



LOS ANGELES LIGHTNING RELEASE

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Lightning return for second IBL season

Pro basketball team to hold tryouts next two weekends



With March Madness excitement in full swing, the Los Angeles Lightning is getting in the act with tryouts over the next two weekends.

The Lightning are beginning their second season in the high-scoring International Basketball League. With former NBA players Lamond Murray, Toby Bailey, Fred Vinson and 7-3 Keith Cross leading the way, the pro basketball franchise won nine of its last 15 games last year.

Tryouts will be held under the direction of Coach Ron Quarterman at the team's home court, the Gilbert Sports Arena on the campus of California Lutheran in Thousand Oaks. The dates are March 28-29 and April 4-5. The tryouts will be run from 6-9 p.m. on Saturdays and 6-8 p.m. on Sundays. The cost is \$125.

"We're expecting everyone back and It's going to be a lot of fun," said Lightning owner Mark Harwell. "We got our feet wet last year and now, we want to get more involved with the community in a grass-roots way. We want to give back."

Murray, a 6-7 forward who averaged 11.3 points during an 11-year NBA career, was fourth in IBL scoring at 26.6 and led the 18-team league in rebounds (11.9). Lightning point guard Kamran Sufi was No. 1 in assists, averaging 11.6. Murray and Vinson, the IBL record-holder with 15 3-pointers in a game, were All-Stars last year.

In the 2008 season finale, guard Phil Givens tossed in a franchise-record 57 points in a 140-124 win over Arizona. IBL teams have averaged 127 points in the first four years, thanks to immediate inbound passes and one timeout per quarter.

The Lightning will play 14 of their 18 games at Cal Lutheran, starting on May 2-3 against the Edmonton Energy of Alberta, Canada. Games will start at 7 p.m. on Saturdays and 5:30 p.m. on Sundays. In the next two weeks, tickets will be available online at Ticketmaster.com, at all Ticketmaster outlets or to charge tickets by phone, call 800-745-3000.

Harwell announced that Tony Award-winning singer Michael Maguire (Les Miserables) will perform the national anthem on opening night. There will also be 20-minute halftime shows, featuring top-notch talent, to benefit the Rising Star Music Fund Foundation. Ticket prices range from \$6 to \$25 for general seating and courtside seats are between \$100 and \$200, depending on location. For more information, check out the the team web site at lalightning.net.