

# 2020-21 West Region Tournament Notes

Feb. 16, 18: (Home Site of Higher Seeds); Feb. 20: Pepsi Rink/MASYA, Minot



**Drop the puck:** The West Region Boys' Hockey Tournament quarterfinals take place on Tuesday, Feb. 16 and will be held at the home of the higher seed.

That is a departure from previous years when the tournament was held in one location over three consecutive days. Due to COVID concerns, the NDHSAA elected to modify the format. Loser-out and semifinal games will be held on Thursday, Feb. 18, and also at the home of the higher seed. The tournament concludes on Saturday, Feb. 20 at Minot's Pepsi Rink/MASYA with two state qualifiers, 10 a.m. and 1 p.m., followed by the championship at 4 p.m.

**The favorites:** Century is the three-time defending region tournament champion and the top seed. The Patriots have won 11 games in a row. Minot is the No. 2 seed, and like Century, has at least one win over every conference team. Minot's last region title came in 2006, but the Magi have played in seven since then. Is this the year they break through? Speaking of breaking through, Jamestown is the No. 3 seed. The Blue Jays have only been in one West Region title game (1995/Won vs. Century). Could this be the year for the Blue Jays to win again?

## Getting to the 'ship

Wins in the quarterfinal and semifinal rounds will get a team to the region championship and an automatic berth into the ND State Tournament. It also means a Feb. 23 home game in the state quarterfinal round. Due to COVID concerns, the state hockey tournament format has been modified by the NDHSAA as well. Quarterfinal games this season are played at the top two seeds from the West and East. Winners advance to the semifinals in Grand Forks on Feb. 26 with the third place and championship to be played on Feb. 27. There is no consolation play, so a quarterfinal round loss will end the season.

**Plenty of parity:** Competitive balance returned to the conference this season in the form of several close games. In fact, 21 games were decided by just one goal, including 14 that needed overtime, or a shootout to determine the winner. That parity should make for an interesting week ahead.

**Bounce-back season:** Perhaps the team which has made the biggest strides this season is Williston. The Coyotes, which finished seventh a season ago in the WDA, tied for fourth place this year. It's best finish since second in 2009-10. Williston has been competitive in nearly every game. It has a shootout win over Bismarck High and a shootout loss vs. Minot. The last time Williston qualified for the state tournament was 2009-10.

**Keep an eye on the underdogs:** The last time all four top seeds qualified for the ND State Tournament was 2017. In fact, it's happened just twice since 2010-11. Given the competitive play this season, it's a good bet another lower seed may again advance

## West Region Hockey Tournament

**Saturday, Feb. 13**

**Play-in**

(8) Mandan 4, (9) Hazen-Beulah 3

**Tuesday, Feb. 16 @ Higher Seed**

**Quarterfinals (Game Times TBD)**

(8) Mandan @ (1) Century, 5 p.m.

(5) Williston @ (4) Bismarck High, 7:30 p.m.

(7) Dickinson @ (2) Minot, 7:30 p.m.

(6) Bottineau-Rugby @ (3) Jamestown, 5 p.m.

**Thursday, Feb. 18 @ Higher Seed**

Loser-out, TBD

Semifinals, TBD

**Saturday, Feb. 20**

**Pepsi Rink, Minot**

**State qualifiers**

TBD vs. TBD, 10 a.m.

TBD vs. TBD, 1 p.m.

**Championship**

TBD vs. TBD, 4 p.m.

## 2020-21 WDA Standings

Team	Conf.	Points
Century <sup>^</sup>	12-2-1-0	41
Minot	12-1-2-1	41
Jamestown	11-2-2-1	38
Bismarck <sup>^</sup>	8-5-1-2	28
Williston	7-5-1-2	28
Bottineau-R	7-8-0-0	18
Dickinson	3-12-0-1	10
Mandan	3-13-0-0	9
Hazen-Beu.	0-15-0-0	0

Teams earned 3 points for a regulation win; 2 points for an OT/Shootout win; 1 point for an OT/Shootout loss  
Some teams only played an opponent once. In those cases, games were worth 6 points in the standings instead of 3.  
<sup>^</sup>Held tie-break

to state.

