



## **Participants Announced for 2021 Raymond James HOF Classic**

(New Castle) – With fields including first-time participants, returning power programs and state champion aspirations, another illustrious lineup is set for the 2021 Raymond James Hall of Fame Classic on Wednesday, December 29 and Thursday, December 30 at the New Castle Fieldhouse.

The prestigious event, spotlighting the best in Indiana high school basketball, will be held for the 38<sup>th</sup> time for girls and it will be the 45<sup>th</sup> edition for the boys.

### **2021 Girls' Raymond James Hall of Fame Classic**

New Castle Fieldhouse - Wednesday, December 29, 2021

11:00 a.m. (ET)	Westfield vs. Franklin Community
to follow	Washington vs. South Bend Washington
6:00 p.m.	Consolation Game
to follow	Championship Game

### **2021 Boys' Raymond James Hall of Fame Classic**

New Castle Fieldhouse – Thursday, December 30, 2021

11:00 a.m. (ET)	Westfield vs. Connersville
to follow	Homestead vs. Cathedral
6:00 p.m.	Consolation Game
to follow	Championship Game

Selecting from the best teams in the state, the girls' tournament has included 18 teams that went on to win a state championship that season, including 11 class champions and seven class runner-up teams in just the past 19 years.

On the boys side, 16 participating teams have gone on to win their state championship (including 2021 2A champion Fort Wayne Blackhawk and 1A champion Barr-Reeve) with six more finishing as state runner-up that season.

Tickets for the tournaments will be available through participating schools and the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame in the 2021-22 school year.

## **ABOUT THE TEAMS**

### **Girls:**

**Westfield** – The Lady Rocks expect to carryover success from a 16-5 Hoosier Crossroads Conference championship season that included wins over 4A runner-up Brownsburg, 3A champion Silver Creek and talented Noblesville and Fishers squads.

6’2” Indiana Junior All-Star Alyssa Crockett (University of Michigan) averaged 17.2 points and 7.6 rebounds per game last season. 5’6” Chesney Tebbe averaged 7.9 points and 4.3 rebounds, 5’4” guard Olivia Robey averaged 7.4 points and 6’1” forward Madi Kerrigan figures to be another key member of Westfield’s strong class of seniors-to-be.

Head coach Ginny Smith is 88-52 through six seasons at Westfield. The Smith family will be immersed in the 2021 Classic – while Ginny coaches the Westfield girls in the event on December 29, her son Braden figures to have a leading role for the Westfield boys the following day.

This is the Lady Rocks’ first appearance in the event. With the Westfield boys also participating in the 2021 Boys’ Classic, this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> time in event history that a school has had their girls and boys in the event in the same season (New Castle, 2006).

**Franklin** – Franklin returns significant firepower from their 2021 4A semi-state squad. The Lady Cubs finished with a record of 22-3, winning sectional and regional championships.

Indiana Junior All-Star 5’10” Kuryn Brunson averaged 16.2 points, 5.2 rebounds and 4.7 assists per game. Freshman guard Lauren Klem averaged 11.0 points and fellow freshman Scarlett Kimbrell averaged 11.0 points and 5.5 rebounds per game. Franklin shot spectacularly behind the arc – according to MaxPreps, their 11.9 three-point field goals made per game led the nation in 2020-21.

Head coach Josh Sabol has a 61-58 record in 5 seasons at Franklin.

Franklin makes their 3<sup>rd</sup> appearance in Classic history. They were participants in the 1987 event and runners-up in the 1999 Girls’ Classic.

**Washington** – The Lady Hatchets return a trio of double-digit scorers from their 19-2 sectional championship team that finished the season ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in 3A.

5’11” Indiana Junior All-Star Alaina Thorne averaged 16.0 points, 9.1 rebounds and 3.7 assists, 5’6” junior Kencia Levasseur averaged 15.6 points, 9.2 rebounds and 4.3 assists, while 5’5” guard Jesse Ledgerwood scored 10.3 points per contest as a junior.

Washington has recorded eight straight seasons with 15 or more wins, with sectional championships the past two years. Their 40-6 (.870) record over the past two seasons is 6<sup>th</sup> best in the state in that span.

Head coach Gretchen Miles is 196-91 in 13 seasons leading her alma mater, including 12 winning seasons.

The Lady Hatchets make their 2<sup>nd</sup> appearance in Girls' Classic history – both with Gretchen Miles involved. A sophomore, Miles was named to the All-Classic team in the 1994 event after totaling 32 points and eight assists against eventual state champion Huntington North and #3 Lake Central.

