<p>Chisholm 28 Montevideo 18. Montevideo was the tournament favorite but stumbled in the semis. This was the actual 3<sup>rd</sup> place score.</p>	<p><b>Red Wing 16</b> Minneapolis North 13. The actual state final.</p>
1934	<p><b>Chisholm 29</b> Redwood Falls 23. Chisholm beat Mechanic Arts by 2. Mechanic Arts beat Redwood by 4.</p>	<p>St. Paul Mechanic Arts 29 Mankato 28. This was a 1<sup>st</sup> round score.</p>
1935	<p>Glencoe 24 Rushford 21. Glencoe was the runner-up, while Rushford lost to Austin by just 3 in the Region One final.</p>	<p><b>Austin</b> 28 Bemidji 25. The Lumberjacks took 3<sup>rd</sup> place.</p>
1936	<p>Wadena 28 Buhl 27. This was an actual semi-final score.</p>	<p><b>Bemidji 30</b> Minneapolis Edison 28. Buhl shocked pre-tournament favorite Edison in the 1<sup>st</sup> round but Edison took 5<sup>th</sup> place.</p>

<p>1937</p>	<p>Crosby-Ironton 32 Virginia 30. Edison beat Crosby-Ironton by 11, and Virginia by 13.</p>	<p><b>Minneapolis Edison</b> 43 Rochester 28. Edison crushed everybody. Virginia beat Rochester by 2.</p>
<p>1938</p>	<p><b>Thief River Falls</b> 30 Crosby-Ironton 28 (OT). This was an actual semi-final score.</p>	<p>Minneapolis North 34 St. Paul Central 27. This was the other semi-final. Central defeated North in the Twin Cities Game the previous week. Thief beat North in the actual final.</p>
<p>1939</p>	<p><b>Mountain Lake</b> 38 Gilbert 24. Gilbert lost to Minneapolis Marshall, then won big twice to take 5<sup>th</sup> place.</p>	<p>Minneapolis Marshall 31 Austin 26. Marshall lost to Mountain Lake 37-31 in the final. Austin lost to the Lakers just 29-28 in the 1<sup>st</sup> round, but lost to Thief (who lost to South St. Paul by 7, who lost to Mountain Lake by 20) in consolation.</p>
<p>1940</p>	<p><b>Breckenridge</b> 35 Chisholm 31. Breckenridge defeated Minneapolis Marshall by 2, Marshall beat Chisholm by 2.</p>	<p><b>Minneapolis Marshall</b> 33 Red Wing 32. Breckenridge beat Red Wing by 3. We still like Marshall as the state's #1 team in 1940.</p>
<p>1941</p>	<p><b>Buhl</b> 34 Fairmont 27. Duluth Cathedral was the #2 small school but from the same region as Buhl. Fairmont lost to Mankato by 5 in Region Two. Mankato lost to Buhl by 2. (On the other hand, Cretin defeated Buhl and Cathedral defeated Cretin 26-21 for the Catholic title. But, Cretin also lost to St. Paul Johnson, who then lost to Red Wing by 15.)</p>	<p>Red Wing 34 Mankato 30. Buhl beat Mankato by 2, Washburn by 4, Red Wing by 2. Red Wing beat Austin by 16 and Mankato beat Austin by 8.</p>

1942	<b>Buhl</b> 44 Bagley 24. Bagley finished 6 <sup>th</sup> .	Marshall 38 Hopkins 23. This was an actual semi-final and a big upset.
1943	Arlington 34 Virginia 32. Arlington was competitive in Region 4, home of the state champ St. Paul Washington.	<b>Cretin</b> 45 Alexandria 33. Cretin fared slightly better against St. Paul City opponents than <b>St. Paul Washington</b> , and won the Catholic title. Cretin and Washington are of course from the same region.
1944	Litchfield 39 Crosby-Ironton 34. Litch gave Henry its closest post-season game, losing by 4 in Region 5. Henry beat C-I by 9 at state.	<b>Minneapolis Patrick Henry</b> 42 Bemidji 33. Bemidji lost to C-I in OT in the 1 <sup>st</sup> round of the state tournament.
1945	Mankato Loyola 45 Ely 31. Some said Loyola was the best team in the state. They beat Cretin, who beat DeLaSalle, who beat Henry.	<b>Minneapolis Patrick Henry</b> 59 Bemidji 49. This was an actual semi-final score.
1946	Mountain Lake 50 Lynd 37. Austin beat Mountain Lake by 7 in a semi, and hammered Lynd 63-31 in the final.	<b>Austin</b> 64 Mankato 54. Mankato defeated Austin twice in Big 9 play. Mankato lost to Mountain Lake 31-28 in the Region 2 final.
1947	Mountain Lake 39 Crosby-Ironton 38. The Lakers repeat. In real life, they lost to Denfeld by 1 in 1 <sup>st</sup> round, while C-I lost by 2 in the final.	<b>Duluth Denfeld</b> 44 Minneapolis Marshall 41. Marshall lost to C-I by 1 in a semi, and to Mountain Lake by 2 in the consolation final.
1948	Mountain Lake 46 Crosby-Ironton 26. Mountain Lake three-peats, and surpasses Chisholm and Fosston with its 5 <sup>th</sup> mythical	<b>Bemidji</b> 38 Hopkins 29. This was the actual final.

