



Applebee's(R) and ESPN Announce Round by Round Pick 'Em, an Online Fantasy Game Full of Second Chances and a Chance for a Trip for Two to ESPN Headquarters for 1st Place Winner

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Applebee's Brings College Basketball Fans Together for Nonstop Basketball Action During the Tournament

LENEXA, KS, Mar 07, 2011 (MARKETWIRE via COMTEX) -- Brackets and buzzer-beaters. Underdogs and upsets. Nothing brings neighbors -- even rivals -- together like college basketball's tournament and great tasting food.

And through an exclusive sponsorship of ESPN's Round by Round Pick 'Em, Applebee's will make watching March hoops extra exciting this year with an online Fantasy Game full of second chances. Unlike bracket contests where players only have one chance to predict the ultimate winners, Round by Round Pick 'Em lets players make selections for the most immediate round -- and accumulate points along the way. The ultimate winner -- who receives a trip to the ESPN Headquarters among other prizes -- is based on total points accumulated during the tournament.

The game is dramatically different from normal bracket contests and promises to keep players engaged throughout March hoops. In Round by Round Pick 'Em, players earn bonus points if lower seeded teams win games. In order to reward players for picking upsets correctly, points will be determined by a combination of a team's seeding and the round in which the game takes place.

All entrants are eligible for participation rewards and the person with the most points will receive the ESPN Experience package, which includes:

- Trip for two to New York City (two-night hotel and roundtrip airfare)
- Tour of ESPN Studios in Bristol, Conn.
- \$200 Applebee's Gift Card

Four runners-up will receive \$200 Applebee's Gift Cards as well. Entrants can create their own groups, public or private, while competing against the overall group. The game will be promoted on ESPN and ESPN.com as well as on Applebee's Facebook page.

"The tournament is one of the true sports holidays," said Ed Erhardt, president, customer marketing and sales for ESPN. "Applebee's has worked hand-in-hand with ESPN to create a unique Fantasy Game with a prize that is equally as unique. We look forward to hosting the game winner in Bristol after the tournament."

"With ESPN, we've created a game that is perfect for die hard and bandwagon fans," said Mike Archer, president of Applebee's Services, Inc. "Through a series of second chances, Round by Round Pick 'Em players will have a rooting interest in every game during the tournament."

Also, with the tournament's recently announced new schedule, fans can see all games live and in their entirety at Applebee's restaurants which are open until midnight or later. Guests can cheer on their local teams and perennial powerhouses until midnight at many of Applebee's 1,900 restaurants, which offer ample bar seating and many flat screen televisions showing the exciting basketball games.

Guests can enjoy Applebee's popular 2 for \$20 menu, which gives guests a choice of a shareable appetizer and two full size meals, 275 flavorful combinations, including new Bourbon Street Chicken & Shrimp and Cajun Shrimp Pasta, all for one great price. Other great game time options include Applebee's Ultimate Trios, featuring more than 200 combinations of bar and grill favorites like Pulled Pork or Grilled Chicken Wonton Tacos, Spicy Queso Blanco, Steak Quesadilla Towers, Cheeseburger Sliders, Spinach and Artichoke Dip, Boneless Wings and Mozzarella Sticks.

To complement the fun, Applebee's beverage menu features leading local and regional beer selections and popular signature drinks such as Main Street 'Ritas(R) or the signature Perfect Margarita, available in six great flavors.

Check with local restaurants for specific game times, game day specials and showings.

About Applebee's

Applebee's (www.applebees.com) is the world's largest casual dining chain, with approximately 2,000 locations in 49 states, 16 countries and one U.S. territory. Based in Lenexa, Kan., Applebee's takes pride in providing a welcoming, neighborhood environment where everyone can enjoy the dining experience. Applebee's Neighborhood Grill & Bar(R) is a DineEquity, Inc. (NYSE: DIN) brand, and is franchised and operated by Applebee's Services, Inc. and its affiliates.

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