

Boston College High School

Model UN Conference

XXXII



The African Union: Basketball Africa League



Chair: Patrick Cincotti

Co-Chair: Charlie Bushley

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Letter from the Chair..... | 3 |
| Message from the Co-Chair..... | 3 |
| Introduction..... | 5 |
| Background of African Influence on Basketball..... | 7 |
| Qualifying in the Basketball Africa League..... | 9 |
| Youth Development and Education in Basketball Africa League..... | 9 |
| Cultural Exchange and Diplomacy through Basketball..... | 9 |
| Basketball Africa League infrastructural impacts..... | 10 |
| Questions to Consider..... | 11 |
| Positions..... | 13 |
| Work Cited..... | 15 |

Letter from the Chair

Dear Delegates,

My name is Patrick Cincotti, and I have been doing Model UN since Sophomore Year. My first experience with MUN was the weekly meetings. My friends urged me to tag along with them to a meeting, and after my first, I was hooked. I loved the unique aspects of MUN that I could not find in other co-curriculars, like sports. It provided a more intellectually stimulating activity for me to participate in. I have attended various conferences, and in years past I had Co-Chaired conferences. I recently attended the Stanford Model UN Conference. Not only do I enjoy Model UN, but I also enjoy basketball. Don't believe me, here is an image from when I dunked on LeBron, boy was he sad.



I look forward to seeing you all in March. This committee will be a SLAM DUNK!

Sincerely,

Patrick Cincotti '24 Chair

p.cincotti24@students.bchigh.edu

Message from the Co-Chair

Dear Delegates,

My name is Daniel Charles Bushley and I am a senior at BC High. It is the greatest pleasure of mine to be in your graces during this magnificent congregation of intellectual minds. I have been in Model UN since sophomore year and have chaired in past conferences. I know very little about basketball but trust that you do. While I may not know much about Basketball, I love Model UN and being able to participate in a conference. Outside of Model UN, I am a member of a business club, political discussion club, and I am on the varsity baseball team. I know we are going to have a great time in this committee session this year and I look forward to meeting you all. This is an amazing opportunity to meet new people and collaborate. See you in March!

Best,

Charlie Bushley '24 Rapporteur

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Introduction

The NBA has made significant strides in expanding its international outreach through the creation of the Basketball Africa League (BAL). Launched in collaboration with FIBA (International Basketball Federation), the BAL represents a groundbreaking initiative to elevate the sport of basketball on the African continent. The league features teams from across Africa, providing a platform for local talent to showcase their skills and compete at a professional level. This initiative not only strengthens the basketball ecosystem in Africa but also contributes to the global growth of the sport by fostering diverse competition and cross-cultural exchange.

The Basketball Africa League (BAL) emerged as a groundbreaking initiative aimed at elevating the presence of professional basketball on the African continent. The concept for the league was developed through a collaboration between the International Basketball Federation (FIBA) and the National Basketball Association (NBA). The BAL was officially announced in February 2019, with the inaugural season scheduled to tip off in March 2020. This marked a significant milestone in the global expansion of the sport, as it aimed to provide a platform for talented African players to showcase their skills and contribute to the growth of basketball in the region.



The formation of the BAL was a strategic move to tap into the immense basketball talent pool in Africa and create a competitive league structure. It aimed not only to provide opportunities for players but also to engage basketball enthusiasts across the continent and promote the sport at both grassroots and professional levels. The league comprised teams from various African countries, fostering a sense of unity and camaraderie while highlighting the rich diversity of basketball talent on the continent. Moreover, the BAL sought to enhance the infrastructure and organizational capabilities of basketball in Africa, contributing to the overall development of the sport.

The inaugural season of the BAL faced an unexpected delay due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, but it eventually tipped off in May 2021 in Kigali, Rwanda. The league featured a series of qualifying tournaments to determine the participating teams, and the championship game saw the Zamalek Sporting Club from Egypt emerge as the first-ever Basketball Africa League champions. The success of the inaugural season not only showcased the high level of competition but also underscored the potential for further growth and expansion of professional basketball in Africa. The Basketball Africa League stands as a testament to the collaborative efforts of FIBA and the NBA in fostering the development of basketball on the African continent.