**Streaks on the line:** Bismarck High has qualified for the ND State Tournament every season since 1990. That by far is the longest active streak among all state teams. Century has also been a consistent qualifier, of late. The Patriots have reached the tournament in each of the past 14 seasons.

**ICings:** Bismarck High has reached the West Region title game seven years in a row...Jamestown's third place finish this season is its best showing in the WDA since placing third in 2006-07... Since 2007-08, only three teams have played in the region championship game (Bismarck High, Century and Minot)...Bottineau-Rugby is the only WDA team never to reach a region tournament final...For the first time since 1992-93, the conference featured regular season co-champions (Century/Minot)...The WDA and EDC did not play any non-conference games...The ND State Tournament will be held Feb. 23 (at higher seeds); 26-27 (in Grand Forks).

## Team Notes

**#1 Bismarck Century (12-2-1-0 WDA; Coach: Troy Olson):** Some programs rebuild and some reload. Put Century in the latter category. Indeed, the Patriots program contin-

ues to have success from year to year and 2020-21 is no exception. The team won a share of the WDA regular season title (9th in program history) and enter the West Region Tournament as the three-time defending champion. And, oh by the way, the Pats are on an 11-game winning streak.

Century has done it with balance. Eight players are in double figures in points led by Colton Schulte. The senior has been dynamic this year with 20 goals and 13 assists. Three goalies have registered at least one win in goal. Casey Odegaard leads with seven victories.

Century is averaging 5.1 goals per game which is tops in the conference and it's 2.0 goals allowed is also best. Century is the only team to have a regulation win against every WDA opponent.

The Pats have finished third or better in the WDA standings every year since 2010-11. During that span, they have won seven regular season crowns and six times won the region tournament. **Stat Leaders:** Points: Colton Schulte, 36; Goals: Schulte, 20; Assists: Schulte, 16; Goalie Wins: Casey Odegaard, 7; GAA: Odegaard, 1.89; Save Pct: Odegaard, 91.6

## #2 Minot (12-1-2-1 WDA; Co-coaches: Jason Bennett/John Grubb):

The Magicians have enjoyed not one, but two lengthy winning streaks this season. And they're hopeful the second one will continue this week.

Minot has won its last six games and the puck is finding the net in bunches. The team has scored 34 goals in that stretch.

What's made the offense so lethal? Balance. Four Magi have 20 or more points and four more skaters are in double figures in points. Five players have seven or more goals. With that kind of balance it's difficult for opponents to try and key on one particular line. Junior Jayden Luck's 24 points is tops on the team.

The defense has been rock solid. Minot has allowed just six goals in its last six games and only allowed an average of 15 shots on goal. Magi senior goalie Tre Sortland has been steady. He's played 14 games and is goals against and save percentage rank near the top in the state.

Minot has just two losses this season, and only one in regulation. That coming to WDA co-champion Century. Minot has won or shared 15 conference titles, including the last two. The Magi have the luxury of home ice throughout the region tournament. The team needed to rally from a one-goal deficit in the final minutes to force overtime in state qualifier last season. The Magi eventually won in OT over Mandan. They don't want to go through that suspense again. If they can post wins in the quarterfinal and semifinal round on home ice, the Magi will reach the region championship and guarantee a quarterfinal home game in the ND State Tournament.