	small school title. The Lakers lost to Bemidji by 3 in the semis.	
1949	Dawson 33 LeSueur 30. Dawson was the only small school in the tournament field, and won 1 game while outscoring their opponents by 11 points. LeSueur lost to Anoka by 2 in the Region 4 semi, and Anoka lost to state champs Humboldt by 11 in the region final.	<i>St. Thomas</i> 47 Mankato 35. <b>St. Paul Humboldt</b> defeated Mankato 47-35 in the MSHSL final, but St. Thomas defeated Humboldt 47-38 in the regular season and won the Catholic title. Humboldt and St. Thomas would both be in Region 4 and so only one could make it to state.
1950	Canby 47 Chisholm 42. Canby was the only small school in the tournament field, and lost to state champ Duluth Central by 13 in a semi-final. Chisholm lost to Central by 13 in the region.	<b>Duluth Central</b> 42 Robbinsdale 40. This was the actual final.
1951	<b>Gilbert</b> 69 Canby 52. The actual state final, the first time since 1932 that our small school final is the same as our actual state final. Gilbert played in 1926, too, losing to Gaylord.	<i>St. Thomas</i> 48 Hopkins 44. The unbeaten Tommies (29-0) won the Catholic title behind Johnny Horan.
1952	Mountain Lake 56 Winona Cotter 51. Cotter was the Catholic champion, the Lakers took 3 <sup>rd</sup> at the MSHSL tournament. (Mountain Lake defeated Virginia by 2, Halstad defeated Virginia by 1.)	<b>Hopkins</b> 42 South St. Paul 29. This is the actual final.
1953		<b>Hopkins</b> 58 Hibbing 49. This is the actual state final.



	Albany 56 Granite Falls 52. Hopkins beat Albany by 13 in Region 5, and Hibbing beat Granite Falls by 8 in a semi-final.	
1954	Renville 68 Braham 62. Renville took 4 <sup>th</sup> place at state. Braham lost to Red Wing in Region Four.	<b>Brainerd</b> 49 Bemidji 47. This is the actual state final.
1955	Esko 66 Morris 65. This was an actual consolation round game.	<i>DeLaSalle</i> 67 Austin 58. <b>Mpls. Washburn</b> defeated Austin 67-58 in the MSHSL final. DeLaSalle was undefeated and ranked #1 nationally among Catholic schools. Washburn finished 22-1. We like De to defeat Washburn head-to-head in Region 5.
1956	Halstad 64 Blue Earth 62. Halstad lost to 5 <sup>th</sup> place Bemidji by 3 in Region Eight, while Blue Earth lost to Roosevelt in the final 101-54.	<i>DeLaSalle</i> 72 Winona 58. <b>Minneapolis</b> 88 Winona 54. Roosevelt crushed everybody in the MSHSL tournament but lost 3 times in the regular season, including twice to DeLaSalle 64-54 and 81-63. De and Roosevelt are in the same district, so only one can qualify for our mythical tournament.
1957	Foley 52 Lyle 51. Foley, with the great Norm Grow, lost to Willmar (who lost to Roosevelt) in Region Five. Lyle lost to 6 <sup>th</sup> place Rochester by 1 in Region One.	<b>Minneapolis Roosevelt</b> 59 Red Wing 51. This was the real final.
1958	Austin Pacelli 64 Virginia 59. Pacelli was the Catholic champion. Virginia lost to Cloquet	<b>Austin</b> 68 Brainerd 63. This was the real final.