It was one of the best fields in Girls' Classic history, with the four teams each ranked in the state's top 5, combining for 97-11 records that season (4 of those losses in the Classic), all four reaching semi-states in the one-class format and HOF Classic consolation game winner Huntington North claiming the state title. Joining Miles on that year's All-Classic team were eventual Miss Basketballs Lisa Winter (1996) and Kelly Komara (1998) and Indiana All-Stars Kristina Divjak and Sarah Hurrle.

**South Bend Washington** – Following a 22-win season that ended with a state finals appearance at Bankers Life Fieldhouse, the Lady Panthers don't expect to slow down for 2021-22. Washington will return 87% of their scoring from last season with a talented addition to their roster this coming season.

The Lady Panthers are led by 2022 Miss Basketball candidate Mila Reynolds (University of Maryland). The 6'2" Indiana Junior All-Star averaged 19.0 points and 8.9 rebounds this past season. Guard Rashunda Jones averaged 17.4 points and 4.3 steals as a sophomore and 6'0" sophomore Amiyah Reynolds filled stat sheets with 9.8 points, 7.3 rebounds and 6.7 assists per game, tallying a state-best 188 assists last season. An addition to the squad will be 6'3" freshman-to-be Kira Reynolds, ranked among the nation's best players in the Class of 2025.

South Bend Washington is 41-14 over the last 2 years, which includes their 2021 3A state runner-up finish. Sustaining the program's long-term success, the Panthers have won 70% of their games over the past 19 seasons.

Head coach Steve Reynolds has led the program to 92 wins in seven seasons. In addition to his three oldest daughters starring on the 2021-22 Panthers roster, his wife Marcy is an assistant coach.

South Bend Washington makes their 2<sup>nd</sup> appearance in event history. Their 28-1 state championship team won the 2006 Classic, led by Classic MVP and future Miss Basketball Skylar Diggins. Karis Phillips, a current assistant coach with South Bend Washington, was a member of that 2006 HOF Classic championship squad.

## **Boys:**

**Westfield** – The Rocks are coming off an 18-5 season with a sectional championship game appearance against eventual 4A champion Carmel. Westfield also shared the Hoosier Crossroads Conference championship for the first time in school history.

6'0" Indiana Junior All-Star guard Braden Smith (Purdue University) was a statistical leader last season averaging 22.0 points, 5.4 rebounds, 6.2 assists and 2.7 steals per contest. Guard Nic Depasquale is a returning starter after averaging 8.0 points as a junior.

The Rocks' 35-12 record over the past two seasons is the best two-year span in the over 100-year history of Westfield boys basketball and marks just the 8<sup>th</sup> time in program history that they have recorded back-to-back winning seasons.

Head Coach Shane Sumpter is now 74-65 in six seasons leading the Westfield boys program. That follows a highly successful seven-year span as the Westfield girls head coach that included a 121-37 record with two sectional championships. In all, including one season leading the Anderson girls program, Sumpter is 210-112 with three sectional titles in 14 seasons as an Indiana high school basketball head coach.

Westfield will be making their first appearance in classic history. With the Westfield girls also participating in the 2021 Girls' Classic, this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> time in event history that a school has had their girls and boys in the event in the same season (New Castle, 2006).

**Connersville** – The Spartans return nine lettermen from their 18-8 squad that was undefeated champion of the Eastern Indiana Athletic Conference and played eventual 3A champion Silver Creek to the buzzer in their 3A regional championship game.

With a well-balanced team, 5'11" senior-to-be Tobey Billups averaged team-bests of 8.8 points and 5.1 assists per game. His 6'3" classmate Kaleb Sparks averaged 6.6 points and 3.3 rebounds as a junior and 6'6" senior-to-be Gage Brown is another returning starter.

The Spartans' 117 wins over the past six seasons are 15<sup>th</sup> best in Indiana high school boys basketball in that timeframe. Annually among the state's top defensive teams under Kerry Brown, Connersville allowed 37.6 points per game last season, the lowest among all IHSAA state-tournament eligible teams. The Spartans held eventual 3A champion Silver Creek (30) and eventual 4A runner-up Lawrence North (40) to their lowest point totals of this past season.

Head coach Kerry Brown is 192-109 in 12 seasons leading Connersville and has 274 wins and six sectional championships in his 20 seasons at Rushville, South Dearborn and Connersville.

The Spartans make their 2<sup>nd</sup> appearance in Boys Classic history, following their participation in the 1987 event hosted at Richmond. The Connersville girls won the 1995 event at New Castle, led by HOF Classic MVP freshman April McDivitt, defeating Katie Douglas and #2 Perry Meridian.

**Homestead** – The Spartans maintain high expectations coming off a sparkling season. Homestead was the only team with an undefeated regular season in 2020-21 and finished the year ranked #1 in state polls, finishing as 25-1 sectional and Summit Athletic Conference champions.

