



## Two of Nation's Top High School Basketball Players Headline 2008 T-Mobile Invitational

*Highly Acclaimed Boys and Girls Teams From Across the Nation Join Host Indiana Squads  
for Premier 2008 National High School Basketball Tournament*

**INDIANAPOLIS, Ind., — November 11, 2008** - Two of the nation's top high school basketball players - Derrick Favors of Atlanta (Georgia) South Atlanta High School and Skylar Diggins of South Bend (Indiana) Washington High School - headline the four boys teams and four girls teams set to compete in the 2008 T-Mobile Invitational national high school basketball tournament.

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 December 29-30 at Ball State University's Worthen Arena in Muncie, Indiana. The NFHS-member Indiana High School Athletic Association (IHSAA) will serve as the tournament's host state association. As such, two Indiana high schools were invited to participate in the tournament.

Favors, a 6-foot-9, 220-pound senior forward-center, and Diggins, a 5-9 senior guard, are considered to be among the nation's top high school boys and girls basketball players, respectively.

South Atlanta High School, which has become a power in Georgia behind the physically imposing and athletic Favors, is expected to contend for the 2009 Georgia High School Association Class AAA state title. The multi-talented Diggins has led South Bend Washington to an IHSAA Class 4A state title and to two runner-up finishes in her first three varsity seasons.

Other boys teams participating are Duncanville (Texas) High School, Seattle (Washington) Garfield High School and Indianapolis (Indiana) Lawrence North High School.

Competing with South Bend Washington for the girls title will be Madison (Alabama) Bob Jones High School, Newark (New Jersey) University High School and Indianola (Mississippi) Gentry High School.

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.

"We are looking forward to this year's tournament," 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 quality event," said Mike Belcher, vice president of brand communications, T-Mobile USA. "The caliber of play is outstanding. And the caliber of individuals taking part is just as great."



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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 Huddle Up* community service project on December 28 designed to improve the after-school facilities at a local community-based organization or public school (site to be determined). *T-Mobile Huddle Up* is T-Mobile USA's community outreach program connecting kids to positive people, places and programs. *T-Mobile Huddle Up* focuses on addressing the critical need for safe, high-quality, after-school programs for kids nationwide.

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 from 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.

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.

Here's a closer look at the 2008 T-Mobile Invitational field:

### **Boys**

#### **Atlanta (Georgia) South Atlanta High School**

Behind the prodigious play of Favors, South Atlanta compiled a 27-3 record in 2007-08 and was ranked No. 7 in Class AAA. The talented and multi-skilled forward-center averaged 23.7 points, 17.1 rebounds, 9.1 blocks, 3.6 steals and 2.7 assists as a junior last season and had 19 triple-doubles in 30 games. For his efforts, he was named Gatorade Georgia Boys Basketball Player of the Year, Class AAA first-team all-state and second-team Parade All-American. Among the eight players South Atlanta returns in 2008-09 is 5-11 senior point guard Nick Watkins, who is ranked as one of the top guards in the state. The Hornets scored 80 points per game and held opposing teams to 50 points per game in 2007-08, and were ranked 15<sup>th</sup> in the nation at one point of the season by USA Today.

#### **Duncanville (Texas) High School**

The second-largest high school in the nation in terms of physical size, Duncanville (Texas) High School has put up some equally huge numbers on the boys basketball court. Duncanville went 35-2 in 2007-08, including a spotless 14-0 in district play. It lost to eventual state champion North Crowley in the regional final and finished the season ranked No. 5 in Class 5A. The top returning scorers for 2008-09 are 6-7 Shawn Williams (17 ppg) and 6-5 Roger Franklin (14.5 ppg), who both were named to the all-state team last season. The Panthers' frontline is expected to be bolstered this winter by the addition of 6-10 junior transfer Perry Jones. Coach Phil McNeely, who has compiled a career record of 674-173 and led Duncanville to state titles in 1991, 1999 and 2007, was 2007 EA SPORTS National Coach of the Year and 2008 District 8-5A Basketball Coach of the Year.





### **Seattle (Washington) Garfield High School**

Coming off a strong 17-9 season with a very young team featuring one of the nation's top underclassmen, Seattle (Washington) Garfield looks to build on that success in 2008-09. The Bulldogs' top four scorers and top four rebounders all return, led by highly touted 6-5 sophomore point guard Tony Wroten Jr. As a mere freshman, the precocious and well-rounded Wroten averaged 20.8 points, 8.7 rebounds, 3.8 assists and 2.2 steals per game, all team-highs. Six-one senior guard De'andre Taylor, who collected 15.4 points, three assists and two steals per contest, led the squad in three-point field goals in 2007-08. Jaron Cox, a 5-9 senior guard, averaged 6.3 points and provides additional depth to the already talented backcourt, while 6-3 junior Wilson Platt toiled inside with averages of 5.6 points and 6.6 rebounds. The Bulldogs will be led by first-year coach Ed Haskins.

