



Jacksonville Scores Historic Victory by Landing FHSA Basketball Championships
Jacksonville Sports Foundation announces new sporting events and partnerships to drive sports tourism

Jacksonville, Fla. — September 17, 2025 — The [Jacksonville Sports Foundation](#) (JSF), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to positioning Jacksonville as Florida's Championship City, today announced a series of historic and high-profile sports developments at a press conference at VyStar Veterans Memorial Arena in the Downtown Sports & Entertainment District.

For the first time, Jacksonville will host the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSA) Boys & Girls State Basketball Championships, relocating the event after more than 30 years. The three-year agreement secures the tournament at the University of North Florida on CSI Companies Court, with the welcome for players and families at Florida State College of Jacksonville. Rural Classification championships will be February 24-27, 2026. Championships for Classifications 1A through 7A will be March 5-14, 2026.

"This is another big win for Jacksonville," said Mayor Donna Deegan. "These championships will be played in our city for the first time ever, a milestone that will continue elevating our sports reputation and have a tremendous economic impact on our community. I'm grateful for all our partners that work together to bring exciting sports events like this one to Jacksonville."

"Every year, Florida's top high school basketball players begin their season with the same goal: to earn the right to represent their community at the state championships. From today onward, every victory will take those teams one step closer to Jacksonville," said Craig Damon, Executive Director of the FHSA. "We're excited to partner with JSF to deliver a winning experience for our athletes, their families and basketball fans from across the state."

Additional highlights of the press event included:

- **NCAA Men's Basketball Rivals Coming to Jacksonville:** The University of Florida, reigning NCAA men's basketball champions, will play the University of Miami men's basketball team in the [Jacksonville Hoops Showdown](#) on November 16, 2025 at VyStar Veterans Memorial Arena.
- **JSF Partners and [Board Members](#):** JSF leadership publicly introduced the organization's growing network of supporters, including some of



Jacksonville's biggest companies and most prominent civic, corporate and sports leaders.

- Professional Sports Presence: Several of Jacksonville's eight professional sports teams were represented at the press conference, showcasing the depth of the city's growing athletic community and support behind the Jacksonville Sports Foundation.
- Community Spirit: The celebration featured an energetic performance from the Sandalwood High School Band and Baldwin Middle-Senior High School Cheerleaders, along with local mascots to hype up the crowd.

The press conference highlighted the collaboration between Visit Jacksonville, the City of Jacksonville and the Duval County Tourist Development Council (TDC) working together with JSF to leverage sports as a driver of economic development and civic pride.

"Bringing the FHSAA Basketball Championships to Jacksonville is another great example of how this city is ready to compete in sports tourism," said Michael Corrigan, Board President of the Jacksonville Sports Foundation and President and CEO of Visit Jacksonville. "With the City of Jacksonville, TDC, Visit Jacksonville and community leaders working together, the Jacksonville Sports Foundation is building momentum that benefits residents, visitors and our economy."

"This is a proud day for Jacksonville. Securing Basketball Championships isn't just about the games — it's about showcasing our city, uniting our community and creating opportunities for the next generation of athletes and fans," said Samantha Vance, JSF's Executive Director. "We're building a lasting legacy here, and I'm grateful to everyone who has leaned in to make this possible."

Since its formation in 2024, JSF has generated momentum by attracting several high-profile sporting events, securing the relocation of the Atlantic Sun (ASUN) Conference headquarters to Jacksonville and building a strong base of partners and sponsors including ASM Global, local Fortune 500 companies, leading corporations, sports franchises and higher education institutions.

Individual and corporate partnerships are critical to sustaining and expanding this growth. Community members can get involved as sponsors, volunteers and supporters to help shape Jacksonville's rise as Florida's Championship City.

To keep up with JSF's future announcements, visit jacksonvillesports.org and join the email newsletter.



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About Jacksonville Sports Foundation

The Jacksonville Sports Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to making Jacksonville Florida's premier sports destination, enhancing the city's economic prosperity and strengthening community unity through sports tourism, events, and partnerships.