



Photo by Jim Redman

Austin Rivers battles Milton at last year's City of Palms Classic. Both teams will be back in 2010.

The best high school basketball teams in the United States will test their mettle in tournaments from Hawaii to Oregon to Florida in 2010-11.

The most star-studded lineup is headed to Fort Myers, Fla., where the State Farm City of Palms Classic will host six teams that could appear in MaxPreps.com's Preseason Xcellent 25 (scheduled for Nov. 1 release). Two public schools with legitimate national title hopes – [Melrose \(Memphis, Tenn.\)](#) and [Milton \(Alpharetta, Ga.\)](#) – headline the field.

The power of tournament play was on full display last December when Houston's Yates High School pulled off an impressive double, winning the Iolani Classic in Hawaii and the T-Mobile Invitational in Alabama. The Lions' holiday sweep eventually helped propel them to the No. 1 ranking and a mythical national title.

Bishop Gorman of Las Vegas also made a major statement last December by doubling up in the Beach Ball Classic and its own Bishop Gorman Holiday Classic. The Gaels have scheduled an even more ambitious gauntlet this season with appearances in the City of Palms Classic and Les Schwab Invitational.

A look at the top 10 high school basketball tournaments of 2010-2011;

### 1. State Farm City of Palms Classic

*Bishop Verot High School – Fort Myers, Fla. / Dec. 17-22*

**Teams:** [Bishop Gorman \(Las Vegas, Nev.\)](#), [Christ School \(Arden, N.C.\)](#), [Christ the King \(Middle Village, N.Y.\)](#), [Dr. Krop \(Miami, Fla.\)](#), [Dwyer \(Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.\)](#), [Fort Myers \(Fort Myers, Fla.\)](#), [Mater Dei \(Santa Ana, Calif.\)](#), [Melrose \(Memphis, Tenn.\)](#), [Milton \(Alpharetta, Ga.\)](#), [Norfolk Christian \(Norfolk, Va.\)](#), [North Port \(Fla.\)](#), [Orlando Christian Prep \(Orlando, Fla.\)](#), [Riverside Academy \(Reserve, La.\)](#), [St. Patrick \(Elizabeth, N.J.\)](#), [Whitney Young \(Chicago, Ill.\)](#), [Winter Park \(Fla.\)](#)

**2011 Top 100 talent:** No. 1 Michael Gilchrist, St. Patrick; No. 2 Austin Rivers, Winter Park; No. 3 Adonis Thomas, Melrose; No. 8 James McAdoo, Norfolk Christian; No. 23 Shannon Scott, Milton; No. 27 Julian Royal, Milton; No. 58 Dai-Jon Parker, Milton; No. 75 Marshall Plumlee, Christ School; No. 87 Samuel Thompson, Whitney Young

**2012 Top 100 talent:** No. 4 Shabazz Muhammad, Bishop Gorman; No. 5 Ricardo Gathers, Riverside Academy; No. 38 Xavier Johnson, Mater Dei; No. 45 Omar Calhoun, Christ the King; No. 47 Evan Nolte, Milton; No. 71 Rosco Allen, Bishop Gorman

**Breakdown:** At least six teams in the field will appear in MaxPreps.com's preseason top 25 set to be released at the beginning of November. Even with the ESPN Rise National High School Invitational entering the picture the last two years, City of Palms is high school basketball's closest thing to a national championship. In addition to the 16-team tournament field, the event will also feature the "Signature Series" including [Academy of the New Church \(Bryn Athyn, Pa.\)](#), [St. Mark's \(Southborough, Mass.\)](#), [Thomasville \(Ga.\)](#) and [Westchester Academy \(High Point, N.C.\)](#) among others. Each of those programs bring additional Top 100 talent to Fort Myers.

### 2. Beach Ball Classic

*Myrtle Beach Convention Center – Myrtle Beach, S.C. / Dec. 27-31*

**Teams:** [Boys & Girls \(Brooklyn, N.Y.\)](#), [Clark \(Winchester, Ky.\)](#), [Douglass \(Oklahoma City, Okla.\)](#), [Dudley \(Greensboro, N.C.\)](#), Father Henry Carr (Ontario, Canada), [Greater Atlanta Christian \(Norcross, Ga.\)](#), [Gonzaga \(Washington, D.C.\)](#), [La Verne Lutheran \(La Verne, Calif.\)](#), [Mann \(Greenville, S.C.\)](#), [Miller Grove \(Lithonia, Ga.\)](#), [Myrtle Beach \(S.C.\)](#), [Prestonwood Christian \(Plano, Texas\)](#), [Rice \(New York, N.Y.\)](#), [Socastee \(Myrtle Beach, S.C.\)](#), [St. Rita \(Chicago, Ill.\)](#), [Wheeler \(Marietta, Ga.\)](#)

