HISTORY

bring it.

On April 24, 1996 women's basketball announced "We Got Next" as the NBA Board of Governors approved the concept of a Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) to begin play in June 1997.

Since that day in 1996 there have been many firsts for the WNBA—Val Ackerman—the first president of the WNBA, Sheryl Swoopes—the first player signed to the WNBA, Cynthia Cooper—the league's first Most Valuable Player, and the Houston Comets—the first WNBA Champions.

However, the very first for the league was a "to do list." With less than 15 months to tip-off, a league of its own began to unfold for the WNBA as each task was completed. The history of the WNBA follows:

On the air...

Before a player was signed or a staff member was in place, the league announced its broadcast partnerships with NBC, ESPN and Lifetime (The WNBA and ESPN expanded their coverage to include ESPN2 beginning with the 2001 season). It was decided that the WNBA season would be played in the summer when the sports calendar was less crowded and the games could be televised live and in prime time on a consistent basis. During a successful inaugural season, more than 50 million viewers watched WNBA games on three networks. By 1999, WNBA games were broadcast in over 125 countries with 37 broadcasters in 17 languages. New countries for the 1999 season included Germany, Ghana, Haiti, Italy, Lithuania, Uruguay, the United Kingdom and Canada. Canada aired a weekly Friday night game on CTV Sportsnet. Nearly one million viewers per week watched the WNBA on national television during the second and third seasons.

The WNBA delivers an audience unique in sports. In-arena, gender breakdown is approximately 70-30 female-male. The TV audience is about 50-50 female-male, with a strong percentage of non-adult viewers.

The Players and the Teams...

The first of the player signings was announced on October 23, with Sheryl Swoopes and Rebecca Lobo joining the league. The duo was soon followed by Ruthie Bolton-Holifield, Lisa Leslie, Cynthia Cooper, Michele Timms (the first international player) and many more WNBA hopefuls.

Eight teams were announced for the league's inaugural season. The Eastern Conference consisted of the Charlotte Sting, Cleveland Rockers, Houston Comets and the New York Liberty while the Western Conference was comprised of the Los Angeles Sparks, Phoenix Mercury, Sacramento Monarchs and Utah Starzz. On January 16, 1997, the first 16 players were assigned to teams, and on February 27 and Elite Draft added two more players to each team, increasing team rosters to four. The Comets selected Tina Thompson, the Pac-10 Conference's leading scorer, with the first pick of the inaugural WNBA Draft. Margo Dydek, a 7'2" center from Poland, was selected first in the 1998 Draft by the Utah Starzz, two-time Associated Press Women's Basketball Player of the Year Chamique Holdsclaw was the Washington Mystics' number one selection in the 1999 Draft, the Cleveland Rockers made Ann Wauters, center, the first pick in the 2000 Draft and the Seattle Storm selected Australian sensation Lauren Jackson, forward, with the first pick in the 2001 WNBA Draft.

Since the inaugural season, the WNBA has expanded from eight teams to 16, with the Detroit Shock and Washington Mystics joining the league in 1998, the Minnesota Lynx and Orlando Miracle in 1999, and the Indiana Fever, Miami Sol, Portland Fire, and Seattle Storm in 2000. The 2001 season will see 176 women play professional basketball in 256 regular season WNBA games (schedule history: 32 games in 2001, 2000 and 1999, 30 in 1998, 28 in 1997).

With such tremendous growth, the WNBA and the Women's National Basketball Players Association (WNBPA) announced on April 29, 1999 the league's first collective bargaining agreement- a first of it's kind in women's team sports.

The Logos and the Uniforms...

With players and teams in place, the league began its next task of creating logos and uniforms. The red, white and blue official WNBA logo- "Logo Woman"- was selected from about 50

different designs. After developing an extensive list of choices, the team names were selected by the league and the teams based on numerous factors, including: a tie to the NBA team name in that market, a link to a characteristic of each city or state and/or the creation of a name fitting the current sports landscape. The uniforms also underwent several designs, and on May 21 the WNBA unveiled the team uniforms- two shorts silhouettes and three jerseys.

It's a Ball Game...

The WNBA game consists of a 30-second clock, a 19-foot, 9-inch three-point line, two 20-minute halves, eleven-player rosters and a collegiate-regulation size ball. The WNBA's signature orange and oatmeal basketball by Spaulding is 28.5 inches in circumference and one inch smaller than the NBA's regulation ball.

