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### **HARLEM WIZARDS 55 YEARS OF TRICKS, SLAMS, LAUGHS AND FUNDRAISING**

Season 55 is here! Howie Davis, sports promoter and entrepreneur believed that he could put a unique spin on show basketball. He had run a comedy baseball and basketball team called the Kokomo Clowns. He managed the first integrated football game in North Carolina. While stationed at Wright Patterson Field in Dayton he ran the recreation department and during WWII was called on to put a team in the World Championship of Basketball in Chicago, and his Dayton Dive Bombers beat the Harlem Globetrotters in a historic upset.

Now the Harlem Wizards are the world's most interactive slamtastic, and comedic basketball show.

What makes a Wizards show "awe-inspiring"? Some say it's the *oohs* and *aahs* created by the thunderous, sky-high slams. For others it's the humor and seeing the teachers being good sports and having fun on the court with the Wizards. The comedy, the audience participation, the spontaneity delivered as a world-class show, in an intimate and community setting adds up to a night to be experienced and treasured. The artistry of the Wizards is evident as they show off their high-flying hoop skills while also elevating the star status of the home team featuring teachers, principals and local notables. Never in the history of the sport will the losing team have so much fun.

. The Wizards shows are also wildly successful fundraiser events for schools and nonprofits, last season alone playing in over 450 events across the USA, while raising over \$2.5 million and playing in front of 350,000 fans.

The Wizards roster is full of amazing hoop talent. The Wizards have three units that crisscross the USA, with Eric "Broadway" Jones, and Dwayne "Swoop" Simpson, both former Globetrotter showmen, as well as the dynamic duo of David "DP" Paul and "King Arthur" Lewis a former Academic All-American at Bowie State University.

The star-studded, experienced roster includes Arnold "A-Train" Bernard, an accomplished trickster and a veteran of 7 years with the Globetrotters. Add in James "The Roadrunner" Tyndal who is fast enough to dribble thru New York City traffic, and Devon "Livewire" Curry who led his team to become the FIBA 3 on 3 US champions.

The slams come at rapid pace in the Wizards show. The roster features veterans LeMarvon "Showtime" Jackson and Leon "Space Jam" Sewell who competed on the TNT show Dunk King last season and is scheduled to come back, as well as Roscoe "Sarge" Johnson whose 360 backboard shattering dunk in a Wizards game was shown on ESPN's dunks of the week online and has had over a hundred thousand views.

## HISTORY

Howie Davis, the founder, (and father of current CEO Todd Davis and grandfather of Vice President Rick Schreiber) had a passion for the merger of sports and entertainment and he believed that he could create a basketball show better than the Harlem Globetrotters. The seeds of rivalry were sown in 1943 when Howie, the director of recreation at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, OH was asked to replace the 8<sup>th</sup> team in the World Championship of Basketball in Chicago. His Dayton Dive Bombers had one of the greatest sports upsets ever, defeating the mighty Globetrotters.

When Goose Tatum, the greatest basketball Showman ever, wanted to do a tour in New York and called Howie Davis to book it and promote it, Davis jumped at the chance. The Tour was a big success as Goose and his team known as the Harlem Stars took on the College All-Stars at various locations in the NY 5 boroughs. When Goose hung up his sneakers Howie wanted to create a new team to fill the demand and fulfill the opportunity he saw during the Goose tour. In 1962, three years after the Goose tour with the Harlem Stars, the Harlem Wizards were born.

Through the years the Wizards have had so many historic moments, and players. Connie Hawkins, “The Hawk” spent two years touring with the Wizards in the prime of his career. Connie is one of the 50 greatest players in NBA History. Over 25 ex-NBA Players have played with the Wizards including top 50 greatest Tiny Archibald, NBA All-Star Ray Felix, 6<sup>th</sup> man extraordinaire Mario Elie, and Wizard homegrown star and future NY Knick Hawthorne Wingo.

The most memorable and moving game in Wizards history was in Newtown, CT in 2013. It illuminated the best of what the Wizard players can do. They brought joy for a few hours in a community that faced an unimaginable tragedy. In spring 2015, the Wizards brought an event that created positive community spirit after the chaos, in Baltimore, MD. Another memorable game was at Attica Prison in the 1970’s against the inmates. This took place not too long after the infamous Attica riot. The Wizards were cascaded with a standing ovation after the game.

The Wizards have toured nearly all of the 50 United States and many countries. The Wizards have had 12 trips to China since 2000. Other tours included a USO tour of the Far East, as well as trips to Italy, Belgium, Taiwan, Israel, Malaysia, Brazil, Argentina, Jordan, Poland and Venezuela. Crowds as high as 10,000+ have watched the Wizards in Soccer stadiums, bullrings, as well as basketball arenas of many CBA teams in China, and in Tel-Aviv, at Menora Mivtachim Arena. In addition the Wizards have done numerous charitable events at Madison Square Garden, in New York City.

The Wizards have played with celebrities in their travels, numerous NFL players and former NBA players, such as John Havlicek, Dave Cowens, Elvin Hayes and Kobe Bryant. NY Mets Donn Clendenon and Ed Kranepool toured with the Wizards. So did Hall of Famer and current NBA Asst. Coach, Nancy Lieberman and NY Giants Hall of Famer Lawrence Taylor and basketball hall of famer, the greatest show dribbler of all-time, the late Marques Haynes.

One celebrity event that featured the Wizards at Madison Square Garden included a star-studded cast including Joe DiMaggio, Bill Bradley, Franco Harris, Oscar Robinson, Phylicia Rashad, Luke Perry and Tony Randall.

The Wizards primary focus is fundraising events for non-profits and school organizations. The record is held by Monroe-Woodbury High School for hosting the Wizards 28 years in a row.

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