



FBC National team to Watch

**By Glenn Nelson HoopGurlz
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SUWANEE, Ga. - One of the tragedies of the select-basketball system is the division of its teams along sneaker affiliations. The top programs from adidas and Nike, in particular, essentially are contractually prohibited from ever facing each other. Which is frustrating, as the foundation of American sports culture is a compulsion to know who is the best of the best. By [Glenn Nelson](#) HoopGurlz Publisher Posted Jul 15, 2006

We'd love, for example, to see a matchup between, say, FBC Blue (adidas) and Cal Swish Black (Nike) - two teams bursting at the seams with major Division I prospects. Though the two hail from Southern California and often play in the same geographical region of the U.S., they may as well be in difference universes.

In this universe, the adidas Tournament of Champions, FBC Blue already is the Deep South Classic champion and is as impressive a team as there is on the adidas circuit. Ray Mayes, who is national director of the FBC program (its Georgia team was a semifinalist in this tournament), has assembled a virtual who's who of top SoCal prospects. His team has size, athleticism, speed (the mph kind), Speed (as in Nikki), creativity and is playing Saturday for the tournament title against surprising Rock Solid from Pennsylvania.

The team's top two 2007 prospects are [Lenita Sanford](#), a 6-foot-3 forward out of Lynnwood High School, and [Nina Earl](#), a 6-1 forward and UCLA commit out of Diamond Ranch. Sanford is long, athletic, cleans up on the offensive board, is disruptive in the paint on defense, and has a bevy of West Coast schools tracking her every move here. Earl mixes it up inside, attacks from the wings and is impressive for her ability to keep even smaller players in front of her on defense.

If you're a college coach, you like FBC Blue mostly for its coming attractions. The team's best player arguably is [Jasmine Dixon](#), a 6-1 2008 wing out of Long Beach Poly. Dixon makes her living on electrifying forays to the rim. She is quick and shifty enough to beat almost any combination of defenders off the dribble and jumps well enough and is strong enough to finish. Her weakness is her stroke, which also fails her at the foul line, but her strengths overwhelms any shortcomings.

Another 2008 prospect, [Nikki Speed](#) of Pasadena, Calif., not only is one of the top two point guards in this tournament, along with [Shay Selby](#) of Geneva, Ohio, she and Selby arguably are the two best lead guards in their class. Speed not only lives up to her name by playing at a rapid pace, she is an excellent shooter, off the dribble and catches, sees the floor well and will harass op-



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posing ballhandlers on defense.

From the 2009 class, [Cierra Windham](#), from Norco High, is having a breakout week. She is 6-3, moves extremely well and has an impressive work ethic to match her skillset.

Outside of Speed, FBC Blue lacks light's out shooters, at least in its main rotation, to array around its bigs. This of course is a Cal Swish strength, along with the coaching of the incomparable Russ Davis. It would be an intriguing matchup.

Nike vs. adidas. Adidas vs. Nike. FBC vs. Cal Swish. For now, it's the stuff of water-cooler debates and, of course, the sneaker section of your local sporting goods store.