



## **Powerhouse Field Set for 2009 T-Mobile Invitational** *Five Defending State Champions and Numerous Blue-Chip Recruits Highlight 2009 National High School Basketball Tournament*

**INDIANAPOLIS — Sept. 30, 2009** – Start with five defending state champions, throw in a state runner-up and another state semifinalist and then add in the nation’s top-ranked big man, and you have the winning recipe for the 2009 T-Mobile Invitational national high school basketball tournament, the nation’s premier event featuring top boys and girls teams.

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and T-Mobile USA, Inc. today announced the eight-team field for this year’s event, which will be held Dec. 29-30 at the Pete Hanna Center on the campus of Samford University in Birmingham, Ala. The NFHS-member Alabama High School Athletic Association (AHSAA) will serve as the tournament’s host state association. As such, two Alabama high schools were invited to participate in the tournament.

The four boys teams feature a pair of defending state champions — Houston (Texas) Yates High School and Huntsville (Alabama) Butler High School. Also taking part are Covington (Washington) Kentwood High School and Winter Park (Florida) High School. Kentwood features 6-foot-10, 280-pound senior Joshua Smith, who some consider the top-rated center in the nation. Winter Park is led by junior sensation Austin Rivers, considered the top-rated shooting guard in the Class of 2011, and son of former NBA player Glenn “Doc” Rivers.

Coming off a state runner-up performance last year, the Hoover (Alabama) High School girls will serve as the host team on the girls’ side of the 2009 T-Mobile Invitational bracket. They’ll be joined by three defending state champions — Stockton (California) St. Mary’s High School, a perennial national power featuring senior guard Chelsea Gray, a third-team USA Today All-American last year; Nashville (Tennessee) Hillsboro High School, which was 36-1 in 2008-09; and Pittsburgh (Pennsylvania) Mt. Lebanon High School, which returns 18 of 20 players from last year’s 31-0 championship team.

The T-Mobile Invitational is the only basketball tournament sponsored by the NFHS, and the field is composed only of schools from NFHS-member associations.

“This year’s tournament should be outstanding,” said Robert F. Kanaby, NFHS executive director. “Not only does this event showcase some of the best teams and individuals in the country, but it also showcases the important role that activity programs play in high school education.”

“T-Mobile is proud to sponsor such a premier event,” said Mike Belcher, vice president of brand communications, T-Mobile USA. “Every year, the fields seem to get better and better, and this year is no exception. Top-rated teams and outstanding student-athletes make this the best tournament in high school sports.”





In addition to the two days of games, all coaches and players of the participating schools will join T-Mobile employees for a T-Mobile community service project on Dec. 28 designed to improve the after-school facilities at a local community-based organization or public school (site to be determined). T-Mobile stresses community outreach programs connecting kids to positive people, places and programs.

The inaugural T-Mobile Invitational was held in 2006 in Seattle with the nation's No. 1-ranked girls team, Suwanee (Georgia) Collins Hill High School, and the boys team, Los Angeles (California) Fairfax High School taking home the championship trophies. The scene shifted to Albuquerque and the University of New Mexico's "The Pit" for the 2007 T-Mobile Invitational. Set against that scenic Land of Enchantment backdrop, Jersey City (New Jersey) St. Anthony High School, ranked No. 1 in the nation, claimed the boys title, while Long Beach (California) Poly High School was the girls winner.

Last year's event was held on the campus of Ball State University in Muncie, Ind. with the host-state schools capturing the titles for the first time – Indianapolis (Indiana) Lawrence North High School earning the boys title, while South Bend (Indiana) Washington High School walked off with the girls trophy.

The partnership between T-Mobile and the NFHS, the national leadership organization for high school athletic and fine arts activities, strives to encourage student participation in interscholastic activities and emphasizes the importance of these programs in preparing students for life. In addition to the basketball tournament, the partnership between the NFHS and T-Mobile includes T-Mobile's sponsorship of the NFHS annual national student leadership conference, plus other initiatives and events. T-Mobile is the Official Telecommunications Partner of the NFHS.

