

Players Era, MGM Resorts International and ESPN Announce Brackets and Tournament Arena Locations for 2026 Players Era Men's Championships

Players Era 8 to take place November 17-19 at Michelob ULTRA Arena in Las Vegas and

Players Era 16 will be played Thanksgiving Week, November 24-28,

at T-Mobile Arena in Las Vegas and Michelob ULTRA Arena

ESPN networks will be the exclusive home of all 37 games across the two tournaments

NEW YORK / LAS VEGAS (MAY 21, 2026)— Players Era, an EverWonder Studio company, MGM Resorts International, and ESPN today announced the brackets for the 2026 Players Era Men's Championships, with the Players Era 8 taking place Tuesday-Thursday, November 17-19, at Michelob ULTRA Arena at Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino in Las Vegas, and the Players Era 16 Championship set for Tuesday-Saturday, November 24-28, at T-Mobile Arena in Las Vegas and Michelob ULTRA Arena.

The Players Era 16 will culminate with a stand-alone championship game played Saturday, Nov. 28 at Michelob ULTRA Arena. All 37 games across the two tournaments will be broadcast on the ESPN family of networks as part of a new multi-year broadcast agreement between Players Era and ESPN.

"With an even bigger field that features four of the last five national championship winning programs, we're thrilled to be bringing the Players Era Men's Championships back to MGM Resorts in Las Vegas, who has been a phenomenal partner and a key part of what makes Players Era events such a first-class experience for players, coaches and fans," said **Players Era CEO Seth Berger**. "With the strongest field outside of March, Players Era has consistently delivered an unmatched test to the top programs in the country and this year's showcase is going to be another powerhouse event. Our continued partnership with MGM Resorts and their world-famous arenas, and new agreement with ESPN, the number one college basketball network in the world, is going to take this year's events to another level once again and we can't wait for the games to tip off in November."

Dan Bernbach, MGM Resorts' Senior Vice President of Content Development said, "Players Era has established itself as one of the most prestigious and exclusive college basketball events in the country. Las Vegas is the ideal destination in which to showcase the nation's top college basketball programs. We look forward to hosting Players Era once again and providing the student-athletes, their families and college hoops fans nationwide with another memorable Las Vegas experience."

The Players Era Men's Championships are set to deliver yet another early-season showcase featuring returning marquee national championship contenders, new powerhouse programs, and teams from seven different premier conferences.

Michigan's dominant performance to win the 2025 Players Era Men's Championship put the country on notice and paid off with a national title. This came on the heels of the inaugural event in 2024 that featured half of the teams that advanced to the Elite Eight and Final Four later that season, including national runner-up Houston.

The 2026 edition is again shaping up to be the biggest test of the season and set the stage for what's to come, including 13 teams that made the 2026 NCAA Tournament. In addition to the last two national champions Florida, ranked No. 1 in [ESPN.com's 2026-27 Way Too Early Top 25 Rankings](#), and Michigan (No. 3), the fields include Alabama (No. 8), Tennessee (No. 11), Houston (No. 12), Louisville (No. 15), Iowa State (No. 18), St. John's (No. 19), Miami (No. 21), Gonzaga (No. 24), Kansas, TCU and Texas Tech. Overall, the 2026 field accounts for 27 unique NCAA Tournament appearances over the past two years and the field is a combined 55-25 (.685) in the NCAA Tournament over that span.

The Players Era 8 will tip off Tuesday, Nov. 17, at Michelob ULTRA Arena and feature four opening round matchups in an eight-team bracket tournament format with Houston facing Rutgers, Florida playing Notre Dame, West Virginia taking on Auburn and Kansas playing UNLV.

On Wednesday, there will be a pair of semifinal matchups as the winner of Houston vs. Rutgers will face the winner of Florida vs. Notre Dame, and the winner of West Virginia vs. Auburn will play the winner of Kansas vs. UNLV, along with a pair of consolation games. Thursday, Nov. 19, will feature the championship game, third-place game, and two additional consolation games.

The Players Era 16 will be divided into two eight-team brackets with the teams emerging from each side meeting for the Championship Game Saturday, Nov. 28.

One bracket will feature four opening round matchups on Tuesday, Nov. 24, including Tennessee against Maryland, San Diego

State vs. Iowa State, St. John's facing Oregon, and Louisville taking on Texas Tech. In first round action in the other bracket, Gonzaga will face Kansas State, Baylor will take on Alabama, Michigan will play Creighton, and TCU will play Miami (FL).

Following an off day on Wednesday, Nov. 25, tournament play will resume Thanksgiving Day with four semifinal and four consolation games. The bracket championships and third, fifth and seventh-place matchups will take place Friday, Nov. 27, and the Players Era 16 Championship Game will be Saturday, Nov. 28 at Michelob ULTRA Arena.

Additional information about ticket on-sale dates and broadcast networks will be announced soon.

