

PitchRank

SEO Action Plan

Comprehensive SEO Strategy & Implementation Roadmap

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1. Current State - 30-Day GSC Analysis

What's Working

- [x] #2 for "pitchrank" (branded query)
- [x] #4 for "louisiana youth soccer rankings" (non-branded)
- [x] Getting impressions across 11 state ranking pages
- [x] Sitemap is well-structured (consistent www, all ranking pages included)

Critical Issues

- www vs non-www split - both pitchrank.io AND www.pitchrank.io indexed, diluting authority
- Zero-click impressions - 17 clicks total despite dozens of query appearances
- Low CTR on ranking pages - showing up but not getting clicks (meta optimization needed)
- Weak positions - most state queries ranking at positions 20-90 (pages 3-9)

Quick Win Opportunities

Query	Position	Opportunity
louisiana youth soccer rankings	#4	Push to #1-3 with content
louisiana soccer rankings	#24	Optimize existing page
az soccer rankings	#17	Add AZ-specific content
2013 boys soccer rankings	#10	Meta optimization needed

2. Phase 1: Quick Wins (Week 1)

1A. Canonical URL Fix (CRITICAL - Day 1)

Problem: Both pitchrank.io and www.pitchrank.io are indexed by Google, splitting authority and diluting rankings.

Solution: Implement 301 redirects from non-www to www + add canonical tags to all pages. Then submit updated sitemap to GSC and request re-indexing of key pages.

Action: Configure next.config.js redirects + add <link rel="canonical"> to all pages

1B. Meta Description Optimization (Day 2-3)

Current Problem: Generic or missing meta descriptions result in low click-through rates.

Template: "[State] Youth Soccer Rankings | Updated [Frequency] | PitchRank"

Description: "Official [State] youth soccer team rankings for boys and girls (U10-U18). See how your team ranks against [#] teams statewide. Updated weekly with live game results."

Action: Add dynamic meta descriptions to /rankings/[state]/[age]/[gender] pages

Include team count dynamically + "Updated [date]" for freshness signal

1C. Title Tag Optimization (Day 3-4)

New Format: [State] U[Age] [Gender] Soccer Rankings | PitchRank

Examples:

- Louisiana U15 Boys Soccer Rankings | PitchRank
- Arizona U13 Girls Soccer Rankings | PitchRank

Homepage Title: "Youth Soccer Rankings | Live Team Rankings by State | PitchRank"

3. Phase 2: Content Strategy (Weeks 2-3)

2A. Priority State Landing Pages

Create /rankings/[state] overview pages for high-volume states:

State	Current Position	Priority
California	#88	HIGH - huge opportunity
Florida	#49	HIGH
Texas	Not ranking	HIGH
New York	Not ranking	HIGH
New Jersey	Good impressions	MEDIUM
Arizona	#17	MEDIUM - push higher

Each page should include: overview, top teams per age/gender, link to methodology, and browsable age/gender grid for internal linking.

2B. Blog Content (SEO-Focused)

Target long-tail keywords with the following content plan:

- "Best Youth Soccer Teams in [State] - 2026 Rankings" - target state-specific searches
- "How Youth Soccer Rankings Work" - target informational queries, attract backlinks
- "U13 vs U15 Soccer: Key Differences" - target age-specific searches
- "State-by-State Guide to Youth Soccer Rankings" - mega-guide with links to all states

Publishing Schedule:

Week	Content
Week 1	California + Florida posts
Week 2	Texas + Arizona posts
Week 3	New York + New Jersey posts
Week 4	Algorithm explanation post

2C. Age Group Landing Pages

Create /rankings/u13, /rankings/u15, etc. (national overviews). These capture queries like "2013 boys soccer rankings" (currently #10). Each page includes National Top 25 for both genders + 50-state browsing links.

4. Phase 3: Technical SEO (Weeks 3-4)

3A. Schema Markup (Structured Data)

Implement SportsTeam schema on all ranking pages with team name, club membership, and location. Add BreadcrumbList schema for navigation. Rich snippets in search results lead to higher CTR.

Schema types: SportsTeam, BreadcrumbList, ItemList, SportsOrganization

3B. Internal Linking Structure

Current Issue: Weak internal linking between related pages.

Implementation plan:

- Breadcrumbs on all ranking pages: Home > Rankings > [State] > U13 > Boys
- Related Rankings sidebar: linking to adjacent age groups & regions
- "Top Movers" widget linking to teams with biggest ranking changes
- Footer links to all state overview pages

Goal: Increase time on site and pass PageRank internally.

3C. Page Speed Optimization

Action items:

- Run Lighthouse audit on key pages
- Optimize images (WebP format, lazy loading)
- Minimize JavaScript bundles
- Implement proper caching headers
- Consider CDN for static assets

Target: Core Web Vitals in "Good" range (this is a ranking factor).

5. Phase 4: Backlink Strategy (Ongoing)

4A. Youth Soccer Directories

Submit PitchRank to:

- US Youth Soccer state associations (50 submissions)
- MaxPreps and similar sports ranking sites
- Local sports news sites per state
- Youth soccer community forums and resources

4B. Club Partnerships

Target: Top 100 clubs in the database

Offer:

- Free embeddable widget showing their team ranking
- Direct links to their team pages
- Featured club status in exchange for backlinks

Benefit: Natural backlinks from club websites.

