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Final Four ticket resale market slumps

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Enlarge By Diane Weiss, Detroit Free Press

Workers at Detroit's Ford Field on Thursday move a pallet of basketball court flooring that will be installed for this weekend's Final Four games.

By **Michael McCarthy, USA TODAY**

The falling U.S. economy and the size of Detroit's Ford Field are driving down ticket prices for the NCAA Final Four by 30% to 40% in the online resale marketplace, say executives from ticket services.

Fans looking for seats to Saturday's sold-out national semifinals and Monday's championship game can find relative bargains compared with last year in San Antonio.

The 71,000-seating capacity — largest in NCAA history for this event — is helping create a glut of inventory, says Scott Roback of RazorGator, the NCAA's official ticket and hospitality package provider. The crowd for last year's final at the Alamodome was 43,257.

VIDEO: Final Four floor installed at Ford Field

The average selling price for Final Four Tickets on StubHub through Wednesday was \$445, down 41% from \$753 at the same point in 2008, says spokesman Sean Pate. Tickets for the championship game were going for \$292, off 34% from \$442 at the same point last year. Those are the lowest average prices since StubHub began tracking them five years ago.

"The economy is unquestionably taking its toll on the Final Four this year," Pate says.

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The average selling price for a pass to all three games in Detroit on RazorGator.com through Wednesday was \$1,148, down 18% from \$1,408 last year.

Ticket prices might have tumbled to face-value levels if not for strong demand generated by the presence of the Michigan State Spartans in this year's Final Four. "They're (about 90) miles down the road (in East Lansing). There hasn't been a 'home school' playing in the Final Four since Duke at Charlotte in 1994," Roback says.

Many corporate customers who used to wine and dine clients are missing in action, notes Don Vaccaro of TicketNetwork.com. The average selling price for title-game tickets on the site through Tuesday was \$274, down 19% from

\$338 last year.

"The corporate buyers are gone. Gone," Vaccaro says. "They'll be gone for a long time due to all the scrutiny over how they're spending their money."

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bpelcher (0 friends, [send message](#)) wrote: 4/5/2009 11:51:16 AM

I was wondering if there is a prelim game Monday nite between UCON and Villanova?

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hilltoppermike (0 friends, [send message](#)) wrote: 4/2/2009 5:15:55 PM

This article made me laugh!! We are supposed to feel bad for the poor ticket scalpers? The group that drives up ticket prices so that us regular folk can't attend? I'm from Chicago.....this group has made it tough for me to attend Cubs games on a regular basis.....and the same group that made it hard for me to bring my kids during the Bulls 6-peat years. I'm sitting at home getting ready to leave for Detroit and the tickets on my NCAA-lottery-winning tickets say \$75. Any price you see beyond that on the internet is the attempt for people to make the most money from us regular fans..... Looking forward to getting into Ford Field and sitting this weekend with "my own". :) With the notes posted below, it looks like I'll be disappointed with my seats and/or sightlines.....but this is something I can now scratch off my "bucket list"!!!!

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rtrial (0 friends, [send message](#)) wrote: 4/2/2009 4:22:47 PM

To Punkel: Excellent points about the NCAA's way of selling tickets. They should hold a lottery that allows potential buyers several weeks to sign up with a limit of four tickets per buyer. Then, computers select the lucky winners thereby reducing the impact of scalpers. (Note: the reference to "scalpers" meant "brokers")

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HoHopeDetroit (0 friends, [send message](#)) wrote: 4/2/2009 12:51:52 PM

I would go if the players got paid with the huge chunk of money being made off of them. Abolish the rule about the NCAA forbidding in paying these athletes.

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comicpro (32 friends, [send message](#)) wrote: 4/2/2009 12:41:50 PM

The average selling price for Final Four Tickets on StubHub through Wednesday was \$445, down 41% from \$753 at the same point in 2008, says spokesman Sean Pate. Tickets for the championship game were going for \$292, off 34% from \$442 at the same point last year. Those are the lowest average prices since StubHub began tracking them five years ago.

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The best seats in the house are in my house! For that money I could buy a large screen tv and pay for digital cable for 2 years! Get real!

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80-20 (0 friends, [send message](#)) wrote: 4/2/2009 12:33:11 PM

Over \$1000 to watch 3 games? The marketing people have everyone in their pocket! Idiots!

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punkel (0 friends, [send message](#)) wrote: 4/2/2009 12:32:06 PM

Instead of wining about ticket brokers losing money why don't you ask the NCAA why they hold a lottery and sell out of face value tickets in 1 minute FORCING fans to use the "scalpers" as you call them. If the scalpers weren't there where do you expect to get tickets from? Ticketmaster or NCAA, sorry the American way of life is to make money not make less by making poor fans happy - thats why the NCAA, NFL, MLB, etc. etc. chose to use brokers and 2ndary exchanges for reselling their tickets. Do you really think it's about the fans HA - cmon it's all about the money and the bottom line.

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crazydays (0 friends, [send message](#)) wrote: 4/2/2009 12:31:42 PM

I know what the problem is... Kwamee is not there to promote the games and tell everyone how great the city is. That fool always tried to take credit for everything good that happened in the city and all he was doing was screwing the city.

I would like to know who it is that can afford or would be willing to pay \$400+ for a college basketball game in any stadium. Why??

The games are great but \$400+ for a seat is a joke.

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rtrial (0 friends, [send message](#)) wrote: 4/2/2009 12:09:28 PM

It's breaking my heart that ticket scalpers, I mean, "brokers", are possibly losing money. Boo, hoo, hoo. See the tears!

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Yankee in Canada (4 friends, [send message](#)) wrote: 4/2/2009 11:55:29 AM

northdakota (0 friends, [send message](#)) wrote: 3h 46m ago

BS. Having been to a final four and been to some games in the monster domes, it is all about the money. Basketball is best viewed by spectators in venues with 15,000 seats or less and good sight angles.

...
===
I agree.

Here's an idea -- watch it on TV.

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