## WDA Stat Leaders

Regular season

Points Player	Games	Pts
J. Thompson, JAM, Sr.	16	38
N. Nenow, JAM, So.	16	37
C. Schulte, CEN, Sr.	15	36
I. Amsbaugh, BOT, Sr.	15	35
A. Collings, WIL, Jr.	15	30
A. Samardzic, CEN, Sr.	15	27

Goals Player	Games	Gls
N. Nenow, JAM, So.	16	22
C. Schulte, CEN, Sr.	15	20
J. Thompson, JAM, Sr.	16	17
A. Collings, WIL, Jr.	15	16
A. Samardzic, CEN, Sr.	15	13
Four Players	--	12

Assists Player	Games	Ast
I. Amsbaugh, BOT, Sr.	15	23
J. Thompson, JAM, Sr.	16	21
J. Luck, MIN, Jr.	16	17
C. Schulte, CEN, Sr.	15	16
N. Nenow, JAM, So.	16	15
C. Curl, CEN, Sr.	15	15

Wins Player	Games	Wins
T. Sortland, MIN, Sr.	15.0	12
B. Hillstrom, JAM, Jr.	15.5	12
L. Hendrick, BHS, Sr.	16.0	9
M. Haugenoe, WIL, Jr.	16.0	8
C. Odegaard, CEN, Jr.	6.3	7

**Goals Against Average (Minimum of 6 games)**

Player	Games	GAA
T. Sortland, MIN, Sr.	15.0	1.73
C. Odegaard, CEN, Jr.	6.3	1.89
L. Hendrick, BHS, Sr.	16.0	2.12
B. Hillstrom, JAM, Jr.	15.5	2.65
M. Haugenoe, WIL, Jr.	16.0	3.19

**Save Percentage (Minimum of 6 games)**

Player	Games	SV%
L. Hendrick, BHS, Sr.	16.0	91.7
C. Odegaard, CEN, Jr.	6.3	91.6
B. Hillstrom, JAM, Jr.	15.5	91.4
Z. Clausen, MAN, Sr.	15.8	90.9

Stats provided by Robert Gillen, ND High School Statistician  
ndhighschoolhockey.com

But first things first, keep the current win streak going this week.

**Stat Leaders:** Points: Jayden Luck, 24; Goals: Case Field, 11 Assists: Luck, 17; Goalie Wins: Tre Sortland, 12; GAA: Sortland, 1.73; Save Pct: 90.6

## #3 Jamestown (11-2-2-1 WDA; Coach: Matt Stockert):

Expectations were lofty for the Blue Jays entering the season. The program was coming off a fifth place showing at the ND State Tournament (It's best finish since 1992) and returned many key players from that squad.

So far, the Blue Jays have played to their potential. The third place finish in the WDA standings is the program's best since the 2006-07 season. During the campaign, the team went on a 10-game winning streak. Offense has been a strong suit as the Blue Jays have netted five or more goals in nine games so far. The defense hasn't been too shabby, either, allowing just under three goals a game. Jamestown has a pair of forwards among the top 10 in statewide scoring and six players have 10 or more points. Just two of those players are seniors. Jace Thompson leads the way with 38 points. Nolan Nenow has 37. In goal, Brode Hillstrom has started all but one game. He boasts a save percentage of just over 91.4.

Jamestown hasn't reached the West Region title game since 1995. Incidentally, that's the first year the tournament was held. Two wins this week advance the Blue Jays back to the state tournament. The last time it qualified in successive seasons was 1995-96.

**Stat Leaders:** Points: Jace Thompson, 38; Goals: Nolan Nenow, 22; Assists: Thompson, 21; Goalie Wins: Brode Hillstrom, 12; GAA: Hillstrom, 2.65; Save Pct: Hillstrom, 91.4

#### #4 Bismarck High (8-5-1-2 WDA;

**Coach: Wes Carr):** The Demons enter the postseason in a similar situation from a season ago.

They are the No. 4 seed and needing to play their best hockey of the season to return to the state tournament. BHS did just that in 2019-20, reaching the West Region Tournament final for a seventh year in a row and extending its historic state tournament appearance streak.

Some of BHS' regular season highlights included a five-game win streak and a victory over top seed Century.

One of the strengths has been team defense. BHS has allowed two or less goals 10 times this season. Shot blocking and keeping play to the perimeter have helped to reduce opponents' scoring chances. It also helps to have a steady goalie and the Demons have one in senior Logan Hendrickson. He is among the conference leaders in goals against and save percentage.