Players Era 8 | Tuesday-Thursday, November 17-19 at Michelob ULTRA Arena

Tuesday, Nov. 17 – Opening Round Games (All times TBD)

Houston vs. Rutgers

Florida vs. Notre Dame

West Virginia vs. Auburn

Kansas vs. UNLV

Wednesday, Nov. 18 (All times TBD)

Semifinal #1 – WINNER (Houston/Rutgers) vs. WINNER (Florida/Notre Dame)

Semifinal #2 – WINNER (West Virginia/Auburn) vs. WINNER (Kansas/UNLV)

Consolation #1

Consolation #2

Thursday, Nov. 19 (All times TBD)

Championship Game

Third-Place Game

Consolation #3

Consolation #4

Players Era 16 | Tuesday-Saturday, November 24-28 at T-Mobile Arena and Michelob ULTRA Arena

Tuesday, Nov. 24 – Opening Round Games (All times TBD)

Tennessee vs. Maryland

San Diego State vs. Iowa State

St. John's vs. Oregon

Louisville vs. Texas Tech

Gonzaga vs. Kansas State

Baylor vs. Alabama

Michigan vs. Creighton

TCU vs. Miami (FL)

Wednesday, Nov. 25

No games scheduled

Thursday, Nov. 26 (All times TBD)

Semifinal #1 – WINNER (Tennessee/Maryland) vs. WINNER (San Diego State/Iowa State)

Semifinal #2 – WINNER (St. John's/Oregon) vs. WINNER (Louisville/Texas Tech)

Consolation #1

Consolation #2

Semifinal #3 – WINNER (Gonzaga/Kansas State) vs. WINNER (Baylor/Alabama)

Semifinal #4 – WINNER (Michigan/Creighton) vs. WINNER (TCU/Miami)

Consolation #3

Consolation #4

Friday, Nov. 27 (All times TBD)

Bracket #1 Champ – WINNER Semifinal #1 vs. WINNER Semifinal #2

Bracket #2 Champ – WINNER Semifinal #3 vs. WINNER Semifinal #4

Bracket #1 Third Place

Bracket #1 Fifth Place

Bracket #1 Seventh Place

Bracket #2 Third Place

Bracket #2 Fifth Place

Bracket #2 Seventh Place

Saturday, Nov. 28 (Time TBD)

Players Era 16 Championship Game (Michelob ULTRA Arena)

About T-Mobile Arena

T-Mobile Arena, the 20,000-seat venue located on the Las Vegas Strip between Park MGM and New York-New York, opened April 6, 2016. The arena hosts more than 100 events annually including major headline entertainment, awards shows, UFC, boxing, basketball and other sporting events, family shows and special events. T-Mobile Arena also is the home of the Vegas Golden Knights, a National Hockey League expansion team and the city's first professional sports team, as well as UFC's exclusive Las Vegas arena destination. The venue, named the No. 1 venue on *Billboard Magazine's* 2018 Arena Power List as well as the "Best New Major Concert Venue" by *Pollstar Magazine* in 2016, features 50 luxury suites, more than two dozen private loge boxes, complete broadcast facilities, and other specially designed exclusive hospitality offerings and fan amenities destined to create a guest experience second to none. Toshiba Plaza, an adjacent two-acre outdoor entertainment space, features performance stages, a variety of video screens and other interactive content and display areas. Designed and built to prioritize environmental sustainability, T-Mobile Arena was awarded Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design® (LEED) Gold certification by the U.S. Green Building Council in 2016. T-Mobile Arena is a privately funded joint venture between AEG and MGM Resorts International (NYSE: MGM). For more information, visit [T-MobileArena.com](https://www.t-mobilearena.com) or follow on [Facebook](#), [X](#) and [Instagram](#).

About Michelob ULTRA Arena

The Michelob ULTRA Arena is a multi-purpose arena home to World Championship Boxing, premier concerts and special events. With seating for as many as 12,000, the venue, which was recently renovated in 2018, offers excellent sightlines and state-of-the-art lighting and sound. The entertainment venue is home to WNBA team, the Las Vegas Aces, the city's first professional basketball team. Prominent events have included concerts such as Justin Timberlake, KISS, Taylor Swift, Kenny Chesney, Alicia Keys, Rihanna, Christina Aguilera, Katy Perry, John Mayer, Metallica, Ozzy Osbourne, Alejandro Fernandez and David Foster & Friends. World championship boxing events have featured fighters including Oscar De La Hoya, Manny Pacquiao, Floyd Mayweather, Shane Mosley and Bernard Hopkins. The Michelob ULTRA Arena also has been home to multiple Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) events, the annual Barrett-Jackson Las Vegas Auction and the Latin Billboard Music Awards.

FORWARD LOOKING STATEMENT

Statements in this release that are not historical facts are forward-looking statements, within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995, as amended, and involve risks and/or uncertainties, including those described in MGM Resorts' public filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Forward-looking statements can be identified by the use of forward-looking terminology such as "believes," "expects," "could," "may," "will," "should," "seeks," "likely," "intends," "plans," "pro forma," "projects," "estimates" or "anticipates" or the negative of these words and phrases or similar words or phrases that are predictions of or indicate future events or trends and that do not relate solely to historical matters. MGM Resorts has based forward-looking statements on management's current expectations and assumptions and not on historical facts. Examples of these statements include, but are not limited to, MGM Resorts' expectations regarding the 2026 Players Era Men's Championships. These forward-looking statements involve a number of risks and uncertainties. Among the important factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from those indicated in such forward-looking statements include risks that the 2026 Players Era Men's Championships does not occur or does not occur in the manner described herein; any other event or factor which may prevent or inhibit the 2026 Players Era Men's Championships; the effects of economic conditions and market conditions in the markets in which MGM Resorts operates and competition with other destination travel locations throughout the United States and the world; and additional risks and uncertainties described in MGM Resorts' Form 10-K, Form 10-Q and Form 8-K reports (including all amendments to those reports). In providing forward-looking statements, MGM Resorts is not undertaking any duty or obligation to update these statements publicly as a result of new information, future events or otherwise, except as required by law. If MGM Resorts updates one or more forward-looking statements, no inference should be drawn that it will make additional updates with respect to those other forward-looking statements.

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