### **Indianapolis (Indiana) Lawrence North High School**

Perennial Hoosier State power Indianapolis (Indiana) Lawrence North High School will field a very tall and talented team in 2008-09. The Wildcats will give opposing teams nightmares as they return a formidable trio of 6-9 players, including senior Stephan Van Treese, who is a four-year varsity player and is verbally committed to Louisville; senior Jeff Robinson, who has verbally committed to Purdue; and junior Dominique Ferguson, who is regarded as one of the nation's top juniors. Coach Jack Keefer, who has been Lawrence North's only boys basketball coach since it opened its doors in 1976-77, led the Wildcats to state titles in 1989, 2004, 2005 and 2006. Among the outstanding big men Keefer coached were Eric Montross and Greg Oden, both seven-footers who played in the National Basketball Association.

## **Girls**

### **Madison (Alabama) Bob Jones High School**

Madison (Alabama) Bob Jones defeated Clay-Chalkville, 48-42, to claim the 2008 Alabama High School Athletic Association girls Class 6A state title, the first state basketball championship in school history. In that state title game, Bob Jones (35-2) played seven players, all juniors who will return in 2008-09. Among them is Kylie Cook, who was named tournament MVP. Her twin sister, 5-10 guard-forward Kellie Cook, was named to the Alabama Sports Writers Association 2008 All-State Basketball Team Super Five (all enrollment classes combined), as well as to the Class 6A first-team. Their classmate, 5-6 guard Jala Harris, was named Class 6A second-team all-state. Coach Tim Miller, who has compiled a 238-40 career record, also led Montgomery (Alabama) Jeff Davis High School to the 2006 state title and was named 2007-08 Class 6A coach of the year. Sports Illustrated recently named Bob Jones High School's athletic program as the best in the state of Alabama.

### **Newark (New Jersey) University High School**

Newark (New Jersey) University, which finished the 2007-08 season 27-4, has won back-to-back New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association Group 1 state titles. Led by coach Felicia Oliver, University lost only one player from last year's squad to graduation and returns 14 players for 2008-09. Leading the way is 6-0 junior Laurin Mincy, who was named first-team all-state as both a freshman (the first girl in New Jersey history to do so) and a sophomore and was named New Jersey Player of the Year as a sophomore. That season, the versatile Mincy averaged 19.9 points, 6.5 rebounds, 3.5 assists, 3.5 steals and 2.9 blocks per game, and already has scored 1,318 points in her 66-game career. In addition, senior Nadirah McKenith was named both second-team all-state and first-team All-Group 1 last year.





### **Indianola (Mississippi) Gentry High School**

Under the direction of coach Charles Williams, Indianola Gentry won MHSAA Class 4A state titles and MHSAA Grand Slam tournaments in both 2007 and 2008. Gentry defeated Yazoo County, 52-44, for the 2008 MHSAA Class 4A state title, and a week later, topped Class 5A state champion Jackson Murrah, 80-75, in double-overtime for the MHSAA Grand Slam championship. Multi-skilled 5-6 junior guard Brizannai Washington, who averaged 14.7 points, five assists, three rebounds and three steals as a sophomore in 2007-08, was named Grand Slam player of the game. Finishing the season unblemished 40-0, Gentry was ranked No. 7 in the ESPN High Elite 25 high school girls basketball rankings and No. 20 in the USA Today Super 25. Gentry is currently riding an 80-game winning streak, which ties the Mississippi high school state record.

### **South Bend (Indiana) Washington High School**

Led by multi-talented 5-9 senior guard Skylar Diggins, South Bend Washington is expected to be one of the state's top teams again this year. During her first three seasons, Diggins paced the Panthers to an amazing 76-6 record, an Indiana High School Athletic Association Class 4A state title and two runner-up finishes. As a junior, the versatile Diggins averaged 29.5 points, 7.7 rebounds, 4.4 assists, 3.2 steals and 1.5 blocked shots. Diggins, who possesses long-range three-point shooting ability, was a Parade Magazine first-team All-American performer in 2007-08, and is expected to contend for national player of the year honors this year. Senior forward Takoia Larry, who scored 24 points in last year's state championship game, averaged 10.9 points last season when she was named high honorable-mention all-state.

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

The NFHS, based in Indianapolis, Indiana, is the national leadership organization for high school sports 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 nearly 19,000 high schools and 11 million participants in high school activity programs, including nearly 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.

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