



For Immediate Release

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Contact: Dawn Miller

Manager of Marketing, Communications & Special Events

(804) 501-5137, office; (804) 912-0564, mobile; dawn@henricosea.com

**Henrico Announces New “DIII Champions Classic” Featuring Past NCAA
Division III Men’s Basketball National Champions**

Henrico, Va. — Henrico announced today the launch of the DIII Champions Classic, a first-of-its-kind regular season showcase bringing together former NCAA Division III Men’s Basketball National Champions for two days of elite competition. The inaugural event will take place December 28–29, 2026, at the Henrico Sports & Events Center.

The 2026 field features four programs with deep championship pedigrees and a collective 98 NCAA Tournament appearances, 35 Sweet 16 runs, 12 Final Four berths, and five national titles:

- Randolph-Macon College (Ashland, Va.) – 2022 National Champion
- Christopher Newport University (Newport News, Va.) – 2023 National Champion
- Babson College (Wellesley, Mass.) – 2017 National Champion
- University of Scranton (Scranton, Pa.) – 1976 & 1983 National Champions

Designed to become the premier in-season national event in Division III men’s basketball, the DIII Champions Classic will bring top programs from across the country together for high-caliber matchups ahead of the championship push in March.

“The DIII Champions Classic was created to raise the bar for regular-season competition in Division III men’s basketball,” said Dennis Bickmeier, Executive Director of the Henrico Sports & Entertainment Authority. “By bringing together former national champions in one place, we’re providing an environment that challenges teams early and gives student-athletes a true championship-caliber experience ahead of the championship push in March.”

“This event represents everything we value about Division III basketball—great programs, great coaching, and meaningful competition,” said Randolph-Macon head coach Josh Merkel. “Playing fellow national champions in a setting like the Henrico Sports & Events Center is exactly the type of opportunity that elevates our program and the student-athlete experience.”

“What makes this event special is not just the competition, but the opportunity to engage with other coaches and players that share a championship standard,” said Babson head coach Stephen Brennan. “The DIII Champions Classic creates space for growth, connection, and high-level basketball both on and off the court.”

“This is a first-class field with historic basketball programs in a first-class facility. We are honored to participate,” said Christopher Newport head coach John Krikorian. “Events like this give our student-athletes a chance to compete against elite opponents on a national stage. This unique event provides an outstanding setting for that experience.”

“The DIII Champions Classic is a great opportunity to showcase the quality and history of Division III basketball,” said University of Scranton head coach Carl Danzig. “We appreciate Henrico Sports & Entertainment for creating an event that brings national attention to programs and student-athletes who excel at every level.”

The Henrico Sports & Events Center, which opened in 2023, continues to grow its slate of high-impact sports programming, attracting teams, fans, and major events from across the nation.

Additional event details, including game times, ticket information, and media credentialing, will be announced in 2026.

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About the Henrico Sports & Entertainment Authority

The Henrico Sports & Entertainment Authority leads Henrico County’s sports tourism initiatives and facility development, helping to position the region as a premier destination for athletic events and entertainment. Sports visitation generates more than \$100 million in annual economic impact, supporting local businesses, strengthening community connections, and enhancing quality of life for residents and visitors alike.