**2011 Top 100 talent:** No. 47 Damien Leonard, Mann; No. 66 Malcolm Brogdon, Greater Atlanta Christian; No. 81 Henry Brooks, Miller Grove

**2012 Top 100 talent:** Grant Jerrett, La Verne Lutheran; No. 42 Zach Peters, Prestonwood Christian; No. 53 Tony Parker, Miller Grove; No. 62 Charles Mitchell, Wheeler

**Breakdown:** Myrtle Beach has what looks like a very balanced and competitive field headed its way. Douglass, Greater Atlanta Christian, Gonzaga, La Verne Lutheran, Miller Grove and Wheeler are all teams on the national Top 25 radar that will look to solidify their claims at this event in late December.

### 3. Chick-fil-A Classic Holiday Tournament

*Blythewood High School – Blythewood, S.C. / Dec. 20-23*

**Teams:** [Benedictine \(Richmond, Va.\)](#), [Blythewood \(S.C.\)](#), [Charlotte Christian \(Charlotte, N.C.\)](#), [Daniel \(Central, S.C.\)](#), [Grace Prep \(Arlington, Texas\)](#), [Irmo \(Columbia, S.C.\)](#),

[Keenan \(Columbia, S.C.\)](#), [Lower Richland \(Hopkins, S.C.\)](#), [Memphis Central \(Memphis, Tenn.\)](#), [Norcross \(Ga.\)](#), [Norland \(Miami, Fla.\)](#), [Penn Wood \(Lansdowne, Pa.\)](#), [Richland Northeast \(Columbia, S.C.\)](#), [Rockdale County \(Conyers, Ga.\)](#), [Rock \(Gainesville, Fla.\)](#), [United Faith Christian Academy \(Charlotte, N.C.\)](#)

**2011 Top 100 talent:** No. 41 Michael Gbinije, Benedictine; No. 44 Aaron Brown, Penn Wood; No. 69 Kevin Ware, Rockdale County; No. 93 Jamal Branch, Grace Prep

**2012 Top 100 talent:** No. 2 Isaiah Austin, Grace Prep; No. 12 Jarnell Stokes, Memphis Central; No. 88 Braxton Ogbueze, United Faith; No. 99 Peter Jurkin, United Faith

**Breakdown:** Tournament director Gary Fulmer has assembled a talented array of teams for the Classic. Unfortunately, teams are slotted into two totally separate brackets so some of the potential dream matchups are out of the question. Still, the two teams that remain unscathed at the end will have survived a grueling three-game stretch.

#### **4. GlaxoSmithKline Holiday Invitational**

*Broughton High School – Raleigh, N.C. / Dec. 27-30*

**Teams:** [Brandon \(Miss.\)](#), [Broughton \(Raleigh, N.C.\)](#), [Cary \(N.C.\)](#), [Christ School \(Arden, N.C.\)](#), [Hillside \(Durham, N.C.\)](#), [Kinston \(N.C.\)](#), [Kiski School \(Saltsburg, Pa.\)](#), [Knightdale \(N.C.\)](#), [Middle Creek \(Apex, N.C.\)](#), [Norcom \(Portsmouth, Va.\)](#), [Ravenscroft \(Raleigh, N.C.\)](#), [Riverside \(Durham, N.C.\)](#), [United Faith Christian Academy \(Charlotte, N.C.\)](#), [Westchester Academy \(High Point, N.C.\)](#), [Word of God Christian Academy \(Raleigh, N.C.\)](#)

**2011 Top 100 talent:** No. 4 Quincy Miller, Westchester Academy; No. 25 Dorian Finney-Smith, Norcom; No. 45 Deuce Bello, Westchester Academy; No. 53 Tyler Adams, Brandon; No. 75 Marshall Plumlee, Christ School; No. 79 Joseph Uchebo, Word of God

**2012 Top 100 talent:** No. 88 Braxton Ogbueze, United Faith; No. 99 Peter Jurkin, United Faith

**Breakdown:** In addition to talented Westchester teammates Miller and Bello, the GSK features a pair of Duke verbal commitments in Adams (6-9, 255) and Plumlee (7-0, 220). Christ School, United Faith Christian Academy, Westchester Academy and Word of God Christian Academy are all part of North Carolina's independent school basketball movement that is drawing players from all over the globe.