The squad is averaging just over three goals a game and has enjoyed balance in its scoring production. Four players have 10 or more points and five players have five or more goals. Hunter Acker leads the scoring (20 points). Two wins will get the Demons back to the state tournament. The program has never lost a first round game at the region tournament. This year's opening round game will be on home ice.

**Stat Leaders:** Points: Hunter Acker, 20; Goals: Nico Mortenson, 9 Assists: Acker, 12; Goalie Wins: Drew Hendrickson, 9; GAA: Hendrickson, 2.12; Save Pct: Hendrickson, 91.7

#### #5 Williston (7-5-1-2 WDA; Coach:

**Tyler Jundt):** The Coyotes' fourth place tie in the WDA standings was the program's best finish since the 2009-10 season. Incidentally, that's the last time the program has qualified for the state tournament.

If there is a phrase to describe Williston this season it would be: tough to play against.

The squad isn't afraid to throw its weight around and that physical style coupled with skill make them a formidable opponent.

The team has been in seven one-goal games. Three of those contests came against WDA co-champions Century and Minot.

The team started strong, winning five of its first six, including a shootout victory over Bismarck High. Wins, however, have been tough to time come by in February. The Coyotes have just two in their last six games.

Five players have reached double digits in points. Three of those are juniors, including Ashton Collings who leads in goals and assists for 30 points. Goalie Mason Haugenoe has played every minute. His save percentage hovers around 90 percent.

The fact Williston has been in so many close games makes it a serious contender for a state tournament berth. The last time the squad reached the final day of the West Region Tournament was 2016-17 season. It's a good chance they will get there this year.

**Stat Leaders:** Points: Ashton Collings, 30 Goals: Collings, 16; Assists: Collings, 14; Goalie Wins: Mason Haugenoe, 8; GAA: Haugenoe, 3.19; Save Pct: Haugenoe, 89.4

#### #6 Bottineau-Rugby (7-8-0-0 WDA;

**Coach: Jesse Nostdahl):** The Braves may be the No. 6 seed entering this week's West Region Tournament, but don't think for a minute they aren't capable of winning a couple of games and advancing to the state tournament.

Bottineau-Rugby has one of the most skilled players in the state in senior Ian Amsbaugh. He's amassed 164 points in four seasons, including 35 this year. He is on the ice every other shift. However, the Braves are not a one-player team. Two other players have netted 12 goals. Four players, in all, have 14 or more points Senior goaltender Tyler Olson has had his moments when he's been sharp. Four times he's allowed two or less goals.

B-R has just one win over a team ahead of it in the standings (2-0 victory at Bismarck High), but have played several other opponents tough. It lost one-goal games to Minot, Jamestown and Williston.

Getting off to a good start has been key to victory. In all six wins, the Braves scored first. That would be the formula to follow this week.

It's been awhile since the Braves' last qualified for the state tournament (2010-11). Could this be the season Bottineau-Rugby returns?

**Stat Leaders:** Points: Ian Amsbaugh, 35; Goals: Amsbaugh, 12; Colton Getzlaff, 12; Landon Rosendahl, 11; Assists: Amsbaugh, 23; Goalie Wins: Tyler Olson, 4; GAA: Olson, 3.64; Save Pct: 89.7

#### #7 Dickinson (3-12-0-1 WDA; Coach:

**Dallas Kuntz):** It's been a trying season for the Midgets.

After reaching 10 or more wins in its last five seasons, the squad has just three in 2020-21.

Struggles to score is one of the shortcomings for the squad.

Eleven times Dickinson has netted two or less goals in a game. Four players are in double figures in scoring. Xander Krump has 13 points.

The squad has given up six or more goals in a game seven times. Sophomore Jayce Concha has played all but one game in goal. He's struggled at times, but there have been some solid performances sprinkled in.

