

## The biggest basketball tournament in Canada returns to Ottawa

The largest youth basketball tournament in Canada is returning to Ottawa this weekend from May 1-3. The U14 boys age “cohort” - Ontario and Canada’s biggest - will compete in the Ontario Cup locations throughout the city.

Basketball is growing. Not only is the tournament bigger, with 32 extra teams, but we’re doing it better. This year, 24 divisions will compete across 19 more centralized locations, cutting down our carbon footprint. The event is also creating a bigger Ottawa basketball community.

With 183 teams coming to the Capital, playing in locations from Kanata to Orleans, this weekend will be an opportunity for tourism across the whole Ottawa landscape. The 3-day tournament **by Ontario Basketball** is hosted by the Eastern Ontario Basketball Association and proudly sponsored by Ottawa Tourism.

Starting at 4:30 p.m. on Friday, divisions 1-3, 5-18, and 20-21 will begin at their designated locations which can be found [here](#). Division 6 will play their first game at 6:00 p.m., and division 19 will begin at 5:30 p.m.

The smaller divisions, 22-24, will begin Saturday at 9:00 a.m. Saturday will also feature **192 games** in total, a record for games played in this tournament.

Basketball’s increasing popularity, and Ottawa’s reputation as a good host, is resulting in year-over-year growth. Along with plans for the IWBF World Wheelchair Basketball championships in September, the growing youth game is stretching gym resources. In January, the Ottawa Sport Council, the Ottawa Basketball Network, and Ottawa Tourism released a Business Case Study on how to improve the city’s capacity to host basketball events. Developed by the Greater, a Toronto consultancy, [the Ottawa Basketball Sport Hosting Improvement Business Case](#) recommends infrastructure expansion to align capacity with rising demand for more dedicated indoor gym space.

In addition, this year’s massive U14 boys tournament requires organizers to import out of town referees from as far away as Toronto. This will create an even larger economic impact, but will also support referee development; officials will have more opportunities to collaborate and share best practices.

Last year, Ottawa saw an economic impact of \$4,793,418 this weekend alone. It brought 2,016 players and 504 coaches to the Capital, using 616 hotel rooms. This year we can expect even more.

Aside from new experiences for referees, this tournament will also allow for the U14 boys to play in their last tournament before playing high school basketball. It gives them the chance to showcase their abilities on a large scale and creates an environment where they can expand confidence in their skills.

Merchandise and the iconic Ontario Cup sweaters will be available for purchase at both the Algonquin College beginning on Saturday.

Wheelchair Basketball Canada will have a booth at Algonquin College on Sunday as they prepare for their World Championships in Ottawa in September.

Photos for media outlets will be available upon request but **MUST** be credited to Ottawa Basketball Network's official photographer, Simon Mckeown.

Please join Ottawa Basketball Network, the Eastern Ontario Basketball Association and Ottawa Tourism, and come to a game this weekend.

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