

It's March Madness time again: IHSA regional boys basketball pairings are set

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
February 18 2019 3:06 PM



Despite what the calendar – and the NCAA – might say – it's time for Illinois to go all mad again.

The 112th edition of the Illinois High School Association's boys' state basketball tournament series – cleverly called “America's Original March Madness” by the IHSA – starts up on Monday evening in Class 1A and 2A, and on Feb. 25 in Class 3A and 4A.

And all the teams entered have one goal in mind: Getting to the Final Four at Carver Arena in Peoria on Mar. 8-9 in Class 1A and 2A, and Mar. 15-16 in Class 3A and 4A.

Locally, the Class 1A and 2A schools begin their regionals on Monday, and both Hardin Calhoun and Carrollton will be hosting regionals.

The Calhoun regional starts Monday with a play-in game between Brussels and Bunker Hill, with a 7 p.m. start time. On Tuesday, the host Warriors will play Father McGivney Catholic at 6 p.m., followed at 7:30 p.m. with Metro-East Lutheran against Mt. Olive. Wednesday's semifinals will pit top-seeded Madison against the Raider-Minutemen winner at 6 p.m., while the Warriors-Griffins winner faces the Knights-Wildcats winner in the second semifinal at 7:30 p.m. The final is set for Feb. 22 at 7 p.m.

The Carrollton regional also starts Monday with a pair of play-in games. At 6 p.m., Greenfield-Northwestern will take on Griggsville-Perry, then the host Hawks play against Pleasant Hill in a 7:30 p.m. tip-off. On Tuesday, Jacksonville Routt Catholic plays the winner of the Tigers-Tornadoes game at 7 p.m., with the second semifinal on Wednesday between Barry Western and the Hawks-Wolves winner. The final is set for Feb. 22 at 7 p.m.

Two other area teams were assigned to separate regionals. Valmeyer will play in the Marissa-Coulterville regional, and the Pirates' first game is Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. Should Valmeyer win, they'll face the winner of Okawville and Lebanon in the semifinals on Wednesday, again at 7:30 p.m., while the host Meteors go against the winner of a play-in game between Brooklyn Lovejoy and New Athens. The final is set for Feb. 22 at 7 p.m.

White Hall North Greene will be playing in the New Berlin regional, and the Spartans will play against Raymond Lincolnwood in a play-in game Monday at 7 p.m. Should North Greene win, they advance to the semifinals on Wednesday, where they'll face Winchester West Central at 6 p.m., then at 7:30 p.m. will be the second semifinal pitting the winners of the Tuesday games – the host Pretzels against Jacksonville Illinois School for the Deaf, and Franklin against Pawnee. The final is set for Friday at 7 p.m.

The four regional winners will play in the Okawville sectional, with the Calhoun winner playing the Carrollton winner on Feb. 26, and the New Berlin winner against the Marissa-Coulterville winner Feb. 27. The final is set for Mar. 1, with all games starting at 7 p.m. The Okawville winner will meet the Lewistown sectional winner in the Jacksonville super-sectional Mar. 5 at 7 p.m.

In Class 2A, the local regional is at Piasa Southwestern, and it starts Monday with a play-in game between the host Piasa Birds and Staunton, starting at 6 p.m., followed by

another play-in game between Litchfield and Gillespie at 7:30 p.m. Marquette Catholic plays the Piasa Birds-Bulldogs winner on Tuesday in the semifinals at 7 p.m., then on Wednesday, it'll be the Purple Panthers-Miners winner against Greenville, also at 7 p.m. The final will be played Feb. 22 at 7 p.m.

The Southwestern winner advances to the DuQuoin sectional, where they'll play the Anna-Jonesboro regional winner Feb. 26, while the winners of the Carlyle and Chester regionals on Feb. 27. The final is set for Mar. 1, with all tip-off times being 7 p.m. The DuQuoin winner meets the Vandalia sectional winner in the Carbondale super-sectional at SIU Arena Mar. 5, also at 7 p.m.

The Class 3A regionals get underway the week of Feb. 25, and Triad will play in the Salem regional, starting their campaign on Feb. 25 in a play-in game against Mt. Vernon at 7:30 p.m. Should the Knights win, they'll advance to a semifinal match-up against the host Wildcats Feb. 27 at 7 p.m. The final will be played on Mar. 1 with the Wednesday winner playing the winner of the Tuesday semifinal – either Centralia, Benton or Highland – in a 7 p.m. tip-off.

The Breese Central regional starts Feb. 25 at 6 p.m, with Civic Memorial going against Roxana, followed by the host Cougars meeting East Alton-Wood River at 7:30 p.m. The Eagles-Shells winner advances to a Feb. 26 semifinal against East St. Louis, while the Cougars-Oilers winner facing Breese Mater Dei Catholic in the second semifinal Feb. 27. The final will be played Mar. 1, with all tip-off times at 7 p.m.

In the opposite bracket, Jersey will host a regional, and the host Panthers will play on Feb. 27 in a semifinal against Springfield Sacred Heart-Griffin. Should Jersey win, they'll play in the final against the survivor of Jacksonville, Rochester, and Springfield Southeast Mar. 1, with the tip-off times all at 7 p.m.

The Jersey winner will play the Rantoul regional winner in the Springfield Southeast sectional Mar. 5, while the winners of the regionals at Olney Richland County and Clinton play on Mar. 6. The final is set for Mar. 8, all games against starting at 7 p.m.

The Salem and Breese Central winners go to the Mascoutah sectional, with the Central winner meeting the Freeburg winner Mar. 5, and the Salem winner going against the Metropolis Massac County winner Mar. 6. The final will be played Mar. 8, again with the tip-off times being 7 p.m. The Mascoutah winner plays the Springfield Southeast sectional winner in the Springfield super-sectional Mar. 12 at the Bank of Springfield Center, tip-off being 7 p.m.

In Class 4A, Collinsville hosts a regional, and it starts Feb. 25 with a play-in game between Granite City and Edwardsville, with a 7 p.m. tip-off. The Warriors-Tigers

winner will play the host Kahoks Feb. 26 at 6 p.m, followed by Alton vs. Springfield High at 7:30 p.m. The final will be played Mar. 1 at 7 p.m.

Defending champion Belleville West will host their own regional, and the Maroons start their championship defense Feb. 26 against the winner of Feb. 25 play-in game between O'Fallon and Belleville East. The second semifinal is on Feb. 27 between Chatham Glenwood and Quincy, with the regional final set for Mar. 1, all games starting at 7 p.m.

The Collinsville and Belleville West winners will play each other at a neutral site in Metro-East as a part of the East Moline United sectional on Mar. 5, while the winners of the Pekin and Champaign Centennial regionals will play on the same day at East Moline. The final is set for East Moline Mar. 8, all games tipping off at 7 p.m. The East Moline winner then plays the Aurora East winner in the Normal super-sectional at Illinois State University's Redbird Arena Mar. 12, with the tip coming at 7 p.m.