	by 2 in the region, and Cloquet lost to Austin by 2.	
1959	Carlton 61 Granite Falls 57. Carlton finished 2 <sup>nd</sup> , Granite Falls 5 <sup>th</sup> .	<i>Austin 55 Wayzata 52.</i> OK, Wayzata defeated Austin 55-52 in a semi, but we think Austin was better and would win 2 of 3 or 3 of 5.
1960	<b>Edgerton</b> 67 Dodge Center 55. Dodge Center lost to runner-up Austin by 1 in Region One.	Richfield 63 Austin 52. Richfield finished 3 <sup>rd</sup> , Austin 2 <sup>nd</sup> , but Richfield took Edgerton into OT while Austin lost by 11.
1961	Sauk Centre 62 Edgerton 54. Sauk finished 3 <sup>rd</sup> , Edgerton 6 <sup>th</sup> . Sauk beat Mahtomedi by 14, Mahtomedi beat Edgerton by 2.	<b>Duluth Central</b> 51 Minneapolis Roosevelt 50. Duluth Central defeated Bemidji 51-50 in the actual final. Roosevelt was 24-0, Region 5 champion and tournament co-favorite coming into state when they were DQ for having used an ineligible player in the region. This is the greatest unplayed game in MN high school history.
1962	Wells 66 Danube 62. This is the actual score of the 3 <sup>rd</sup> place game.	<b>St. Louis Park</b> 62 South St. Paul 57. This is the actual final.
1963	Sauk Centre 63 Granite Falls 61. Sauk was 3 <sup>rd</sup> . Granite Falls lost to Marshall in Region 3 by 5.	<b>Marshall</b> 75 Cloquet 74. This is the actual final.
1964	<b>Luverne</b> 68 Austin Pacelli 59. Pacelli was the Catholic runner-up.	Rochester John Marshall 76 Edina 71 (OT). This is an actual semi-final score.

1965	<i>Austin Pacelli</i> 67 Henning 62. Pacelli won the Catholic final by 30. Henning finished 6 <sup>th</sup> .	<b>Minnetonka</b> 71 Faribault 60. This was the actual final.
1966	Henning 69 Chisholm 68. Henning lost to champion Edina in 3OT. Chisholm lost to runner-up Duluth East in OT, who lost to Edina in OT in the final. In theory, all four were dead even in regulation.	<b>Edina</b> 82 Duluth East 77 (OT). This was the actual final.
1967	Rochester Lourdes 67 Luverne 64. Lourdes repeated as Catholic champion, Luverne finished 5 <sup>th</sup> .	<b>Edina</b> 72 Moorhead 55. This was the actual final.
1968	Rochester Lourdes 75 Granite Falls 53. Shattuck and Hayfield were better than Granite Falls, but both are in the same region as Lourdes.	<b>Edina</b> 70 Moorhead 45. This was the actual final.
1969	Shattuck 66 St. Cloud Cathedral 64. Shattuck won its 2 <sup>nd</sup> straight indie title, St. Cloud its 1 <sup>st</sup> Catholic title since 1929.	<b>Rochester John Marshall</b> 58 Duluth Central 42. This was the actual final.
1970	<b>Sherburn</b> 82 Shattuck 63. Shattuck won its 3 <sup>rd</sup> straight independent title and its 4 <sup>th</sup> in 6 years.	South St. Paul 68 Robbinsdale 54. This was an actual semi-final result.

### The Early Two-Class Era

In the early 2-class era, only the top 64 teams moved up to Class AA. Class A (then) consisted of what today are Class A, AA and AAA. We wanted to divide the teams down the middle—that is, Class A (then) consisting of Class A and AA (now), and so we need to continue to play a mythical 2-class tournament to make that determination.

1971	Melrose 72 Renville 60. Red Wing, the actual Class A runner-up, would soon move up to Class AA. Renville was 4 <sup>th</sup> in Class A.	<b>Duluth Central</b> 54 North St. Paul 51. This was the actual Class AA final.
1972	<b>St. James</b> 57 Melrose 55. St. James actually won this Class A final on Jeff Nessler's half-court heave at the final buzzer.	Mounds View 62 Austin 54. This was the actual Class AA final.
1973	Chisholm 53 Melrose 52. This was the actual Class A final.	<b>Anoka</b> 58 Richfield 54. This was the actual Class AA final.
1974	<b>Melrose</b> 55 Chisholm 50. The actual runner-up, Mound, soon moved up to Class AA.	Bemidji 52 Richfield 50. This was the actual Class AA final.
1975	Chisholm 41 Fulda 32. We classify 2 of the semi-finalists, DeLaSalle and St. Paul Mechanic Arts, as Class AA. Fulda lost in the semis.	<b>Little Falls</b> 54 Robbinsdale 49. This was the actual Class AA final.

