

Press Release

Springfield, Missouri, Convention & Visitors Bureau

Note to Media: Great photo and video opportunities at the tip-off at 3 p.m. March 16.

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National Christian Homeschool Basketball Championships March 16-21 in Springfield

Event Expected to Fill Most of the City's Hotel Rooms for Six Days

The 18th Annual National Christian Homeschool Basketball Championships will be in Springfield March 16-21.

The tournament begins with the girls' tip-off at 3 p.m. and boys at 4:30 p.m. March 16 at Baptist Bible College.

Standouts competing in the tip-off games include Taber Spani, one of the best female players in the nation. Spani, a senior with the Mavericks of Olathe, Kan., has signed with the University of Tennessee and is a member of McDonald's All-American Team, the top 24 girls in the nation.

Another standout is John Caleb Sanders, a junior with the HCYA Warriors of Houston, Texas. Sanders has signed with Liberty University.

Other noteworthy players who play at 9:30 p.m. March 16 are Tony Mitchell, who signed with the University of Alabama, and Will Neighbour, who signed with the University of Arkansas-Little Rock. Both are seniors at Central Park Christian School in Birmingham, Ala.

The High School All-American Game three-point shooting slam dunk contests will be at 6 p.m. March 18 and the Championship games are March 21 at Hammons Student Center.

The tournament is expected to bring more than 340 basketball teams from 20 states and thousands of people to the city. This is the largest number of teams ever to sign up for the tournament. The previous record was 305 teams.

Officials with the Convention & Visitors Bureau anticipate most of the city's 6,000 hotel rooms will be booked during the six-day tournament. More than 9,000 room nights were booked through the bureau's reservation program along with many others that were booked without using the bureau's service.

The CVB also estimates out-of-town participants and spectators will spend about \$3.65 million in Springfield during the event.

The championships are booked in Springfield through 2011 and the city could become the permanent home of the championships.

The tournament will use 33 gym floors at area public and private schools, colleges, Springfield-Greene County Parks, churches and private gyms.

All NCHBC games are free and open to the public. For information about NCHBC, visit www.homeschoolbasketball.com.