

New Orleans Receives Bid to Host NCAA Men's Basketball Final Four in 2012

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Tulane University will be the host school, and New Orleans will be the host city, for the NCAA Men's Basketball Final Four in 2012, the NCAA announced today. Ten hopefuls were vying for the championship game in years 2012-2016.

Mike Slive, commissioner of the Southeastern Conference and chair of the NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Committee, will hold a 30-minute national teleconference at 12 p.m. CST. In addition, New Orleans area media can call in with city-specific questions for Slive at 12:45 CST. To participate in these teleconferences, dial 1-800-993-8735 and enter the pass code 9480387. Audio files of the teleconferences will be made available at www.ncaa.com on Wednesday afternoon.

Tulane will hold a press conference at 4 pm today in the Hall of Fame room of the James W. Wilson Center on Tulane's uptown campus. The event will be streamed live on tulanegreenwave.com.

"We are elated with the decision. This is such an important milestone, as sports continue to be an integral aspect in the resurgence of this great city," said Rick Dickson, Tulane Athletic Director and leader of the Local Organizing Committee (LOC). "I am very proud of our LOC and the tireless efforts they put forth to attain this outcome. They are to be saluted. This was a true team effort and this LOC was unique in that for the first time the Sugar Bowl and the New Orleans Saints joined us. I also want to thank the NCAA men's basketball committee and NCAA staff who recognized these efforts not only on the part of our LOC but also on the community," said Dickson.

In addition to Dickson, the LOC included former Tulane Board chair John Koerner, Chairman; Tulane President Scott Cowen, Honorary Chairman, and members Jay Cicero, GNO Sports Foundation; Doug Thornton, SMG; Paul Hoolahan, Sugar Bowl;

Stephen Perry, Convention & Visitors Bureau; Courtney Bagneris, City of New Orleans; Bob Johnson, Morial Convention Center; and Mickey Loomis, New Orleans Saints. Also, Saints owner and executive vice president Rita Benson LeBlanc, with Saints vice president of marketing Ben Hales, actively participated in the bid process.

In October, NCAA officials did a site check of the potential host cities. A four-man team visited New Orleans and reviewed the Superdome, Convention Center, local hotels and venues for ancillary events and visited with the LOC about local transportation options, the city's financial commitment and vision for the event. Last week, Dickson led a New Orleans team to Indianapolis to do a presentation to the full selection committee.