Despite the record, the Midgets have showed potential. They have one-goal losses against the top four seeds (Cen-

## West Region Hockey Tournament History

Year	Championship	Tourney Site
1994-95	Jamestown 4, Century 3	Bismarck
1995-96	Century 3, Minot 2	Bismarck
1996-97	Devils Lake 2, Minot 1	Minot
1997-98	Minot 3, Bismarck High 2	Bismarck
1998-99	Bismarck High 3, Minot 1	Minot
1999-00	Minot 4, Dickinson 3 (OT)	Bismarck
2000-01	Bismarck High 8, Mandan 0	Minot
2001-02	Bismarck High 3, Minot 1	Bismarck
2002-03	Minot 1, Century 0 (2OT)	Bismarck
2003-04	Bismarck High 2, Hazen-Beulah 1	Minot
2004-05	Minot 5, Bismarck High 1	Minot
2005-06	Minot 2, Williston 1	Bismarck
2006-07	Bismarck High 2, Minot 1	Bismarck
2007-08	Bismarck High 7, Williston 4	Minot
2008-09	Bismarck High 3, Minot 1	Bismarck
2009-10	Bismarck High 5, Century 4	Minot
2010-11	Century 6, Minot 4	Bismarck
2011-12	Bismarck High 4, Century 2	Bismarck
2012-13	Century 4, Minot 2	Minot
2013-14	Bismarck High 5, Minot 2	Minot
2014-15	Century 2, Bismarck High 0	Bismarck
2015-16	Bismarck High 5, Minot 1	Minot
2016-17	Bismarck High 6, Minot 0	Bismarck
2017-18	Century 4, Bismarck High 2	Minot
2018-19	Century 2, Bismarck High 0	Minot
2019-20	Century 5, Bismarck High 2	Bismarck
2020-21	TBD	Minot*

**Titles By Schools:** Devils Lake (1); Jamestown (1); Minot (5); Century (7); Bismarck High (12)

\*Final day only

tury, Minot, Jamestown, Bismarck High). The one-goal loss to Jamestown was in overtime and that point gained kept them out of a play-in game.

It's evident the team isn't built for firewagon-style hockey, so defensive discipline and taking advantage of grade-A scoring chances when they come will be the formula for success in the postseason.

Dickinson's last trip to the state tournament came in 2017-18. Qualifying will be a tall order this season. The Midgets will need to win at least one road game to advance to the final day of the West Region Tournament.

**Stat Leaders:** Points: Xander Krump 13; Goals: Groll, 8; Assists: Krump, 10; Goalie Wins: Jayce Concha, 3; GAA: Concha, 3.78; Save Pct: 87.2

#### #8 Mandan (3-13-0-0 WDA; Coach:

**Leif Mattson):** A three-win regular season doesn't usually bring much promise come postseason time, but there isn't too many three-win teams that boast steady goaltending.

A closer look at the Braves' regular season reveals a team that was in a lot of games, despite a losing record. Mandan has played in eight games decided by two or less goals. That's the good news. The bad news is it's winless in those contests and that will need to change this week.

No question Mandan's MVP this season has been senior goalie Zane Clausen. He is among the conference leaders in save percentage. He has posted 35 or more saves in a game on six occasions.

Offense is where the squad has struggled. Mandan has scored just 37 goals in 16 games. Fifteen of those coming against Hazen-Beulah. Three senior

forwards are in double figures in scoring led by Tyler Yantzer.

Mandan came within an overtime goal of getting back to the state tournament in 2019-20.

Mandan defeated Hazen-Beulah, 4-3, in the region play-in game to advance to the quarterfinals.

As the No. 8 seed, the Braves know they're going to have to win at least one road game to reach the final day of the West Region Tournament. Getting an early lead would be a big step toward victory and putting pressure on the opponent.

**Stat Leaders:** Points: Tyler Yantzer, 16; Goals: Yantzer, 11; Assists: Drew Condon, 8 Goalie Wins: Zane Clausen, 3; GAA: Clausen, 3:35; Save Pct: Clausen, 90.9

*News/Notes compiled by WDA SID/Executive Secretary Note: Stat leaders are provided by Robert Gillen, ND state statistician*