Tickets for the 2009 T-Mobile Invitational will go on sale later this fall. For the most up-to-date information on the tournament and this year's teams, visit [www.t-mobileinvitational.com](http://www.t-mobileinvitational.com)

Here's a closer look at the 2009 T-Mobile Invitational field:

## **Boys**

### **Covington (Washington) Kentwood High School**

Fueled by 6-foot-10, 280-pound Joshua Smith's stellar play, Covington Kentwood compiled a 17-9 record and tied for the highly competitive 4A South Puget Sound League North championship in 2008-09. Smith, who is rated the nation's No. 1 center this winter, averaged 24.1 points (with single-game highs of 43 and 40 points), 13.5 rebounds and 3.3 blocks, while shooting .690 from the floor. Possessing a powerful inside game, Smith is a tenacious rebounder who dunks and blocks shots with a vengeance. The backcourt returns intact, with 6-2 senior Tre Tyler (11.3 points per game (ppg), 3.0 rebounds per game (rpg) and 3.2 assists per game (apg)), 5-11 junior Alec Wilson (5.7 ppg, 1.4 rpg and 3.4 apg) and 5-9 junior Mikell Everette (3 ppg, 3 apg). Senior Max Manthou and sophomore Isaiah Melvar will provide backcourt depth. Smith will receive frontcourt help this year from Jason Boyce (6-5), Paul Brennan (6-6) and sophomore Taylor Jones (6-6). Kentwood is expected to be one of Washington's top teams in 2009-10.



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### **Houston (Texas) Yates High School**

The Houston Yates Lions' high-powered offense lit up the scoreboards for a prodigious 96.5 points per contest en route to a 34-1 record and to the 2009 Texas University Interscholastic League Conference 4A state title. In that game, they handled Dallas Kimball, 94-78. Although they eclipsed the century scoring mark 13 times, they didn't shirk their defensive responsibilities either, as they held opponents to just 50.9 points a contest. Six-foot-two junior guard Joseph Young, who was named Conference 4A championship game MVP, set the pace with a 19.4 ppg scoring average. Classmates Brandon Peters (6-2) averaged 18.5 points, 9.2 rebounds and 6.2 steals and Darius Gardner (5-10) averaged 12.2 points, 7.2 steals and 6.8 rebounds. All three were named to the all-state tournament team. With 6-0 point guard Marshall Lange (10.5 ppg, 4.6 apg and 4.5 steals) and 6-9 center Alexander Davis (7.5 ppg and 3.4 blocks) also coming back for their senior campaigns, the entire starting unit returns intact for 2009-10, along with 11 of 15 players from last year's state championship team.

### **Huntsville (Alabama) Butler High School**

Huntsville Butler (34-3) set a school record for victories and won its fourth AHSAA Class 5A state championship in six years (and its second consecutive) with a convincing 55-45 victory over Parker High School. In that title tilt, Butler was led by 6-3 sophomore sensation Trevor Lacey with 14 points and 6-4 junior post Ryan Ervin with 13 points and 11 rebounds. For the season, Lacey averaged 18.1 points, 6.4 rebounds, 5.1 assists and 3.2 steals, prompting veteran coach Jack Doss to call him "the best I've ever coached." Ervin averaged 15.3 points and 8.9 rebounds, while freshman point guard Justin Pride dished out 6.3 assists a game.

### **Winter Park (Florida) High School**

Led by precocious 6-3 sophomore guard Austin Rivers' 23.6 points and 4.5 rebounds per game and a team-high 84 three-pointers, the Winter Park High School Wildcats compiled a 24-8 record and advanced to the 2009 Florida High School Athletic Association Class 6A semifinals. Rivers, who has committed to the University of Florida and is the son of former National Basketball Association standout and current Boston Celtics head coach Glenn "Doc" Rivers, is ranked as one of the nation's top juniors this year. Also returning are 6-4 forward Robert Lovaglio (13.1 ppg and 7.3 rpg), 6-7 forward Adam Jones (8.9 ppg and 7.4 rpg and Fairfield University commitment), 6-1 guard Isaac Turner (7.5 ppg and 31 three-point field goals) and 6-2 guard Swanson John David (3.9 ppg and 14 three-point field goals), who all will be seniors in 2009-10. Top junior newcomers include 6-2 guard Brett Comer (Florida Atlantic University commitment), 6-1 guard James Ferrell and 6-4 forward Alex Swanson.

### **Girls**

#### **Stockton (California) St. Mary's High School**

Boasting two superstar players, Stockton St. Mary's figures to be not only one of the top girls teams in California this winter, but also in the nation. Leading the way is 5-11 senior guard Chelsea Gray, who averaged 20 points, 6 rebounds and 6 assists last year, and was named third-team All-American by USA Today. Her equally talented classmate, 6-0 swingman Afure Jemerigbe, collected 15.3 points and 8.0 rebounds per contest. With a youthful roster composed of 11 juniors and a sophomore, St. Mary's went 31-3 in 2008-09 and defeated Inglewood, 71-62, to claim the California Interscholastic Federation Division II state title. Jemerigbe and Gray poured in 23 and 14 points, respectively, in that championship





game, while Alle Morena tallied 15 and Emily Gonsalves (coach Tom Gonsalves' daughter) added nine. It was the Rams' seventh CIF finals appearance and fifth state title this decade.