## Summary

In summary, Mountain Lake (5-3), Fosston (4-2), Chisholm (4-7), Virginia (2-3) and Crosby-Ironton (1-4) appeared in five or more mythical small school finals. Mountain Lake won in 1917, 1939, 1946, 1947 and 1948; Fosston won in 1913, 1914, 1915 and 1919; Chisholm won in 1933, 1934, 1973 and 1975; Virginia in 1916 and 1928; and Crosby-Ironton in 1937. Along with these, Austin Pacelli (1958-1965), Buhl (1941-1942), Glencoe (1931-1935), Henning (1927-1966), Melrose (1971-1974), Rochester Lourdes (1967-1968), Sauk Centre (1961-1963) and Thief River Falls (1932-1938), won two mythical small school titles each. So 31 of the 63 mythical Class A titles were won by repeat champions. Among the one-time champions, Canby, Edgerton, Ely and Luverne won one and lost one

mythical Class A final, while Gilbert and Shattuck won one and lost two. Appleton, Fulda and St. Cloud Cathedral played in two of these mythical finals, losing both games, while Granite Falls lost three mythical Class A finals.

Among all of the mythical “Class A” champions from 1913 to 1975, seven also won a “real” state championship later on:

- Austin Pacelli 1958, 1965, 1992
- Chisholm 1933, 1934, 1973, 1975, 1991
- Esko 1955, 2014
- Henning 1927, 1966, 2019
- Litchfield 1944, 2000, 2002, 2003
- Melrose 1971, 1974, 2015
- Winona Cotter 1952, 1977, 1982

#### The Four-Class Era

During the 4-class era, we might assume that the Class AA and Class AAAA champions would win had there been a 2-class format. But, let’s not assume. Let’s explore it. Section assignments are the same as today (2022).

Year	Class A	Class AA
1997	<b>Caledonia</b> 63 <b>Hancock</b> 53. Caledonia won Class AA easily by 5, 21 and 22. Hancock won Class A though it’s anybody’s guess whether they would have beaten Staples-Motley in their section. But Staples lost to DeLaSalle in OT the AA semi and DLS lost to Caledonia by 22. (We regard DLS as a large school.)	<b>Minneapolis North</b> 61 Stillwater 53. This was the actual Class AAAA final.
1998	Long Prarie-Grey Eagle 58 <b>Norman County East</b> 53. LP lost to DeLaSalle in AA 53-52 but we regard DLS as a large school. NCE won 5 playoff games by a	<b>Minnetonka</b> 65 Eagan 57. This was the actual Class AAAA final.

	total of 21 points, then the Class A final by 27.	
1999	Belle Plaine 62 Watertown-Mayer 60. DeLaSalle repeated as AA champion but is regarded as a large school. DLS beat Belle Plaine by 4 in the semis, and beat Watertown by 6 in the final.	<b>Mounds View</b> 69 Minnetonka 64. This was the actual Class AAAA final.
2000	<b>Litchfield</b> 47 <b>Southwest Minnesota Christian</b> 38. Litch beat AAAA champion Tartan 74-49. This was the best of SWMC's 4-peats. They would have made the tournament from Class AAA based on comparative scores out in the southwest.	<b>Minneapolis Patrick Henry</b> 65 <b>Tartan</b> 59. Henry beat North 3 times by an average of 19 points. Tartan beat North twice by an average of 24 points, but lost to Litchfield by 25.
2001	<b>Kenyon-Wanamingo</b> 49 <b>Southwest Minnesota Christian</b> 43.	<b>Osseo</b> 73 <b>Minneapolis Patrick Henry</b> 62.
2002	<b>Litchfield</b> 50 <b>Southwest Minnesota Christian</b> 48.	<b>Hopkins</b> 66 <b>Minneapolis Patrick Henry</b> 61.
2003	<b>Litchfield</b> 55 <b>Mankato Loyola</b> 54.	<b>Minneapolis North</b> 64 <b>Minneapolis Patrick Henry</b> 59. It is true, however, that Mpls. Henry won the Minneapolis city title over North.
2004	<b>Braham</b> 65 Martin County West 49. The actual score of the AA final was 73-47 but MCW was better than that.	<b>Chaska</b> 71 Burnsville 57. This was the actual AAAA final.

