

2008-09 Men's Basketball Tournament Central

The 2009 Big Ten Men's Basketball Tournament returns to Indianapolis and Conseco Fieldhouse for the second of a five-year commitment. This year's tournament will tip off on Thursday, March 12 and the champion will be lauded on Sunday, March 15. The women's event will be held at Conseco Fieldhouse March 5-8.

All 11 teams participate in the men's tournament with the winner receiving the conference's automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament. The team that finishes atop the regular season standings is the Big Ten champion. The bracket will be seeded according to the final regular-season standings with the conference champion earning the top seed and the top five finishers receiving first-round byes.

The Big Ten Men's Basketball Tournament has made its mark both nationally and locally in its first 11 years of existence. Sell-out crowds, exciting and competitive games, national television coverage and throngs of media have been featured in past conference tournaments. It is a highlight reel of college basketball that showcases the finest coaches and student-athletes in the nation. The strength and depth of the conference have also been displayed, as the tournament final has featured teams seeded 11th, 10th, 9th and 6th, while the No. 4 seed has advanced to the championship game on three occasions.

After welcoming 969,038 patrons in its first decade, the Big Ten Men's Basketball Tournament broke the one-million mark in total attendance with a sellout crowd of 18,691 during the Friday night session at Conseco Fieldhouse in 2008. Through five sessions, the Big Ten welcomed 80,012 fans to boost the all-time tournament attendance to 1,049,050.

Since the inception, the Big Ten Men's Basketball Tournament has seen five different conference representatives crowned Tournament champions, with Michigan State (1999, 2000), Illinois (2003, 2005), Iowa (2001, 2006) and Wisconsin (2004, 2008) claiming the honor twice along with Ohio State (2007) capturing one. In addition, every tournament game in the past 10 years has been televised live on CBS Sports, ESPN, ESPN2, ESPN Plus or the Big Ten Network and will continue in 2009.

Join us in Indianapolis for a celebration of Big Ten Basketball!