

# Pairings for the 2026 Class B Girls' Basketball Tournament set

After the state qualifier games in Mayville and Bismarck on Saturday, March 1, the pairings for the 2026 Class B Girls' Basketball Tournament have been finalized. This year's tournament will be held at the Minot State Dome beginning on Thursday, March 5, and running through Saturday, March 7. Last year's champion and the #2 seed Benson County (22-2) will face the #7 seed Edgeley/Kulm/Montpelier (14-12), followed by the #3 seed LaMoure-Litchville/Marion (23-2) matching up with the #6 seed Washburn (18-8). The third game of the day will have the #1 seed Central McLean (24-1) versus the #8 seed Linton/HMB (15-11), and the final contest of the day will have the #4 seed Lewis & Clark-Berthold (19-6) taking on the #5 seed Flasher (24-2).

## SERVICE AND BEYOND

### Their stories should be told: Joseph Hanson, Part I

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The veteran I write about now is Joseph Hanson. He was born in Sharon, N.D., in 1921, and grew up and went to school there. He was a friend and classmate of Arnold Johnson, who will come up in another article. He entered the Army in November of 1942.

I knew Joe before this. He was well known in the county, was a county commissioner, and in my opinion was always willing to give far more to everyone he touched than he ever expected to receive. Even when it came to veterans' benefits, he almost needed to be convinced that he deserved them.

One time he called with a question about VA benefits, and I happened to be in Finley. I said, "I'll stop at your house and take a look at what you got in the mail." It was an easy question, and he said, "You have time for coffee?" I said sure.

That's when Joseph Hanson told me his story.

Joe began: "I have had the last rites of the Catholic Church." Then he paused and said, "I know you are Catholic," as if knowing that he need not explain when that sacrament is given, or more importantly, why.

Then he said it was on Saipan on July 7, 1944.

For reasons he did not know, he was assigned to the New York Army National Guard, which was the 27th Infantry Division. He was among mostly New York soldiers, but not all. He had a good friend, a farmer from Nebraska, who was close to him, but mostly they were New York State soldiers. They were in Hawaii training for a long time. He liked it there; it was good duty, and he rose in rank quickly and was a staff sergeant by early 1944. Then they shipped out to the war in the Pacific, and it was the Battle of Saipan.

There were three main American battle groups assigned to the attack on Saipan: the fully strengthened and battle-experienced 2nd and 4th Marine divisions, with 22,000 Marines each, and the 27th Infantry Division, 16,500 strong, which was Joe Hanson's New York National Guard - not battle experienced.

He said the plan was that they landed at one end of the island. Each Marine division took a route along the beach, pushing the enemy toward the other end of the island, and the 27th Infantry took the middle, pushing the enemy defenders back, all at the same time. This battle gets little attention, but it was as brutal a fight as any Americans got into during the Pacific war. Almost the last day of the battle, the day

Joe was badly wounded, was the most savage assault launched by the Japanese during the Pacific war.

D-Day was June 15, and it was immediately a huge fight. By June 20, General Holland Smith of the 27th Infantry Division, as well as the two Marine divisions, had all their reserves committed already, with no one else left to land. It was fight it out with the guys you had, to the bitter end, with the Japanese soldiers.

Joe was in E Company of the 105th Infantry Regiment. He did not tell me much about the three-week-long fight to push the enemy to the end of the island, but the casualties were very high. He had not been hurt, and his good friend from Kansas was still fighting alongside him.

They knew the enemy was badly beaten and that they were on the verge of the battle being over. The enemy was scattered and could not defeat them, but they were fighting an enemy that did not surrender. They would fight to the last man, and they knew that this battle was not over until they had killed their enemy or the enemy had killed them.

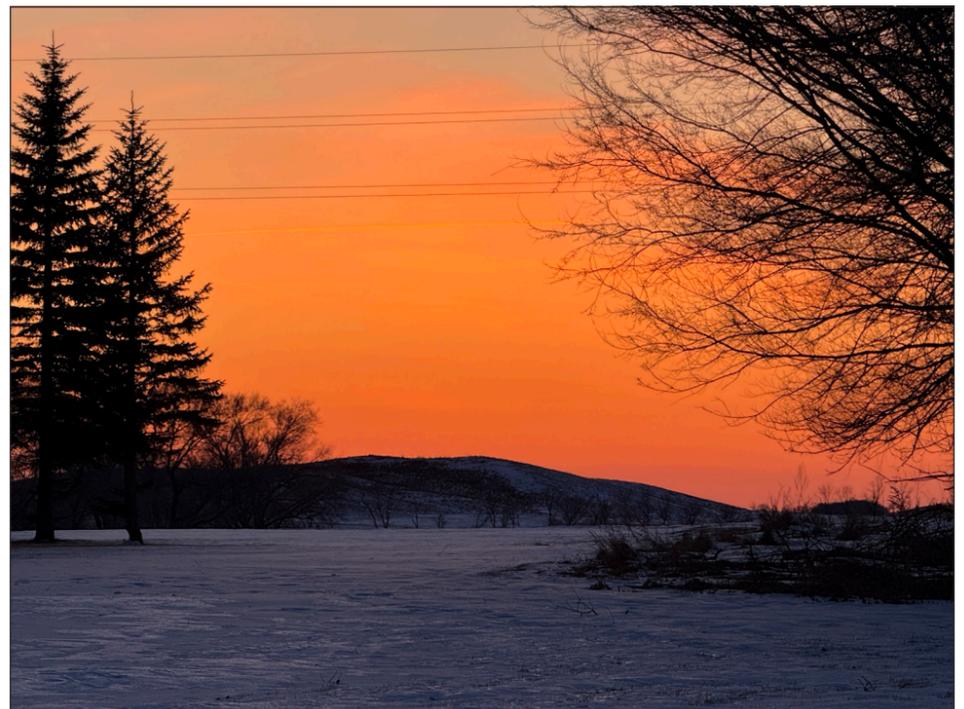
In the night of July 6, Joe told me his company, E Company of the 105th Infantry, was dug in west of the railroad. He said they knew something was up. They could hear the enemy approaching, launching small attacks, which turned out to be probing attacks to look for weaknesses in their lines. Then, in the early morning hours of July 7, he said you could hear the enemy coming. They were close. They knew they were out there, going to attack. They were asking for artillery to shell the enemy, but none came.