### **Nashville (Tennessee) Hillsboro High School**

Coming off a glittering 36-1 record and the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association Class AAA state title in 2009, Nashville Hillsboro hopes to replicate that great success in 2009-10. Leading the way for the Burros will be 5-11 senior forward Lakeisha Crouch, a versatile and well-rounded player who led last year's squad in scoring, rebounding and steals (14.0 ppg, 7.2 rpg and 3.1 steals). Crouch, who was also second in blocked shots, has committed to Xavier (Ohio) University. Anchoring the middle will be rising star Isabelle Harrison, a 6-3 junior who can dunk the ball. Last year, she averaged 11.1 points, 6.3 rebounds and 1.2 blocks per game. Both Crouch and Harrison were named to 2009 all-state tournament team. Expected to run the offense is 5-6 sophomore point guard Kearra Holt, while 6-0 freshman Nicole Bowers is expected to be a strong contributor as a first-year player.

### **Pittsburgh (Pennsylvania) Mt. Lebanon High School**

With an amazing 18 of 20 players returning from last year's squad, Pittsburgh Mt. Lebanon brings new meaning to the term "experienced team." The 2009 edition roared to an unblemished 31-0 record as it captured the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association Class AAAA state title with a 67-58 decision over perennial power Springfield Cardinal O'Hara. In the process, Mt. Lebanon became the first Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic League Class AAAA team to win a PIAA state title with an undefeated record. Led by state coach of the year Dori Oldaker, the Blue Devils are expected to be paced this winter by 6-0 senior forward Lauren Arbogast, who scored 14 points, and 5-11 junior guard Madison Cable, who collected 18 points and 11 rebounds, respectively, in the 2009 state title game.

### **Hoover (Alabama) High School**

Home of the famed television series "Two-A-Days," which featured the highly successful Buccaneers football squad, the Hoover High School girls basketball team has also distinguished itself as an exceptional program. Under the direction of Coach Donnie Quinn, the Hoover girls compiled an outstanding 29-6 record as they finished runner-up in the 2009 AHSAA Class 6A state tournament. Ironically, they fell in that title tilt and absorbed half of their six setbacks to 2008 T-Mobile Invitational runner-up Madison Bob Jones. The top player is expected to be athletically gifted 6-0 small forward Tyrese Tanner, who is considered to be one of the nation's top seniors in 2009-10. Lending frontcourt depth will be 6-1 senior Kanaesha Burch, who averaged 8.9 points and 8.2 rebounds, and 6-1 sophomore center Kayla Anderson. Five-five senior point guard Meaghan Dunn ran the offense with averages of 9.5 points and 2.5 assists per game, while 5-6 senior Jordan Smith contributed 6.1 points an outing.

### **About the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)**

The NFHS, based in Indianapolis, Indiana, is the national leadership organization for high school athletic and fine arts activities. Since 1920, the NFHS has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and fine arts activities that help students succeed in their lives. The NFHS sets direction for the future by building awareness and support, improving the participation experience, establishing consistent standards and rules for competition, and helping those who oversee high school sports and activities. The NFHS writes playing rules for 17 sports for boys and girls at the high school level. Through its 50 member state associations and the District of Columbia, the NFHS reaches more than 19,000 high schools and 11 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 7½ million in high





school sports. As the recognized national authority on interscholastic activity programs, the NFHS conducts national meetings; sanctions interstate events; produces publications for high school coaches, officials and athletic directors; sponsors professional organizations for high school coaches, officials, spirit coaches, speech and debate coaches and music adjudicators; serves as the national source for interscholastic coach training; and serves as a national information resource of interscholastic athletics and activities. For more information, visit the NFHS Web site at [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org)

### **About T-Mobile USA, Inc.**

Based in Bellevue, Wash., T-Mobile USA, Inc. is the U.S. wireless operation of Deutsche Telekom AG. By the end of the second quarter of 2009, almost 150 million mobile customers were served by the mobile communication segments of the Deutsche Telekom group — 33.5 million by T-Mobile USA — all via a common technology platform based on GSM and UMTS, the world's most widely used digital wireless standards. T-Mobile's innovative wireless products and services help empower people to connect to those who matter most. Multiple independent research studies continue to rank T-Mobile among the highest in numerous regions throughout the U.S. in wireless customer care and call quality. For more information, please visit <http://www.T-Mobile.com>. T-Mobile is a federally registered trademark of Deutsche Telekom AG

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