4C. Content Outreach

Once blog posts are live, distribute via:

- Reddit: r/bootroom, r/SoccerCoaching
- Youth soccer podcasts (guest appearances)
- Hacker News (algorithm explanation post)
- Youth soccer Facebook groups (50k+ members in many states)

6. Phase 5: Local SEO (Month 2)

5A. Google Business Profile

Create a Google Business listing:

- Category: "Sports Website" or "Sports Information Service"
- Include link to site
- Post weekly updates ("New rankings posted!")

5B. State-Specific Content

Per priority state, create:

- "Top 10 Soccer Clubs in [State]" blog post
- "[State] Soccer Tournament Calendar 2026"
- "Best Cities for Youth Soccer in [State]"

All linking back to relevant team and club pages.

7. SEO Improvements - Detailed Recommendations

Current SEO Strengths

- [x] Comprehensive metadata structure using Next.js Metadata API
- [x] Structured data (Organization, WebSite, SportsOrganization, FAQ, Breadcrumbs, SportsTeam)
- [x] Dynamic sitemap generation (918 ranking pages)
- [x] Proper robots.txt configuration
- [x] OpenGraph and Twitter cards on most pages
- [x] ISR (Incremental Static Regeneration) for performance
- [x] Dynamic metadata generation for rankings and team pages
- [x] Good internal linking structure

Priority 1: Critical Missing Metadata

1.1 Add OpenGraph/Twitter Cards to Team Pages

- Impact: High - Team pages are likely high-traffic landing pages
- Risk: Zero - Just adding metadata
- Effort: Low (15 minutes)

1.2 Add Metadata to Rankings Landing Page

- Impact: High - Main rankings page gets significant traffic
- Risk: Zero
- Effort: Low (10 minutes)

Priority 2: Structured Data Enhancements

2.1 Add ItemList Schema to Rankings Pages

- Enables rich results in Google (carousel/list format)
- Show top 10 teams as structured list items

2.2 Add HowTo Schema to Compare Page

- Enables rich results for "how to compare teams" queries

2.3 Add Article Schema to Methodology Page

- Better indexing of methodology content

Priority 3: Sitemap Improvements

3.1 Add Team Pages to Sitemap

- Current: Only 918 URLs (static pages + ranking combinations)

- Recommendation: Add top 10,000 teams by power score
- Use sitemap index for multiple sitemap files

3.2 Improve Sitemap lastModified Dates

- Use actual last modified dates instead of current date
- Helps search engines prioritize crawling

8. Implementation Priority Summary

Week 1 (CRITICAL)

- [x] Canonical URL fix (301 redirects from non-www)
- [x] Add canonical tags to all pages
- [x] Dynamic meta descriptions for ranking pages
- [x] Title tag optimization
- [x] Submit updated sitemap to GSC

Week 2

- [x] Create state overview pages (CA, FL, TX, AZ, NY, NJ)
- [x] Add breadcrumb navigation
- [x] Implement Schema.org markup for teams

Week 3

- [x] Create age group landing pages (U10-U18)
- [x] Build "Related Rankings" sidebar component
- [x] Write 2 blog posts (California + Florida focus)

Week 4

- [x] Page speed audit + optimizations
- [x] Internal linking improvements
- [x] Embeddable widget for clubs

Quick Wins (Under 1 Hour Total)

Task	Impact	Effort
Add OG/Twitter to team pages	High	15 min
Add metadata to rankings landing	High	10 min
Add keywords to team pages	Medium	10 min
Add canonical to rankings page	Med-Low	5 min
Verify robots meta tags	Low	5 min

9. Success Metrics & KPIs

Monthly Tracking Goals

Metric	Baseline (30d)	1-Month Goal	3-Month Goal
Total Clicks	17	100+	500+
Total Impressions	~100	1,000+	10,000+
Avg Position	35-40	25	15
Indexed Pages	~200	300+	500+
Backlinks	Unknown	10+	50+
Organic Traffic	~50/mo	300/mo	1,500/mo

Expected Impact Timeline

Short Term (1-2 weeks):

- Better social sharing previews (team pages)
- Improved indexing of rankings landing page
- Better rich results for rankings queries

Medium Term (1-3 months):

- More team pages indexed via sitemap
- Better rankings for long-tail queries
- Improved click-through rates from better OG images

Long Term (3-6 months):

- Higher domain authority from improved internal linking
- More organic traffic from team-specific searches
- Better user engagement metrics

The Big Picture

Goal: Own the youth soccer rankings space in Google

Strategy:

1. Technical foundation (canonicalization, meta, schema) - Week 1
2. Content expansion (state pages, blog posts) - Weeks 2-4
3. Link building (directories, clubs, partnerships) - Ongoing
4. Optimization (based on GSC data) - Continuous

Why it will work:

- Unique data (live rankings) that no competitor has
- Low competition in a niche space
- Clear user intent (parents/coaches searching for rankings)
- Technical SEO issues are quickly fixable
- Content strategy targets high-value long-tail keywords