2005	<b>Braham</b> 61 Crookston 43. The actual score was 63-39 but Crookston was better than that.	<b>Hopkins</b> 59 Eastview 51. The actual score was 71-60 in OT after Blake Hoffarber's butt shot. 59-51 in regulation would have been more believable.
2006	<b>Braham</b> 64 Pelican Rapids 54. This was an actual Class AA semi-final.	<b>Hopkins</b> 70 <b>DeLaSalle</b> 63. Hopkins beat Mpls. Henry twice, DeLaSalle split with them.
2007	<b>Holy Family</b> 60 Maple River 57. This is the actual AA final.	<b>St. Thomas</b> 59 Rocori 56. St. Thomas defeated Rocori 54-51 in an AA semi-final. Rocori and AAAA champion Buffalo had 3 common opponents whom Rocori beat by an average of 17 points, Buffalo 10.
2008	<b>Ellsworth</b> 64 <b>New London-Spicer</b> 63. Ellsworth beat Litchfield by 35 points, NLS beat Litch by 34 points.	<b>Minnetonka</b> 77 <b>Benilde-St. Margaret's</b> 76. The AAAA champion and AAA champion had 4 common opponents. Tonka went 6-1 with a margin of 86-76, Benilde went 3-2 with a margin of 76-68.
2009	<b>Pelican Rapids</b> 80 St. Bernard's 68. This was the actual AA final score. Class A champion GHEC beat MN Transitions by 3. Transitions beat St. Agnes by 27, St. Bernard's beat St. Agnes by 53.	<b>Hopkins</b> 69 Osseo 59. This was the actual AAAA final, and Osseo beat AAA champion Mpls. Washburn 62-58 in the regular season.
2010	<b>New London-Spicer</b> 68 <b>Minnesota Transitions</b> 63. Transitions, the Class A champion, beat Minnehaha by 10 during the regular season. Crosby-Ironton, the AA	<b>St. Paul Johnson</b> 86 <b>Hopkins</b> 78. This was the score of their regular season game.

	runner-up, beat Minnehaha by 5, then lost to NLS by 10.	
2011	<b>Perham</b> 45 Waterville-Elysian-Morristown 41. This was the score of an AAA semi-final.	<b>Hopkins</b> 64 Eden Prairie 52. This was the actual AAAA final.
2012	<b>Plainview-Elgin-Millville</b> 63 <b>Belgrade-Brooten-Elrosa</b> 58. BBE beat SWMC who beat Worthington. PEM beat Litchfield who beat Perham who beat Worthington.	<b>Osseo</b> 87 Hopkins 86. This was the actual AAAA final.
2013	<b>Southwest Minnesota Christian</b> 68 <b>Minnehaha</b> 64. SWMC beat Maranatha 81-73 in the Class A final. Maranatha and Minnehaha had 3 common opponents, who Minnehaha beat by 8 points more than Maranatha. So SWMC and Minnehaha would be a tossup. We like SWMC's 30-1 record vs. Minnehaha's 26-6.	<b>DeLaSalle</b> 69 <b>Apple Valley</b> 63. DLS was unbeaten against Minnesota competition. DLS and AV had 2 common opponents. DLS beat Park Center 74-60 and Cretin 85-49. AV split with Park Center and beat Cretin 74-47.
2014	<b>Belgrade-Brooten-Elrosa</b> 58 <b>Esko</b> 53.	<i>Apple Valley</i> 84 Hopkins 77. #1-rated AV lost to Cretin in the section. #2 Hopkins lost to Lakeville North in the AAAA final. AV was 4-1 vs. Class AAAA tournament teams (and AAA champion DeLaSalle; Hopkins was 3-2; LN 3-3; Cretin 1-3; DLS 2-1 (they lost to AV 73-63 in the regular season and also lost to Eden Prairie, whom Hopkins beat 3 times).