6'4" Junior All-Star guard Fletcher Loyer (Purdue University) figures heavily into the Homestead attack, averaging 24.4 points, 4.9 rebounds, 4.5 assists and 2.1 steals per game last season. 6'6" Andrew Leeper is another returning starter, who averaged 7.6 points and 5.3 rebounds as a junior.

Over the past 10 seasons, Homestead's 214-51 (.808) record represents the 4<sup>th</sup> highest winning percentage and 5<sup>th</sup> most wins in the state in that timeframe with the Spartans capturing seven sectional titles, two regional championships and the 2015 4A state championship in that span.

Head coach Chris Johnson has a 372-152 record in 22 seasons at Homestead and 452 wins in his 27-year career at Homestead and Fort Wayne Dwenger. He ranks 13<sup>th</sup> in career victories among active Indiana boys high school basketball coaches and his .708 career winning percentage is 4<sup>th</sup> best in the state among active coaches with 25 or more seasons.

Homestead makes their 1<sup>st</sup> appearance in the Boys Classic. The Homestead girls have made two appearances in the Girls Classic, taking runner-up in the 2013 and 2018 events.

**Cathedral** – The Fighting Irish return five of their top seven players from a 18-3 squad that were the Indianapolis City Champions and ranked #4 in the final IBCA coaches poll of the season.

6'1" Indiana Junior All-Star guard Tayshawn Comer averaged 15.0 points and 6.0 assists, 6'6" junior guard Jaxon Edwards averaged 10.7 points and 5.6 rebounds, while 6'5" sophomore guard Jake Davis averaged 9.0 points and 4.6 assists and led the state of Indiana in charges taken. 6'3" sophomore guard Jaron Tibbs averaged 5.4 points. The emergence of 6'11" junior-to-be wing Xavier Booker rounds out the five Cathedral players named Top 100 in the state of Indiana.

Head coach Jason Delaney is 88-29 in five seasons at Cathedral with four Indianapolis City Championships during that time. Delaney has a 266-134 record in 17 seasons overall with a 2004 Class 1A State Championship at Waldron and a 2014 Class 4A State Championship at Arsenal Tech High School.

Cathedral makes their 4<sup>th</sup> appearance in Boys Classic history. The Irish won the 1982 and 2006 events and were runners-up in 2012. They become the 5<sup>th</sup> program to have made four or more appearances in Boys Classic history (Bloomington South, New Castle, Lawrence North and New Albany).

### **History:**

26 young women who went on to win the award have participated in the Girls Classic, including 11 of the past 13 Miss Basketball winners (Skylar Diggins, Courtney Moses, Bria Goss, Jessica Rupright, Stephanie Mavunga, Whitney Jennings, Ali Patberg, Jackie Young, Karissa McLaughlin, Amy Dilk and Jorie Allen). 12 women to have played in the Classic were named McDonald's All-Americans and 12 Girls Classic alums have played in the WNBA.

Girls legends who have played in the Classic include Stephanie White, Katie Gearlds, Shanna Zolman, Skylar Diggins, Jackie Young, Kristen Spolyar, Lisa Shepherd, Abby Conklin, April McDivitt, Kelly Faris, Jennifer Jacoby, Jodie Whitaker, Shrya Ely, Tiffany Gooden and Ali Patberg, among others.

32 men who went on to win the Indiana Mr. Basketball award have participated in the Boys Classic, including 13 of the last 17 award winners (Luke Zeller, Greg Oden, Tyler Zeller, Jordan Hulls, Cody Zeller, Gary Harris, Zak Irvin, Trey Lyles, Kyle Guy, Romeo Langford, Trayce Jackson-Davis, Anthony Leal and Caleb Furst). 26 men to have played in the Classic have been named McDonald's All-Americans, while 19 have been NBA Draft picks.

Legends to have competed in the Boys Classic include Damon Bailey, Steve Alford, Glenn Robinson, Shawn Kemp, Greg Oden, Mike Conley, Zach Randolph, Eric Montross, Sean May, Delray Brooks, Tom Coverdale, Troy Lewis, Woody Austin, Josh McRoberts, Gary Harris, Luke, Tyler and Cody Zeller, Trey Lyles, Kyle Guy and Romeo Langford among others.

Including entrants in the 2021 Classic, the event has included 95 different IHSAA-member girls programs and 108 different IHSAA-member boys programs in tournament history.

### **Sponsors:**

2021 is the 5<sup>th</sup> year under the event title "Raymond James Hall of Fame Classic"

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Additional event sponsors and partners include adidas, Henry Community Health and Jostens.

**Broadcast / video streaming coverage:**

Broadcast and video streaming coverage of the two-day event will be announced at a later date.

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