Background of African Influence on Basketball

While basketball's roots can be traced to North America, African players have left an indelible mark on the game, showcasing their exceptional skills and contributing to the global popularity of basketball. The emergence of African players on the international stage gained notable attention in the late 20th century, with players like Hakeem Olajuwon from Nigeria and Manute Bol from Sudan making significant impacts in the NBA.



The 21st century witnessed a surge in the number of African players making their mark in the NBA. Players like Dikembe Mutombo (Democratic Republic of Congo), Serge Ibaka (Republic of Congo), and Joel Embiid (Cameroon) continued the legacy of African excellence in basketball.



With the immense contribution to the NBA from elite players hailing from around the world, including the African continent, coupled with the growth of an international Basketball community, the NBA has created initiatives to nurture and further basketball talents from around the world, through the creation of the BWB.

The NBA's Basketball Without Borders (BWB) program is a global basketball and community outreach initiative aimed at promoting the sport, fostering cultural exchange, and addressing social issues around the world. Launched in 2001, BWB brings together young basketball players from diverse backgrounds, offering them the opportunity to develop their skills, receive coaching from NBA and FIBA players and coaches, and participate in life-skills seminars. The program typically includes a combination of basketball clinics, leadership development sessions, and community service projects.

Basketball Without Borders operates in various regions around the world, including Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas. The program has been instrumental in identifying and nurturing young basketball talent from diverse backgrounds, helping to pave the way for international players to enter elite basketball competitions. It reflects the NBA's commitment to making a positive impact on a global scale through the universal language of basketball.

Qualifying in the Basketball Africa League

In order to qualify for the BAL, teams compete in tournaments organized by FIBA Africa. Each of the 12 teams in the league qualifies for their spot in the BAL through domestic competition, in a meritocratic system similar to the UEFA Champions League. Six teams qualify directly, while the others have to play in The Road to BAL. The Road to BAL was a tournament between teams who won their own domestic tournaments. The season exists out of three conferences and uses playoffs to determine the champions. The BAL champions of each season automatically qualify for the FIBA Intercontinental Cup.

Youth Development and Education in Basketball Africa League

The Basketball Africa League (BAL) prioritizes youth development and education through basketball as a core component of its mission. The league implements various programs and initiatives aimed at nurturing young talent and providing educational opportunities. Through grassroots basketball clinics, coaching workshops, and community engagement, the BAL actively promotes the sport at the youth level, identifying and honing emerging talent across the continent. Additionally, the league integrates educational components into its programs, emphasizing life skills, leadership, and academic excellence alongside basketball training. By combining sports and education, the BAL contributes to the holistic development of young individuals, fostering a positive impact on their lives both on and off the basketball court.

Cultural Exchange and Diplomacy through Basketball

The Basketball Africa League (BAL) plays a significant role in cultural exchange and diplomacy through the unifying power of basketball. By bringing together teams from various African countries, the league serves as a platform for fostering cross-cultural interactions and mutual understanding. The diverse backgrounds and experiences of players contribute to a rich tapestry of cultures within the league, promoting a sense of unity and collaboration. The BAL's international exposure also facilitates diplomatic engagement, as games and events become opportunities for nations to connect and showcase their basketball prowess on a global stage. Additionally, the league's emphasis on community engagement and outreach programs promotes cultural exchange at the grassroots level, transcending borders and fostering a shared love for the

sport. Through basketball, the BAL becomes a conduit for diplomatic relations, cultural appreciation, and the celebration of Africa's diverse heritage on an international scale.

Basketball Africa League infrastructural impacts

BAL games and events can drive the construction or renovation of sports facilities, upgrade transportation networks, and enhance hospitality services. Additionally, the league's community engagement programs may involve collaborations with local authorities to improve public spaces and facilities where basketball programs and events take place. The BAL's influence on the broader socio-economic landscape can serve as a catalyst for infrastructure improvements, creating a positive ripple effect that extends beyond the realm of sports. For the most current and detailed information, it's recommended to check the latest updates from reliable sources or the official channels of the Basketball Africa League.