#### **5. Iolani Classic**

*Iolani High School – Honolulu, Hawaii / Dec. 16-21*

**Teams:** [Academy of the Pacific \(Honolulu, Hawaii\)](#), [Dr. Phillips \(Orlando, Fla.\)](#), [Iolani \(Honolulu, Hawaii\)](#), [Kaimuki \(Honolulu, Hawaii\)](#), [Kamehameha \(Honolulu, Hawaii\)](#), [Lexington Catholic \(Lexington, Ky.\)](#), [Mason County \(Maysville, Ky.\)](#), [Mililani \(Mililani, Hawaii\)](#), [Moanalua \(Honolulu, Hawaii\)](#), [Montverde Academy \(Montverde, Fla.\)](#), [Mt. Vernon \(Mt. Vernon, N.Y.\)](#), [Oak Hill Academy \(Mouth of Wilson, Va.\)](#), [Radford \(Honolulu, Hawaii\)](#), [St. Louis \(Honolulu, Hawaii\)](#), Tsinghua (China), [Wheeler \(Marietta, Ga.\)](#)

**2011 Top 100 talent:** No. 12 Quinn Cook, Oak Hill Academy; No. 39 Ben McLemore, Oak Hill Academy; No. 68 Jabarie Hinds, Mount Vernon; No. 71 Shane Larkin, Dr. Phillips; No. 85 Sidiki Johnson, Oak Hill Academy

**2012 Top 100 talent:** No. 37 Jordan Adams, Oak Hill Academy; No. 48 A.J. Hammons,

Oak Hill Academy; No. 62 Charles Mitchell, Wheeler; No. 98 Damien Wilson, Oak Hill Academy

**Breakdown:** Eventual national champion Yates (Houston, Texas) won the event a year ago to bolster its resume and Oak Hill Academy will have a chance to do the same in 2010. Points guards will be a theme with Cook, Hinds and Larkin being three of the best in the country. Montverde Academy sophomore Kasey Hill is another highly-touted floor general.

## 6. Les Schwab Invitational

*Liberty High School – Hillsboro, Ore. / Dec. 27-30*

**Teams:** [Bishop Gorman \(Las Vegas, Nev.\)](#), [Central Catholic \(Portland, Ore.\)](#), [Dayton \(Ore.\)](#), [DeMatha \(Hyattsville, Md.\)](#), [Hillsboro \(Ore.\)](#), [Horizon Christian \(Tualatin, Ore.\)](#), [Jefferson \(Portland, Ore.\)](#), [Jesuit \(Portland, Ore.\)](#), [Lake Oswego \(Ore.\)](#), [Lincoln \(Portland, Ore.\)](#), [McKay \(Salem, Ore.\)](#), [South Salem \(Salem, Ore.\)](#), [St. Raymond Boys \(Bronx, N.Y.\)](#), [Sunset \(Portland, Ore.\)](#), [Westview \(Portland, Ore.\)](#), [Wilsonville \(Wilsonville, Ore.\)](#)

**2011 Top 100 talent:** No. 20 Kyle Wiltjer, Jesuit; No. 84 Mikael Hopkins, DeMatha

**2012 Top 100 talent:** No. 4 Shabazz Muhammad, Bishop Gorman; No. 17 Jordan Tebbutt, Horizon Christian; No. 50 James Robinson, DeMatha; No. 71 Rosco Allen, Bishop Gorman; No. 79 Nkereuwem Okoro, St. Raymond; No. 81 Maika Ostling, Dayton; No. 90 Jerami Grant, DeMatha

**Breakdown:** Bishop Gorman won back-to-back holiday tournaments a year ago and will be looking to do it again with the City of Palms and Les Schwab Invitational. No Oregon team has won the LSI since 2003 when Jesuit pulled it off. Behind Kentucky verbal commitment Wiltjer, the Crusaders have a shot to do it again 2010. It will also be interesting to follow the progress of Dayton and Horizon Christian, a pair of small-school powers that faced off four times a year ago and played for the 3A state title.

## 7. Bass Pro Tournament of Champions

*JQH Arena – Springfield, Mo. / Jan. 13-15, 2011*

**Teams:** [Branson \(Mo.\)](#), [De La Salle \(Chicago, Ill.\)](#), [Douglass \(Oklahoma City, Okla.\)](#), [Greater Atlanta Christian \(Norcross, Ga.\)](#), [La Verne Lutheran \(La Verne, Calif.\)](#), [Nixa \(Mo.\)](#), [Oak Ridge Military \(Oak Ridge, N.C.\)](#), [Parkview \(Springfield, Mo.\)](#)

**2011 Top 100 talent:** No. 34 Michael Shaw, De La Salle; No. 37 Chris Jones, Oak Ridge Military Academy; No. 66 Malcolm Brogdon, Greater Atlanta Christian

**2012 Top 100 talent:** No. 35 Grant Jerrett, La Verne Lutheran

**Breakdown:** Annually high school basketball's top January tournament, defending state champions from California, Georgia and Oklahoma head to Springfield intending to make a national splash.

