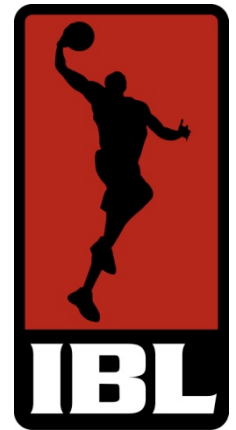


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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MEDIA ADVISORY**

June 26, 2012

## **Energy and IBL Welcome Japan to Edmonton**

**Edmonton, AB. (June 18, 2012)** – An International flavor will be present at the Saville Community Sports Centre this weekend, as the Edmonton Energy will host the Nippon Tornadoes. The addition of Nippon to the IBL is part of an evolving relationship with other countries to develop and promote the game of basketball. “The Nippon Tornadoes are a reflection of the IBL being truly international and a strong partnership with Japan”, says Sharleen Graf, IBL Commissioner.

Nippon’s 13-game schedule has sent them throughout the Oregon and Washington region. The roster is full of Japanese talent from the JBL (Japanese Basketball League) including, the much anticipated, Masaharu “Masa” Kataoka who just recently joined the team from the Japan League, as well as some American talent including Gonzaga alumnus Jordan Mast, a 6’3” guard who has been averaging 33.2 points, 13.2 rebounds, and 5.7 assists for the Tornadoes this season.

Over the past few seasons, Energy fans have had a chance to see the style of play that the IBL brings, which is a fast-paced style that keeps fans engaged. With the inclusion of Nippon to the league, fans may see a different style of play that could create an interesting matchup.

“The work ethic, culture, and competitive spirit the Tornadoes athletes bring to our League is noticeable in each game they play as they emulate sportsmanship, a unique style of play mixing Japanese and North American basketball, while reminding us of the purity in the game.” – Sharleen Graf.

The games this weekend will be a great opportunity for the IBL to showcase international talent, and for the Japanese community, which is strong in Edmonton, to come together and celebrate the successes of these players.

The Energy go into the weekend having won 8 straight at home, including 2 victories last weekend over the defending IBL Champions, Vancouver Volcanoes.

The Energy and the Tornadoes will meet twice this weekend, Friday and Saturday night. Games will get started at 8pm MT at the Saville Community Sports Centre.

**All media are more than welcome to come out to practices during the week. Tuesday thru Thursday, 4:00pm-6:00pm at the Saville Community Sports Centre.**