



INDIANA STATE FAIR

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Basketball is the theme of the 2020 Indiana State Fair *Fairgoers Are Invited to Celebrate the State that Grew the Game*

March 10, 2020, INDIANAPOLIS, IN – The Great Indiana State Fair, taking place August 7-23, announces that its 2020 theme BASKETBALL presented by Pacers Sports & Entertainment will be dedicated to all things related to the sport, with an homage to Indiana’s rich basketball legacy. The theme will be activated through multiple interactive experiences, including All-Star Court (a Basketball Amusement Park), the Pacers Sports & Entertainment Court, daily storytelling moments – 17 of Indiana’s greatest basketball stories told through the 17 days of the Fair, team player meet & greets, and so much more.

“The Indiana State Fair is an annual celebration of agriculture, entertainment, and what it means to be a Hoosier,” Governor Eric J. Holcomb said. “Perhaps the only other Hoosier tradition that brings together as many fans, as much nostalgia, and that sense of hometown pride is the love of basketball that’s swept our state for more than a century, which makes it the perfect theme for this year’s fair.”

“Indiana has a rich basketball heritage, so we are thrilled to offer a theme that will bring this sport to life,” said Cindy Hoyer, executive director, Indiana State Fairgrounds & Event Center. “The Indiana State Fair is the greatest showcase of agriculture and entertainment and I can’t tell you how excited we are to share the history of basketball, along with many exhibits and installations that tell the story of how our how great state grew the game.”

“For our theme of ‘We Grow Basketball Here’ to be associated with our great Indiana State Fair could not be more perfect,” said Rick Fuson, president and COO of Pacers Sports & Entertainment. “As the original home of the Indiana Pacers during the time when they won three American Basketball Association championships, the Coliseum and the Fairgrounds are forever linked to our heritage. We are delighted that this partnership can remind our fellow Hoosiers of the legend and lore of the great Hoosier game.”

The history of basketball in Indiana is tied directly to agriculture. During the late 1800s, football was gaining popularity across the nation; however, in Indiana, schools were not consolidated and were mostly small, rural school communities with too few students to have a football team. Most could host a basketball team. The game was affordable, and the playing season was based on the farmers’ planting and harvest season. After each harvest, farm kids could play basketball, and then when the season ended in March, they could go back to the fields for planting. Thus, the tradition of “Friday Night High School Basketball” became rooted in Indiana.

Other significant historical basketball highlights include:

- Butler University’s legendary coach Tony Hinkle introduced the orange basketball in the 1950s – in search of a ball that was more visible to players and spectators.
- The Pacers got their name from the Indianapolis 500-Mile Race pace car and the pacing of Standardbred Harness Racing at the State Fairgrounds.



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- Basketball has a rich history at the Fairgrounds where our iconic Indiana Farmers Coliseum has played host to high school championships, the ABA Pacers, All-Star Games and more.
- The Indiana State Fairgrounds first opened in 1892 – the same year basketball was introduced in Indiana – two great Hoosier traditions that have stood the test of time.

Stay tuned for more exciting announcements, including the BetIndiana Free Stage concert line up, all leading up to opening day on Friday, August 7th, when you can enjoy The Greatest 17 Days of Summer at the 164th Indiana State Fair. For more information, view our BASKETBALL-themed video announcement here: For more information, view our BASKETBALL-themed video announcement here: <https://youtu.be/K4ICTpkiaew>, visit www.indianastatefair.com or follow the Indiana State Fair on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. The 2020 Indiana State Fair hashtag is #yearofbasketball.

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About the Indiana State Fair

The Indiana State Fair is the state's largest multi-day event celebrating Hoosiers' spirit and agricultural heritage. These 17 days celebrate Indiana agriculture and promote it to hundreds of thousands of people across Indiana, and beyond. Nationally recognized for offering great entertainment, showcasing 4-H youth, interactive agriculture education programs, premier facilities and a variety of unique, fun foods, the Indiana State Fair has been an annual attraction for generations of Hoosiers since 1852. The 2020 Indiana State Fair will be held August 7-23. For more information, visit www.indianastatefair.com.

About Pacers Sports Entertainment

Pacers Sports & Entertainment is the corporate identity exemplified by the Indiana Pacers, Indiana Fever, Fort Wayne Mad Ants, Pacers Gaming, Bankers Life Fieldhouse and Pacers Foundation Inc. Its team of inspired and dedicated employees promises to deliver quality entertainment and unparalleled service.

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