



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Savannah Sports Council to Host New Collegiate Basketball Invitational

SAVANNAH, Ga. – The Savannah Sports Council (SSC) announced Thursday that it will host a new collegiate basketball tournament called the Savannah Invitational this November. The five-day event, which will take place November 22-26 at the Savannah Civic Center, will bring six women’s and six men’s college basketball teams to Savannah.

Participating women’s teams and conferences, which are scheduled to play Nov. 22-24, are Auburn University (SEC), Ball State University (MAC), East Carolina University (AAC), Marist College (MAAC), North Carolina A&T (MEAC) and West Virginia University (Big 12). Participating men’s teams and conferences, which are scheduled to play Nov. 25-26, are University of Akron (MAC), the U.S. Air Force Academy (MWC), East Carolina University (AAC), Georgia Southern University (Sunbelt), Mercer University (SoCon) and Radford University (Big South).

“We are very excited about this new college basketball event and the impact it will have on our community,” said Ben Wilder, Savannah Sports Council director. “When we were given the chance to bring NCAA Division I basketball teams to Savannah during the week of Thanksgiving for a pre-season tournament, we jumped at the opportunity. Our goal is to impact as many hotels, shops and restaurants as possible over the five-day event.”

In preparation for the tournament, the SSC, in partnership with the City of Savannah and Visit Savannah, has refurbished the basketball court at the Civic Center. It was rebuilt and painted by Horner Flooring, the court’s original creator.

“Visit Savannah and the Savannah Sports Council were happy to collaborate with the City of Savannah on getting the basketball court redone,” said Joe Marinelli, president of Visit Savannah. “From the City’s perspective, the improved court is terrific for events like the Harlem Globetrotters and other local community events. Additionally, the new modernized court gives the Sports Council the ability to attract future amateur and collegiate basketball events. New events like the Savannah Invitational can help us to drive visitor spending during traditional slower times of the year.”

The SSC has partnered with Chris Spencer of Basketball Promotions & Events (BPE) to assist with recruiting the teams and managing the event. Spencer currently assists with events in New York City and Las Vegas and will be key in helping launch the Savannah Invitational.

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Visit Savannah serves as the official destination marketing organization for the Savannah area tourism industry and is committed to driving economic prosperity in the greater Savannah community through increased overall visitation and related spending while continuing to build upon Savannah’s image as a world-class destination.