

## 1945 STATE BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

A new champion was crowned as Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association held its annual state high school basketball tournament at the University of Wisconsin fieldhouse on March 15, 16 and 17 with Madison-West winning the coveted honors for the first time in its history in a meet that kept its pretourney promise of being the "biggest and best" in history.

Playing before record crowds, the 1945 meet was witnessed by nearly 30,000 fans that smashed every mark of attendance on the books of the W.I.A.A. and almost reached the overflow stage on the final night of play. Heavy rains and warm weather were no handicap to the fans who filled the Badger fieldhouse with their cheers not only for the new champions but for each and every contestant in the 8-team 3-day carnival of point making.

The meet produced one new scoring record, that of highest total score for a single game when Lena trounced Wisconsin Rapids in a point making battle by a count of 50 to 43. The 93 points for the game surpassed the mark set in 1940 when Neenah defeated Sturgeon Bay, 41 to 38, for a total of 79.

While Madison-West annexed the crown, it was the runnerup five, little Lena that really won the greatest plaudits from the great turnouts at the meet. Coach Bruce L. Kimball's brilliant little "Giant Killers" were the surprise of the tourney and proved that Class C teams can be just as potent a factor in the state meet as their bigger brothers.

West with its great height and balanced scoring power proved a great team and a worthy new champion. Waukesha, the 1944 state king, had to be content with the consolation honors.



Madison-West—Winner State Basketball Tournament

## 1945 Tournament Scores

## Championship

Wisconsin Rapids 46; Berlin 22  
Lena 39; Waukesha 28  
Eau Claire 31; Tomah 20  
Madison-West 34; Ashland 26

## Second Round

Lena 50; Wisconsin Rapids 43  
Madison-West 52; Eau Claire 34

## Championship

Madison-West 44; Lena 35

## CONSOLATION

Ashland 20; Berlin 14  
Waukesha 22; Tomah 17

## Championship

Waukesha 16; Ashland 14

296  
2  
50

**Madison-West**

Coach Willis Jones' boys ran true to pre-tourney predications when they were picked as one of the outstanding teams in the state and installed by the press as a favorite to cop the meet. The squad had fine balanced scoring ability, good ball handling and great height. Its ability to control rebounds made it always dangerous. The starting lineup of giant Don Page at center, equally tall John Wise at one forward, Bob Worthman at the other and a pair of speedy sharpshooting guards in Bob Smith and Doug Rippe carried the brunt of the burden throughout the meet. The champs listed as their victims Ashland, Eau Claire and Lena in annexing the title.



Lena—Runner-Up State Basketball Tournament

**Lena**

The little Lena five, only class C entry in the tournament was the crowd's team and they were heavily supported throughout the meet by Madison as well as their own followers. Coach Kimball's boys displayed superb ability in every department of play, and but for a first quarter slump might well have emerged with the title. In Roman Kosnar at forward they had the high scorer of the meet in a tie with Don Page of Madison, while Clarence Blahnik gave one of the finest exhibitions of under the basket play seen in the state meet in years. The remaining trio of the first team, Arvid McGuire, James Peleshek and Maynard Ausloos fitted in perfectly with the team play so essential to a winning team. Lena, the giant killers, must truly win high praise for its great play in the 1945 meet.

**Waukesha**

The consolation crown was won by the Spring City five and must prove some solace to the 1944 champs who returned to the meet with its entire championship team gone but battled gamely throughout the meet. Big Gordon Johnson and Douglas Rogers were outstanding performers for Waukesha.

**Ashland**

Ashland, the only undefeated team to come to the state meet had the "luck" of the draw to face Madison-West in the first game and was eliminated in the

first round of title play. Coach Melvin's boys stayed in the fight for consolation honors but dropped a thriller to Waukesha in the final. Tall Dick Axness, Captain Bruce Fossum and their mates made a distinct impression on the fans and never quit trying its best to take home some honors.

**Eau Claire**

Eau Claire, a finalist in the 1944 meet, went to the second round this year where they dropped a scorching battle to West. The team started slow the first night but gave the new champs a terrific battle for three quarters of the semi-final game. Adolph Washburn and Elroy Strand both proved great performers with Strand one of the leading point makers of the tournament.

**Wisconsin Rapids**

The Rapids as always was another great team in the tourney and many expected the five to go to the finals. Rapids trounced Berlin in the first round but ran into the red hot scoring Lena team in the second round and was eliminated in a game that set a total point record of 93 for the two teams. Rapids' brilliant pair of guards, Donald Murgatroyd and Robert Mader, played great ball for Coach Klandrud's team, the latter ringing up 19 markers in the tilt against Lena.



Waukesha—Consolation Winner, State Basketball Tournament

**Tomah**

Tomah, one of the four teams in the streamlined 1944 tourney, was back again for another fling at the crown but found tall Eau Claire too hard to handle and was eliminated in the first round. The Indians showed remarkable ball handling but they had lots of bad luck with their shooting. Little Tom Curry was a great favorite of the crowds with his hard play throughout and fine team direction.

**Berlin**

Berlin, the "Cinderella" team of the tourney, lost its shooting eye in the first round and also in the consolation play, and its sharpshooting forward, Kermit Weiske, was the only one to hit the hoop with any consistency. Berlin found Rapids a tartar in the first round of play.