

The Basketball Tournament Adjusts Format Due To Coronavirus Pandemic



On Wednesday afternoon, The Basketball Tournament announced this year's \$2 million tournament will feature just 24 teams playing at a single location amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Under normal circumstances, the annual event would include 64 teams playing at different venues around the country.

□Introducing the new TBT 2020□

24 Teams

10 Days

1 Quarantined Location

The most intense week and a half in tournament history!! pic.twitter.com/Kdr4gihVWx

— TBT (@thetournament) May 27, 2020

"After reviewing all available science and data, working with experts and receiving support from our partners, we've devised a plan we are confident protects the health and safety of our participants and staff to the greatest extent possible," TBT founder and CEO Jon Mugar said in a statement. "At the forefront is our single-elimination format, ability to test and quarantine the field and keep teams separate at all times. We look forward to hosting an incredible group of teams and crowning a champion this summer."

Defending tournament champion Carmen's Crew — a team comprised of several Ohio State alums — was scheduled to begin its title defense at the Covelli Center on July 23-26 as part of the Columbus

Regional. The new location and dates of the tournament have yet to be determined, however.

Players and staff will be tested for COVID-19 upon their arrival and quarantined for the duration of the tournament. They will be tested again after the quarantine period and screened regularly for symptoms. A positive test result would lead to the removal of that participant's team from the event.

"If there's anything this virus has taught us is there's no way to ensure 100 percent probability of anything," said tournament advisor Dr. Tara Kirk Sell, who works at the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health, "but after reviewing TBT's plan and challenging some of their assumptions, I feel confident in the approach they are taking to minimize risk and their commitment to conducting this event responsibly.

More than 100 teams have applied for the tournament thus far, including Carmen's Crew, The AfterShocks (Wichita State alumni), Best Virginia (West Virginia alumni), Boenheim's Army (Syracuse alumni) and Red Scare (Dayton alumni). There are two additional teams featuring Ohio State alums, Big X and Great Lakes Elite, but it's unclear at this time if they'll make the cut down to 24.

Carmen's Crew features former Ohio State guards Aaron Craft, William Buford, Jon Diebler, David Lighty and Lenzelle Smith and forwards Dallas Lauderdale and Evan Ravenel, as well as coach Jared Sullinger and general manager Evan Turner. Big X's roster includes former guards Andrew Dakich and C.J. Jackson and forward Andre Wesson, while Great Lakes Elite is coached by former walk-on Jake Lorbach and features guard Kam Williams and forward Marc Loving.

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