Questions to Consider

1. Youth Development and Education Through Basketball:

- Analyzing strategies to use the BAL as a platform for youth development and education in African nations.
- Addressing challenges and opportunities in creating basketball-focused educational programs and scholarships.

2. Gender Equality in Basketball:

- Discussing ways to promote gender equality within the BAL, ensuring equal opportunities for female athletes and administrators.
- Exploring strategies to break gender stereotypes in African basketball and encourage female participation.

3. Economic Impact and Job Creation:

- Assessing the economic impact of the BAL on participating nations and local communities.
- Formulating policies to maximize job creation, entrepreneurship, and economic growth associated with the league.

4. Cultural Exchange and Diplomacy Through Basketball:

- Examining the role of the BAL in fostering cultural exchange and diplomatic relations between African nations.
- Developing initiatives to enhance cultural understanding and collaboration through basketball tournaments and events.

5. Infrastructure Development:

- Discussing the need for sports infrastructure development to support the growth of basketball in Africa.
- Formulating plans for investments in stadiums, training facilities, and community courts to strengthen the basketball ecosystem.

6. Community Engagement and Social Responsibility:

- Analyzing the social responsibility initiatives of BAL teams and organizations.
- Crafting policies to ensure that the BAL contributes positively to local communities, addressing social issues and promoting community engagement.

7. Media and Broadcasting Rights:

- Discussing the role of media in promoting the BAL and its impact on the global perception of African basketball.
- Addressing challenges and opportunities related to broadcasting rights, media coverage, and digital platforms.

8. Athlete Welfare and Development:

- Exploring policies to safeguard the welfare of BAL athletes, including issues like fair compensation, healthcare, and post-career support.
- Developing programs for the holistic development of athletes beyond their sporting careers.

9. Inclusivity and Accessibility:

- Evaluating the inclusivity of the BAL and addressing barriers to accessibility for underrepresented groups.
- Formulating policies to promote inclusivity, diversity, and equal representation in all aspects of the league.

10. Collaboration with NGOs and International Organizations:

- Examining partnerships between the BAL and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or international bodies to address broader development goals.
- Discussing how collaborative efforts can enhance the social impact of the BAL.

Positions

1. Adam Silver
 - NBA Commissioner
2. Victor Williams
 - Chief Executive Officer, NBA Africa
3. Tammy Henault
 - Chief Marketing Officer of the NBA
4. Sheikh Saud Ali Al-Thani
 - President of FIBA
5. LeBron James
 - He plays basketball, ever heard of him?
6. Joel Embiid
 - NBA All Star
7. Josh Giddey
 - Australian Basketball Star, Made it to the NBA through the BWB
8. Amadou Gallo Fall
 - President, Basketball Africa League BAL
9. Anibal Manave
 - FIBA Africa Executive Director
10. Masai Ujiri
 - President of the Toronto Raptors, known for his work in basketball development in Africa.
11. Jermaine Cole
 - Rapper, and Basketball Player for Rwandan Team
12. James Pitaro
 - CEO/ President of ESPN
13. Brittney Griner
 - International basketball star
14. Alphonse Bilé
 - Development Manager for Africa, former basketball player

15. Florian Wanninger

- Marketing and Communications Manager

16. Ike Diogu

- Nigerian forward, who played in the NBA, plays on the Rivers Hoopers (Nigeria)

17. Moustapha Fall

- Senegalese Center for AS Douanes (Senegal)

18. Tyrone Brazelton

- U.S. born guard for the Nigerian Rivers hoopers

19. Steven A. Smith

- American sports television personality, sports radio host, and sports journalist

20. Mark Parker

- Executive Chairman of Nike, Nike is a partner of the NBA and the BAL

21. Laurent Boilot

- CEO of Hennessy, Hennessy is a partner with the NBA and the BAL

22. Mahmoud El Khatib

- President of the egyptian basketball club Al Ahly

23. Artur Barros

- Vice President of Basketball for Petro de Luanda, an Angolan Basketball team

24. Amy Brooks

- President, Team Marketing & Business Operations and Chief Innovation Officer, NBA

25. Francis Gatare

- Chief Executive Officer of the Rwanda Development Board (a government department responsible for the attraction, retention and facilitation of investments in the national economy)

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