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Yamhill High Flyers has nice ring to it

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Yamhill High Flyers has nice ring to it

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Any Yamhill Valley companies or individuals who would like to see an International Basketball League team in McMinnville and are willing to divvy up some money to make it possible should contact IBL rep Eric Bailey soon.

The way it works is this: Sponsorship pledges in varying amounts will demonstrate the local climate for supporting a professional basketball team; if Bailey and IBL commissioner Mikal Duilio, who both have widespread experience in sports promotion, feel there's adequate interest and financial commitment to a team, then by next April, the Yamhill High Flyers might be competing in Mac - possibly at Linfield College's Ted Wilson Gymnasium.

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Companies interested in making pledges should contact Bailey, he said, as a great deal of organizational work would still be required to get the team on board and flesh out all the details.

Bailey noted that smaller communities like McMinnville "are much more viable candidates for minor league teams.

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"Those cities do well with community support, media coverage and fans ... smaller areas that have a distinct community feel, such as McMinnville."

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Bailey, who has an extensive background in sports promotion activities, especially in and around Portland, has worked with the Beavers Triple-A baseball team, the Timbers professional soccer team and the Portland Chinooks of the IBL.

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Because of the league's speed-up rules, the games are fast-paced and teams frequently average more than 125 points per game. And, for fans looking for family entertainment, games typically get over in about two hours.

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With teams clustered in geographical areas (L.A. and Chicago, plus the Northwest, for example), travel costs are kept under control.

And Bailey touts the "one flight guarantee" that allows teams to travel once and play a number of games in the same area of the country.

Will Yamhill County, Mac support an IBL team?

From a local perspective, the questions that have to be asked by potential sponsors are, "What return would I get from sponsoring an IBL team?"

And what would paying fans get for their money? A high-level team with a few name players, or ... ?

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Also, is there a sufficient fan base to support such an endeavor in the April through June season when the IBL plays its contests?

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While the idea of basing a minor league basketball team in Mac is pretty heady stuff and would give the city serious bragging rights among other Oregon towns, those questions and others have to be addressed. Prospective owners and/or sponsors must complete a due diligence process before signing on; but so, too, do IBL officials: they need to know if Mac is the right fit for a team.

Bailey was in McMinnville last week checking out that "fit," and the interest level.

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After a few prospecting missions to the city to test the sponsorship interest, IBL officials will have a good idea of just how high this venture might fly.



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If the financial pledges are sufficient to award an IBL franchise to McMinnville, the Yamhill High Flyers could be testing their fledgling wings as soon as next April.

Contacts

But, it's really up to the business owners whether or not the High Flyers ever get off the ground.

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