



Brooklyn and the Progressive Legends Classic is the place to be for Wolverines fans



It has become an annual occurrence. The University of Michigan plays a basketball game at Barclays Center in Brooklyn and Wolverines from all over the tri-state area descend on Atlantic Avenue for a mini reunion.

"I love it when they come to New York," said 1988 alumnus Michael Prober. "I've been to the two previous games at Barclays Center. We take the whole family and other families as well. We get a group of about 15-20 tickets and the kids love it. Last year we sat by where the players come on and off the court and the kids were slapping the players' hands. It was great."

This year Michigan will play a pair of games at Barclays Center as part of the Progressive Legends Classic. The Wolverines will open with Oregon in the second game of a November 24 doubleheader that will also see Villanova take on VCU. They will then play in either the consolation or championship match the following day.

Paul Schnell, a political science major from the Class of 1985, bought 75 tickets for this year's games and will be joined by family, friends, friends' kids, and friends of friends - all with some tie to Ann Arbor.

"When they come to New York, it gives you the chance to think about the school. The great friends, fun times, and so much of it revolved around football Saturdays," explains Schnell, who is originally from Long Island and currently resides in the City. "The day was consumed by going to the football game, the basketball game, the hockey game. A lot of our relationships became close as a result of that. You don't talk about issues or poli-sci classes when you get together. You talk about games. And when they come here you get to relive that with friends."

Barclays Center is now in its third year and Michigan is 2-0 in its two previous trips to Brooklyn. In 2012, the Wolverines downed West Virginia, 81-66, and followed that with a 68-65 win over Stanford in 2013.

In those two games, more than 27,000 fans were in attendance, a good portion of them wearing Maize and Blue.

"There is a tremendous Michigan alumni base in the area and this is the only time we get to see them without getting on an airplane," says Prober, who lives in Chappaqua and whose first trip west of the Hudson River was when he visited Michigan ("the only school I applied to"). "The alumni enjoyed their time in school and we are bound by that and athletics. This was a big part of people's lives for four years and they want to share that experience with their families and friends."

A basketball and football season ticket holder, Schnell reflects fondly on the Michigan experience.

"The 'special sauce' is about the band, students, stadium. The whole experience you had. You had a cool autumn day, crisp air, hopefully a blue sky and there are 30,000 people walking down the street wearing their Michigan jerseys and they are jacked. The band is outside playing 'Hail to the Victors.' It just gets into your system and never leaves. Plus the quality of people is A-plus. It's a special place."

As the Wolverines prepare for the 2014-15 season, they will look to replace three players who were drafted into the NBA.

"I had the pleasure of meeting Coach Beilein over the last couple of years and he is a class act. He's the kind of guy I would love to have mentor my son," says Schnell, a father of three whose oldest son is enrolled at Michigan. "I'm bullish about Michigan hoops well into the future."

TICKET INFORMATION: Tickets for the Championship Round games at Barclays Center can be purchased by visiting www.ticketmaster.com, www.barclayscenter.com, or by calling 800-745-3000. Tickets are also available at the American Express Box Office at Barclays Center. Group tickets may be purchased by calling 855-GROUP-BK. Information regarding individual suites may be obtained by calling 718-BK-SUITE.



The Gazelle Group | 475 Wall Street | Princeton, N.J. 08540 | 609.921.1300 | gazellegroup.com