



2009 FIBA U19 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP NEW ZEALAND



www.newzealand2009.fiba.com

BULLETIN #5 MAY 21

VISIT OF FIBA PRESIDENT

The FIBA u19 World Championship received a major boost this week with a visit from FIBA President, Bob Elphinston. He met with Basketball New Zealand and Government officials in Wellington on Monday, including the Minister for Economic Development - Gerry Brownlee and Major Events Director - Wayne Morgan.

Elphinston emerged from the meetings positive that the NZ government was fully supportive of the tournament, and impressed with the sense of partnership between BBNZ and the Government, through NZ Major Events.

“They assured me they were fully committed to this event and they were enthusiastic about the fact that this is the first world basketball championship to be played in New Zealand” said Elphinston.

During his time in the country, Bob Elphinston reinforced the opportunity that was before New Zealand as it hosted its first ever world championships for the world’s second biggest sport.

Elphinston said “this is the tournament where future NBA and Olympic stars would be unearthed, with at least 100 professional scouts heading to New Zealand in July to start that process”.

“This is not just a one-off event” he added. “Remember the major powers of world basketball are all going to be here, as will all of FIBA’s officials. This paves the way for an ongoing list of international events in New Zealand”.

The government signed up to a partnership with Basketball NZ last year and NZ Major Events officials have been working closely with both BNZ and the local organising committee since then. The event has received a grant from the government’s Major Events Development Fund, but the Director of NZ Major Events, Wayne Morgan, says the partnership goes well beyond funding.

“The government wants to invest in events that can provide major benefits for New Zealand beyond those that come from an event itself, and also boost New Zealand’s international profile. We believe this tournament has that potential,” he said.

He says as well as NZ Major Events, several other government agencies are supporting the event

including SPARC, Tourism New Zealand and the Department of Internal Affairs, along with other social development and border agencies.

“We’ve all been working on a number of programmes which will ensure that as well as having a short term impact, the tournament leaves a lasting legacy for both Auckland and New Zealand. That includes things like recruiting and training volunteers, who’ll add to the pool of skilled volunteers for other events here, and developing the try-basketball project for young people.”

THE PATH TO THE WORLD CHAMPS

Sixteen countries will compete in the 2009 FIBA U19 World Championship for Men that will be held July 2-12 in Auckland and all had different paths to make the cut for what will be a truly world-class event.

Players are eligible if they are 19-years-old or younger (born on or after January 1, 1990). At this age it is commonly noted that they are full of flair and spirit and are well worth watching with different styles reflected in their teams location around the world.

In addition to host New Zealand, which earned an automatic berth, teams qualified for the ‘09 U19 Worlds through FIBA Zone qualification tournaments held in 2008.

FIBA Americas is represented by gold medalist Argentina, silver medalist USA, bronze medalist Canada, and Puerto Rico, which finished in fourth place.

At the 2008 FIBA Africa U18 Championship Egypt finished with the gold medal and Angola captured silver to earn their berths.

Teams from FIBA Asia include gold medalist Kazakhstan, silver medalist Iran and third place to Syria.

FIBA Europe teams feature 2008 U18 gold medalist Greece, silver medalist Lithuania, bronze medalist Croatia, fourth place finisher France and fifth place finisher Spain who as a senior side were the silver medalist at the Beijing Olympics last year.

Australia captured FIBA Oceania’s lone qualifying berth.

GLOBAL PARTNERS



MAIN SPONSOR



LOCAL SUPPORTERS



EVENT DIRECTOR

Dave Mee

davemee@smcevents.co.nz

MARKETING

Dean Wilson

wilson.dean@xtra.co.nz

MEDIA

Dave Worsley

kiwidworsley@xtra.co.nz

TRANSPORT & TEAM SERVICES

Tom Waterhouse

tom@u19bballchamps.co.nz