Then the attack came. Joe said, in a questioning voice to me, "Where was our artillery?"

Early in the morning of July 7, all the surviving soldiers of the 31,000 defenders of the island launched the largest banzai attack of the Pacific war. Over 4,000 soldiers simultaneously charged right into the 105th Infantry Regiment. It was not just that he was on Saipan during the largest suicidal attack of the war, it ran right into him. It hit them first.

I'm just telling Joe's part of this, but the regiment buckled under the swift, suicidal attack. For some reason, his company, E Company, held their most forward position long enough that the other companies that had collapsed had some chance to recover and withdraw as best they could, which was down to the beach. There, they could retreat no further. It was their actual last stand. Fight or die.

## PHOTO OF THE WEEK



A photo taken March 1, at sunset, approximately 6:28 p.m., from the north end of the Cooperstown Country Club Golf Course looking west. (photo/Jeff Stachler)

## DAKOTA DATEBOOK

### Minot UFOs return

written by Jayme L. Job

March 5 – An unbelievable UFO sighting occurred on this date over the Minot Air Force base in 1967. Unbeknownst to many North Dakotans, the state has proved fertile ground for UFO sightings for several decades. In fact, the state even has a connection to the first UFO sighting in history, when the term "UFO" was first coined.

That 1947 event began over Washington state, when pilot Kenneth Arnold "...spotted nine unidentified objects flying near Mount Rainier." Arnold's report led reporters to term the entities, 'unidentified flying objects,' or UFOs. Arnold grew up in Minot, attending grade and high school there during the 1920s and '30s. After the initial description and media coverage, UFO sightings became much more common. In response, the Air Force created a catalog of UFO sightings in an attempt to chronicle and explain the phenomenon. Referred to as "Project Blue Book," the catalog documents dozens of UFO reports from North Dakota, most taking place near the Minot and Grand Forks Air Force Bases.

The UFO sighting on March 5, 1967, took place only three days after two sightings were reported near Mohall and Velva. Then on March 5, Minot Air Force Base security teams were alerted when Air Defense Command radar detected an "...unidentified target descending over the Minuteman

missile silos of the 91st Strategic Missile Wing..."

When security police responded to the call, they saw a large metallic disk hovering over the missile silos. The disk was ringed with bright flashing lights. Before F-106 interceptors at the base were scrambled, the UFO left the silos, moving first over the launch control facility, and then climbing straight up into the air before taking off at an "incredible speed."

Between the years of 1967 and 1968, a number of UFO incidents occurred at or near the nuclear missile sites in North Dakota. One eyewitness, Lt. David Schuur, claimed in interviews that a brightly lit UFO hovering near missile sites in 1967 was responsible for initiating a launch sequence at the Echo Launch Control Center. Once the glowing object left the vicinity, Schuur was able to activate the launch inhibit switch. Robert Hastings, the professional UFO reporter who interviewed Schuur, called the interview "one of the most disturbing" of his career.

"Dakota Datebook" is a radio series from Prairie Public in partnership with the State Historical Society of North Dakota and with funding from the North Dakota Humanities Council. See all the Dakota Datebooks at [prairiepublic.org](http://prairiepublic.org), subscribe to the "Dakota Datebook" podcast, or buy the Dakota Datebook book at [shopprairiepublic.org](http://shopprairiepublic.org).

## Public Notices from Page 10

offices are up for election:

Glenfield-Sutton-McHenry (3-year term)

Binford Precinct (3-year Term)

An individual seeking election to the Midkota School Board shall prepare and sign a document (Statement of Intent) stating the individual's name and the position for which that individual is a candidate. A candidate shall also file a SFN 10172 (Statement of Interests) as required by section 16.1.-09-02. The documents must be filed with the school district's Business Manager or mailed to and in the possession of the business manager by April 6, 2026, at 4:00 p.m.

All forms are available from the Business Manager or

Assistant Business Manager at Midkota School or may be obtained online at <https://vip.sos.nd.gov/PortalListDetails.aspx?ptlhpPKID=30&ptlPKID=3>  
GCC February 27, March 6, 2026  
IO#355991

**IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF GRIGGS COUNTY, STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA**  
In the Matter of the Estate of Faye R. Vigasaa, Deceased.

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**  
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the undersigned has been appointed personal representative of the above estate. All persons having claims against the said deceased are required to present their claims within three months after the date of the first publication

of this notice or said claims will be forever barred. Claims must either be presented to Lauri A. Stokka, personal representative of the estate, at 310 Barston LN, Bismarck, ND 58503, or filed with the Court. Dated this 12th day of February, 2026.

/s/ Lauri A. Stokka  
Personal Representative  
310 Barston Ln., Bismarck, ND 58501

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