

Postseason for Purdue men's basketball after all

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LAF S Purdue Michigan

WEDNESDAY'S GAME

College Basketball

Invitational

Western Illinois (22-8) at

Purdue (15-17)

Time: 7 p.m.

TV: AXS TV

Radio: WSHP (95.7)

Tickets: Go on sale to John Purdue Club members at 9 a.m. today and to the general public at noon. Club area reserved seats are \$25 each and non-club, lower-arena tickets are \$15 each. All upper-arena tickets are general admission and are \$10 each. Youth tickets are \$5 each in the non-club lower arena and in the upper arena. Purdue students with a VIP Card are eligible for one free ticket each by presenting their card at the Athletic Ticket Office. All other Purdue student tickets are \$5 each.

The up-and-down journey that has been the 2012-2013 Purdue basketball season will continue.

The Boilermakers, beaten Thursday night by Nebraska in the opening round of the Big Ten tournament, learned Sunday night that they will participate in the sixth College Basketball Invitational tournament (CBI) and will play Western Illinois at 7 p.m. on Wednesday in Mackey Arena.

“We’re happy for the chance to continue our season and excited that the Gazelle Group afforded us this opportunity,” coach Matt Painter said, noting the tourney’s organizing group, in a statement. “I’m confident this will be a positive step for the future of our program.”

The Leathernecks are 22-8 and are the Summit League’s regular-season champions. They are coached by Jim Molinari, voted Summit League Coach of the Year. If the Boilermakers defeat Western Illinois, they will play the winner of the Santa Clara-Vermont game in quarterfinal action on March 25.

Purdue is 4-0 all-time against Western Illinois and is 12-0 all-time against current Summit League members.

This 16-team tournament’s eight first-round games will be staged Tuesday and Wednesday. The semifinals are set for March 27. The two finalists will participate in a best-of-three series beginning April 1. All games are played at on-campus venues.

The Boilermakers will be the first Big Ten Conference member to play in the CBI. Seven Big Ten teams will play in the NCAA tournament, and Iowa is the lone Big Ten team in the National Invitation Tournament.

The CBI has a history of featuring young teams expected to make marked improvement the following season,

which Purdue is expected to do. For example, VCU won the 2010 CBI, then went to the Final Four in 2011, taking out the Boilermakers in third-round action.

Pittsburgh won the 2012 CBI and is the No. 8 seed in West Regional of this year's NCAA tournament. Each of the past three CBI champions — VCU, Oregon and Pittsburgh — are playing in this season's NCAA.

AXS TV (Comcast Digital Ch. 1241) will televise CBI games at 7 and 9 p.m. Tuesday and Wednesday.

This will be Purdue's first non-NCAA tournament postseason appearance since the 2003-2004 season, when the Boilermakers participated in the NIT, dropping a 71-59 opening-round decision at Notre Dmae.

Purdue played in the 2001 NIT, defeating Illinois State and Auburn in Mackey Arena before losing a quarterfinal game to Alabama in overtime.