

Roxana Hoopsgiving Basketball Tournament Set For Nov. 21-26, Great Mix Of Local And Regional Teams To Play, Tournament Still Seeks Sponsors

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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ROXANA - The second annual Roxana Hoopsgiving basketball tournament is set to go for the week of Nov. 21-26 at both Larry Milazzo Memorial Gym and the Roxana Junior High gym, and it promises to be a week full of great basketball to start the 2022-23 season.

A good mix of teams from the local area and the region are involved in this year's tournament, and the addition of two teams - one from the Riverbender.com area and another from the Cahokia Conference Mississippi Division - promises to add to the excitement and quality of the tournament.

"We've added one local team and a conference team. Civic Memorial and Freeburg are joining this year," said Roxana head coach and athletic director Mark Briggs. "We have two of the better programs in the south. Carbondale and Centralia, are back. I think it's got good balance. Carbondale, Centralia, Gateway Legacy (of Florissant, Mo.) are back; Gateway got beat by Centralia in the final. It's a great tournament for the local community and brings in a lot of people in the local community."

The group stage takes place Nov. 21-23, with the opening games being Civic Memorial against Centralia at Milazzo Gym and Piasa Southwestern meeting Gateway Legacy in the junior high gym at 6 p.m. In the nightcaps at 7:30 p.m., It'll be Maryville Christian against Carbondale at Milazzo and Jersey against White Hall North Greene in the junior high gym.

The second day of the group stage on Nov. 22 pits the Piasa Birds going against East Alton-Wood River at Milazzo and Freeburg meeting the Lions in the junior high gym at 6 p.m., followed by Centralia against Roxana at Milazzo and White Hall North Greene against Marquette Catholic in the junior high gym at 7:30 p.m.

On the third and final day of the group stage, it'll be the Explorers meeting the Panthers at Milazzo and Carbondale against Freeburg in the junior high gym at 6 p.m., followed by 7:30 p.m. games, with the Shells meeting the Eagles at Milazzo and Gateway playing the Oilers in the junior high gym.

After a day off for Thanksgiving, the tournament resumes on Nov. 25, with the third place teams in each group playing for ninth through 12th place. The Group A third place finisher plays the Group D third place finisher at 3 p.m., and the Group B third place team meets the Group C third place team at 4:30 p.m. The 11th place game takes place Nov. 26 at 11 a.m. in the junior high gym, while the ninth place game tips off at 1:30 p.m.

The fifth through eighth place bracket involves the second place finishers in each group, with Group A playing Group D at Milazzo on Nov. 25 at 3 p.m. and Group B takes on Group C at 4:30 p.m., also at Milazzo. The seventh place game will be played Nov. 26 at 3 p.m in the junior high gym, while the fifth place game tips off at 1:30 p.m. at Milazzo.

The group stage winners will play for first through fourth places, with Group A winner taking on the Group D winner Nov. 25 at 6 p.m. and the Group B winner meeting the Group C winner at 7:30 p.m. at Milazzo. The third place game is set for Nov. 26 at 3:30 p.m. and the final will be played at 6 p.m. Nov. 26, again at Milazzo.

A junior varsity tournament will be played at the same time, with games being played at Milazzo, the junior high gym, and the high school auxiliary gym, tip-off times being 4:30 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Briggs feels that the tournament is a chance for fans to see the good things that's happening at Roxana High and is looking ahead to the tournament.

"It's going to bring people into our house and to see the great things going inside," Briggs said. "It's a great way to get the season started."

The tournament also enjoys popular support from its sponsors, but Briggs is still looking for more sponsors to help out with the tournament.

"The big thing for us is, outside the monetary donations, is that we're looking for local restaurants to sponsor our hospitality room," Briggs said. "We've had a good response so far and we're blessed to have the support from the area for our student-athletes. We've had a very successful fall with our football team and we hope it carries over to the winter seasons."

Potential sponsors can donate at three different levels.

For more information on sponsorships, please E-mail Briggs at mark.briggs@rcusd.org