2015	<p><b>Melrose 58 Rushford-Peterson 56.</b></p> <p>Melrose beat Caledonia in the AA final 63-51. RP beat Caledonia twice in the regular season by an average of 61-54.</p>	<p><b>Apple Valley 70 Champlin Park 69.</b> The two AAAA finalists split 2 games, Champlin winning in the regular season 79-74, AV winning the final 64-61. AV also beat AAA champion DeLaSalle 83-69.</p>
2016	<p><b>Minneapolis North 78 Braham 67.</b> In Minnesota, North lost only to AAAA teams including Hopkins 98-96. North beat St. Croix Lutheran 72-67, while Braham split 2 games with St. Croix Lutheran, losing 86-75 in the regular season and winning 86-77 in the state semis.</p>	<p><b>Hopkins 86 Apple Valley 70.</b> Hopkins beat AV in the regular season and the AAAA semis. Osseo came into the AAAA tournament unbeaten but lost to Lakeville North and then Apple Valley 93-82.</p>
2017	<p><b>Minneapolis North 79 Minnehaha 74.</b></p> <p>This is the score of their regular season matchup.</p>	<p><b>Apple Valley 64 Champlin Park 58.</b> These 2 again split 2 games with Champlin again winning in the regular season and AV winning in the state final. AAA champion DeLaSalle also lost to Champlin.</p>
2018	<p><b>Minnehaha 76 Caledonia 67.</b> This was the average of 2 meetings between these teams, including the AA final.</p>	<p><b>Cretin-Derham Hall 79 Apple Valley 78.</b></p> <p>This was the actual score of the AAAA final. They were in the same section in 2014 but obviously not in 2018.</p>
2019	<p><b>Minnehaha 71 Henning 57.</b> Minnehaha lost only to Hopkins (twice) but beat DeLaSalle with a margin of -4 points in the 3 games.</p>	<p><b>Hopkins 75 DeLaSalle 73.</b> Hopkins, Minnehaha and DLS played a round robin during the regular season. Hopkins won 2 out of 3 by a margin of +4 points, DeLaSalle split a pair with a margin of 0 points.</p>

<p>2020</p>	<p>Caledonia 81 Waseca 73. This was the actual score of their regular season game.</p>	<p><i>Eden Prairie</i> 78 <i>Minnehaha</i> 64. This was the actual score of their regular season game.</p>
<p>2021</p>	<p><b>Waseca</b> 51 Caledonia 49. This is the actual score of the AA final.</p>	<p><b>Minnehaha</b> 70 <b>Wayzata</b> 63. This is the actual score of their regular season game.</p>
<p>2022</p>	<p><b>Annandale</b> 60 Mpls. North 49. This was the actual score of the AA final.</p>	<p><b>Park Center</b> 58 Wayzata 53. This is the actual score of the class AAAA final. Park Center split 2 games with AAA champion Totino-Grace. They would come from the same section, of course, and so one or the other of them would not have made it to the state tournament.</p>
<p>2023</p>	<p><b>Albany 74</b> Holy Family 68. Albany, Holy Family and Minnehaha all played one another, and they finished #1, #3 and #2 in Class AA. None of them lost to any other Class AA team. Holy Family defeated Minnehaha 101-56. The other head-to-head games were close. Albany was 1-1 with an average score of 70-70. Holy Family was 2-1, 83-67. Minnehaha was 1-2, 66-81. Albany beat Minnehaha 72-65 in the state final after Minnehaha upset Holy Family 76-72 in the semis. If you value all the head-to-head games equally, Holy Family was the best. If you value state tournament games more highly, then state</p>	<p><b>Wayzata 75</b> Park Center 71. This is the actual AAAA final. Park Center swept 2 games against AAA champion Totino-Grace.</p>

	<p>champion Albany is the best. We choose the latter evaluation, though Holy Family's 101-56 win is too much to ignore.</p>	
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## Summary

So, the answer is that, yes, occasionally the Class A champion is better than the AA champion, and occasionally the Class AAA champion is better than the AAAA champion. Only once has the AA champion been better than the AAAA and AAA champions. Specifically:

- In 2000, both Minneapolis Patrick Henry (AAA) and Litchfield (AA) were better than Tartan (AAAA).
- In 2003, Litchfield was better than Henry and Minneapolis North (AAAA).
- In 2007, St. Thomas (AAA) was better than Buffalo (AAAA).
- In 2008, Ellsworth (A) was better than New London-Spicer (AA).
- In 2010, St. Paul Johnson (AAA) was better than Hopkins (AAAA).
- In 2013 and 2014, Southwest Minnesota Christian and Belgrade-Brooten-Elrosa (both A) were better than the AA champions.
- Also in 2013, DeLaSalle (AAA) was better than Apple Valley (AAAA).
- In 2016 and 2017, Minneapolis North (A) was better than the AA champions.
- In 2021, Minnehaha (AAA) was better than Wayzata (AAAA).

In total:

- A was better than AA five times in 25 seasons.
- AA was better than AAA **and** AAAA just once.
- It is not clear from this analysis how often AA was better than AAA, though it is possible that it has happened many times—maybe ten to a dozen times.
- AAA was better than AAAA five times in 25 seasons.

In other words, if they had continued with a single class tournament or had initiated a Final Four, a Class AAAA team would have won 19 times, Class AAA five times and Class AA one time.