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VIDEO: Prep basketball: 2010 City of Palms tournament will feature another field of nation's elite

By [ADAM FISHER](#)

Posted June 16, 2010 at 3:51 p.m., updated June 16, 2010 at 4:38 p.m.

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FORT MYERS — Variety is the spice of life, but it's also what keeps a tournament like the City of Palms Classic consistently entertaining for 38 years.

When piecing together the nationwide field for the annual high school basketball tournament, Donnie Wilkie tried to find teams with varying styles from an array of locales featuring different types of players and coaches. But the one constant with

the 2010 field is success.

The past two years, the City of Palms has brought some of the best overall talent to Bishop Verot High School in December. While this year's event, Dec. 17 to 22 at the same venue, will have its share of individual stars, Wilkie has brought together some of the best overall teams in the country.

"You want a little bit of this style, a little bit of this style," said Wilkie, vice president of Classic Basketball Inc., which organizes the tournament. "My job is to create a mix, a blend that will wind up being interesting to our fans."

During a press conference at Shoeless Joe's Sports Cafe on Tuesday afternoon, Wilkie and tournament director Ron Riley announced 15 of the 16 teams in this year's field, with one team yet to be determined. A year after the event lost its title sponsor because of a bad economy, Riley announced the tournament found a new one and is now the State Farm City of Palms Classic.

The teams come from eight states, stretching from New York to California. Seven Florida teams will play in the tournament. The 38th City of Palms field includes eight state champions from last season, including three champs from Florida's six classifications.

"We're extremely proud of this field," Riley said. "This is one of the earliest (points in the year) that we've had the teams committed."

Santa Ana (Calif.) Mater Dei returns for a sixth time. The school won the tournament championship the past two times it participated in Fort Myers, in 2006 and 2008. The Monarch finished ranked ninth in the nation by ESPN.

Led by the Monarchs, seven teams in the field were ranked nationally at the end of the 2009-10 season.

The 38th State Farm City of Palms Classic

When: Dec. 17 to 22

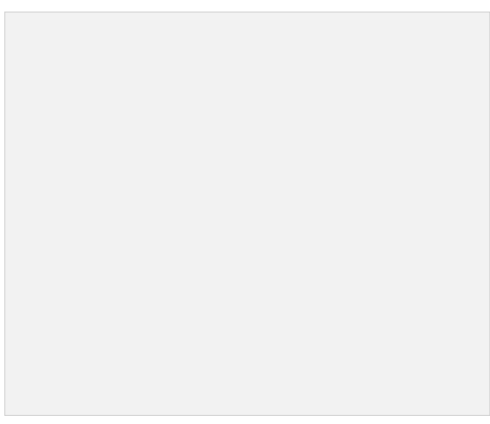
Where: At Bishop Verot High School, Fort Myers

Familiar names:

Santa Ana (Calif.)-Mater Dei — The Monarchs, ranked in the top 10 nationally last season, are back for the sixth time. They won the title their past two trips, including a championship in 2008 with four future Division I players.

Winter Park — Austin Rivers drew national attention in 2008 when he scored 46 points in the third-place game as a sophomore. Last year he earned his second straight MVP award while leading the Wildcats to second place. Rivers is fourth on the all-time City of Palms scoring list.


Fort Myers — The Green Wave knocked off Huntsville (Ala.)-Butler, then ranked No. 15 in the country, and advanced to the consolation final. Fort Myers became the first Southwest Florida school to win a boys basketball championship last season by claiming the Class 4A crown.




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