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IBL team coming to Yamhill County

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IBL team coming to Yamhill County

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Good news for basketball fans, especially those who want more of the roundball sport than the regular high school, college and NBA seasons provide: An International Basketball League (IBL) team is coming to Yamhill County, and the league plays a short season that begins in May and runs through June.

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According to G.M. Eric Bailey of Portland, his organization is finalizing the ownership package and a kick-off press conference will be scheduled soon after all the details are inked on the LLC agreement.

Bailey also said two international opponents - the Nippon Tornadoes from Japan's professional basketball league and the Vancouver, B.C. Titans - are already scheduled to travel to Yamhill County to compete against the High Flyers.

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"I hope," Bailey said, "that this will bring an economic boost to the area while also simply providing an entertainment option that is cheaper than a movie - \$8 for adults, \$6 for seniors and \$4 for students/youth."

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Soon, Bailey added, the franchise's official Web site - [www.highflyersbasketball.com](http://www.highflyersbasketball.com) - will be up and running, offering fans more information about the team and the IBL.

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Personally, I'm looking forward to the arrival of the High Flyers.

Bailey and his colleagues have done some serious groundwork over the past few months to get the support necessary to field a team, and they hope to bring YC basketball fans a professional-level team to get excited about when it comes tip-off time.

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Stay tuned for more info in the coming weeks.

Don't check the little guy ... or else

Over my years as a basketball player, I've played against a number of traveling professional teams in the mold of the Harlem Globetrotters while competing on local town teams. Never against the Globetrotters, who played in bigger venues. But I have played against teams like the Harlem Crowns (not Clowns) and Harlem All-Stars, both of which are a notch or two below the world famous Globetrotters when it comes to both talent and entertainment value.

In one game against the Crowns, played in the Regis High School gym in the late '60s, the Crowns featured a short little player - his teammates called him Pee Wee - who could bury shots from about 30 feet on a consistent basis. These were two-handed howitzers, with lots of air under the ball, and I watched him launch a number in the pre-game warm-ups from my team's end of the court.

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Hmm, I thought ... I could probably check a few of those two-handers if I bellied up on him. After all, he was only 5-foot-6 and I towered over him at 5-10.

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Sure enough, after "allowing" him to score a couple from downtown for added entertainment value, I crowded him and checked his next three or four shots.

Not a good idea, I discovered. I got a good talking to from one of his 6-7 teammates who said I was detracting from the entertainment level. "The show," he called it. If I persisted in my efforts to smash Pee Wee's two-handers back into his face, his much larger teammate would find a way to harass and embarrass me, too, he whispered through "I'm-warning-you, I'm-not-kidding" lips.

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Embarrass me and harass me, like how? I wondered.



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The big guy must have been reading my mind.

"Like by grabbing your trunks and pulling them down around your ankles in front of your teammates, friends and students," he said, without displaying any visible emotion.


That was good enough for me to abstain from hounding Pee Wee. I modified my game plan right then and there. I quit checking Pee Wee's shots and moved back inside to play defense and fight for rebounds against their 6-7 and 6-8 players.


Sure, I got pounded more than a little by their inside guys the remainder of the game. I also earned a few bumps and bruises during my time in the paint.

But at least I got to keep my trunks right where they belonged.

If you have an idea for a column or feature story or a comment, contact me by e-mail at [jwalker@newsregister.com](mailto:jwalker@newsregister.com) or by phone at (503) 472-5114, ext. 333.

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