



# Deep South Preview

**By Glen Nelson, Hoop Gurlz Publisher**  
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**Jasmine Dixon**

Several of the nation's top players and teams will be represented in the Raleigh-Durham, N.C., area during the first evaluation period of 2007.

In adidas circles, there are two major tournaments - the Deep South Classic in April and the Showtime National Championships in July. Last year, Finest Basketball Club (FBC) California won both.

This year may not be too different a story.

"We're better," said Ray Mayes, the FBC director and coach. "We're bigger and longer.

And we still have [Jasmine Dixon](#) and [Nikki Speed](#).

With apologies to the eight that went to major Division I colleges off last year's team, Dixon and Speed, who led Long Beach Poly and Marlborough to California state titles last month, made FBC's world

go round. Among the fastest, most athletic players in the country, Dixon is 6-foot-1 and ranked No. 4 by HoopGurlz.com in the 2008 class and Speed is 5-9 and ranks No. 13 nationally.

Yet even Mayes is not willing to claim the mantle so early. Seven of the top 24 players in the country will be at the Deep South Classic in the Raleigh-Durham, N.C., area this weekend. In addition to Dixon and Speed, those include No. 8 [Glory Johnson](#) of the Webb School in Knoxville, Tenn.; No. 11 [Shay Selby](#) of Regina High

School in Cleveland, Ohio; No. 15 [Amber Gray](#) of Lakota West in Westchester, Ohio; No. 19 [Samantha Prahalis](#) of Commack (N.Y.), and No. 24 [Sarah Boothe](#) of Warren Township in Gurnee, Ill.

And that doesn't include the many players who likely will rise to be ranked among the nation's elite.



There will be some 250 teams in nine divisions, topped by the 17 Sponsored. That division starts Friday with a bang, pitting FBC against the D.C. area's Team Unique and Chasity Clayton at 8 p.m.



Among the intriguing, potential second - round matchups on Saturday are the Ohio Legends with Alesia Howard against the Cy-Fair Houstonians with [Adaora Elonu](#) and Jasmine Blakemore, Exodus NYC with Prhalis and Alexa Roche against Full Package with Boothe and [Ashley Wilson](#), and Cincinnati's Finest with Gray and Tierra Stephen against Tennessee Team Pride with Brown and [Kamiko Williams](#). summer.

The 17 Sponsored championship will be played on Sunday, 3 p.m. at the Dean Smith Center at the University of North Carolina.

Traditional circuit powers such as Atlanta Celtics, Chicago Hoops Express and Georgia Hoopstars are expected to field strong teams in the younger divisions.



**Glory Johnson (right) celebrates a state title**