LAS VEGAS STARS LOOKING TO PAVE THE WAY FOR THE NBA

By Toni Beckham

When the Las Vegas Stars take the court in its inaugural season in the International Basketball League, the Stars will do so with three primary goals in mind: play great basketball, win games, and entertain the fans. According to Stars' General Manager and CEO Alexis Levi-Scott, the team will also be striving to help lay the foundation to one day bring an NBA team to Las Vegas.

"We will be working closely with the city of Las Vegas to build a great minor league professional basketball team in hopes that the NBA and Commissioner Stern will see a viable basketball program, as well as an opportunity in the future for the NBA," Levi-Scott said.

Off the court, the Stars are working with local, national, and international businesses to build partnerships. On the court, the Stars will be led by head coach George Tarkanian, son of legendary coach Jerry Tarkanian.

Next up for the Stars is bringing in quality players. The team will announce its roster in March.

"We have been recruiting in the U.S. and overseas to find the very best players available," said Levi-Scott. "Even in a league that will clearly be more competitive in 2007, we expect to contend for the title in our first season."

The Stars' season kicks off with a road game against the Phoenix Flame on Friday, April 6. The game will be held at Arizona Veterans Coliseum. The Stars' home opener is on Thursday, April 19 versus the Colorado Crossover. Stars' home games will be played at the Stations Sports Complex. The team has arranged to significantly increase seating capacity on game days, and will offer fans valet parking.

This season the Las Vegas Stars will face a Santa Barbara team with two former NBA players on the roster: Sam Clancy (Pac-10 Player of the Year) and Erick Barkley (First round draft pick, Portland Trailblazers). The Stars will also play a Phoenix Flame team that features former NBA star Cedric Ceballos. God Shammgod (second round draft pick of the Washington Wizards) will suit up for the Portland Chinooks in '07. Of interesting note; Sun Ming 7'9" from China, recently agreed to play with the Grand Rapids Flight.

For more information about the new Las Vegas Stars and the IBL, go to **www.iblhoopsonline.com**