## 8. Proviso West Holiday Tournament

*Proviso West High School – Hillside, Ill. / Dec. 27 – 30*

**Teams:** [Benet Academy \(Lisle, Ill.\)](#), [Fenwick \(Oak Park, Ill.\)](#), [Foreman \(Chicago, Ill.\)](#), [Glenbrook North \(Northbrook, Ill.\)](#), [Hillcrest \(Country Club Hills, Ill.\)](#), [Hinsdale Central \(Hinsdale, Ill.\)](#), [Homewood-Flossmoor \(Flossmoor, Ill.\)](#), [Morgan Park \(Chicago, Ill.\)](#), [Morton \(Cicero, Ill.\)](#), [New Trier \(Winnetka, Ill.\)](#), [Proviso East \(Maywood, Ill.\)](#), [Proviso](#)

[West \(Hillside, Ill.\)](#), [St. Joseph \(Westchester, Ill.\)](#), [St. Patrick \(Chicago, Ill.\)](#), [Thornton Fractional North \(Calumet City, Ill.\)](#), [Von Steuben \(Chicago, Ill.\)](#)

**2011 Top 100 talent:** No. 15 Wayne Blackshear, Morgan Park

**Breakdown:** Aside from winning a state title, there isn't a much bigger accomplishment in Illinois than winning the Proviso West Holiday Tournament. This year is even bigger as 2010 marks the 50th installment of the prestigious event, which has seen the likes of Isaiah Thomas, Hersey Hawkins, Juwan Howard, Michael Finley, Kevin Garnett and Corey Maggette over the years.

### **9. VisitMesa.com Arizona Basketball Challenge**

*Mountain View High School – Mesa, Ariz. / Dec. 27-30*

**Teams:** [Amphitheater \(Tucson, Ariz.\)](#), [Archbishop Moeller \(Cincinnati, Ohio\)](#), [Brighton \(Salt Lake City, Utah\)](#), [Chandler \(Ariz.\)](#), [Chaparral \(Scottsdale, Ariz.\)](#), [Dobson \(Mesa, Ariz.\)](#), [Estrella Foothills \(Goodyear, Ariz.\)](#), [Horizon \(Scottsdale, Ariz.\)](#), [Mountain Pointe \(Phoenix, Ariz.\)](#), [Mountain View \(Mesa, Ariz.\)](#), [Orange Lutheran \(Orange, Calif.\)](#), [Red Mountain \(Mesa, Ariz.\)](#), [Serra \(Gardena, Calif.\)](#), [St. Mary's \(Phoenix, Ariz.\)](#), [Sunnyslope \(Phoenix, Ariz.\)](#), [Westwind Prep Academy \(Phoenix, Ariz.\)](#)

**2012 Top 100 talent:** No. 86 Gabe York, Orange Lutheran

**Breakdown:** An event on the rise, the ABC features a number of Arizona's top teams with out-of-state challengers from California, Ohio and Utah.

### **10. Burger King Classic**

*Hammermill Center – Erie, Pa. / Jan. 14-15, 2011*

**Teams:** [Cathedral Prep \(Erie, Pa.\)](#), [Penn Wood \(Lansdowne, Pa.\)](#), [St. Edward \(Lakewood, Ohio\)](#)

**2011 Top 100 talent:** No. 44 Aaron Brown, Penn Wood

**Breakdown:** No official announcement has been made on the tradition-rich event's four-team lineup, but Penn Wood – the defending champion – and St. Edward both indicate they will join annual host Cathedral Prep in Erie. Long known as the McDonald's Classic, Burger King has swooped in to take over naming rights for an event that has featured Trevor Ariza, Ron Artest, Samuel Dalembert, Roy Hibbert and Chris Webber over the years.

**Others to watch:** Great Florida Shootout (Kissimmee, Fla.), Hawk Kreul Classic (Coral Springs, Fla.), Rumble on the Ridge (Forrest City, Ark.), Stop DWI Classic (Binghamton, N.Y.), Whataburger Tournament (North Richland Hills, Texas)

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