Millions of Fans Join In...

The Inaugural WNBA season tipped off on June 21, 1997 with the New York Liberty taking on the Los Angeles Sparks at the Great Western Forum in Inglewood, California. A crowd of 14,284 watched as Sparks guard Penny Toler scored the first basket in WNBA history. The Liberty defeated the Sparks 67-57. Then on August 22, the WNBA league attendance surpassed the one million mark at America West Arena in Phoenix. The league concluded a successful inaugural season with a league-wide average attendance of 9,669. In year two, the average attendance increased to 10,869 and by the third year, the WNBA had set a new attendance record for the league and women's professional team sports by drawing 1,959,733 fans during the regular season. The 1999 league-wide attendance average of 10,207 fans per game marked the second consecutive season that the WNBA averaged crowds of more than 10,000. Over seven million fans have attended WNBA games since the league's inaugural season in 1997. The WNBA has had 293 games draw 10,000 or more fans through its first four seasons.

Fans Get Connected...

In addition to television, the league website, WNBA.com is an important tool in reaching fans. The site (www.wnba.com) offers the latest WNBA news, multimedia coverage, fan interaction with players and more. The WNBA was the first major sports league to provide complete live cybercast of a draft exclusively over the Internet. For its exclusive live cybercast of the 1999 WNBA Draft, WNBA.com registered 376,100 impressions, a 194 percent increase over the 1998 WNBA Draft (128,000 impressions), breaking all previous records for most traffic on any given day in the site's three year history.

In the Community...

For the WNBA, the focus is two primary outreach initiatives: WNBA Be Active, a grassroots program that targets boys and girls ages 11-14 with the goal of encouraging them to be physically active; and WNBA Breast Health Initiative, a partnership with the National Alliance of Breast Cancer Organizations (NABCO) to draw national attention to the issue of breast cancer and the importance of early detection through the 3-Point Play for Good Breast Health- clinical breast exam, self-exam, and mammography.

League Showcases All-Stars...

On July 14, 1999, the league held the Inaugural WNBA All-Star Game at Madison Square Garden. The sold-out game (18,649) showcased the incredible sportsmanship, teamwork, player enthusiasm, fan involvement, and in-arena excitement that have made the WNBA so special. The Western Conference All-Stars- led by the game's Most Valuable Player and Los Angeles Sparks center Lisa Leslie- defeated the Eastern Conference team, 79-61 in front of an ESPN national television audience. The 2000 WNBA All-Star Game was held at a sold-out America West Arena in Phoenix on July 17. An ESPN national television audience watched the West win for the second consecutive year behind Houston center Tina Thompson's MVP effort.

We Got Game...

Women's basketball has come a long way since its beginnings in 1892 when Senda Berenson adapted James Naismith's basketball rules for women. And with the continued growth of the WNBA, it plans to go even further. For more information on the WNBA and its history, log onto http://www.wnba.com.

bring it.

FIRST ROUND

Team	(2002 Record)		
1	Cleveland	(10-22)	LaToya Thomas
2	Sacramento	(14-18)	Chantelle Anderson
3	Detroit	(9-23)	Cheryl Ford
4	Phoenix	(11-21)	Plenette Pierson
5	Detroit from Connecticut	(16-16)	Kara Lawson
6	Indiana	(16-16)	Gwen Jackson
7	Washington	(17-15)	Aiysha Smith
8	Seattle	(17-15)	Sun-Min Jung
9	Charlotte	(18-14)	Jocelyn Penn
10	New York	(18-14)	Molly Creamer
11	San Antonio	(20-12)	Coretta Brown
12	Houston	(24-8)	Allison Curtin

SECOND ROUND (not affected by the Lottery)

Team	(2002 Record)		
1	Connecticut from Detroit	(9-23)	Courtney Coleman
2	Minnesota	(10-22)	Teresa Edwards
3	Cleveland	(10-22)	Jennifer Butler
4	Phoenix	(11-21)	Petra Ujhelyi
5	New York from Sacramento	(14-18)	Erin Thorn
6	Minnesota from Miami	(15-17)	Jordan Adams
7	Houston from Connecticut	(16-16)	Lori Nero
8	Indiana		DeTrina White
9	Washington	(17-15)	Zuzana Zirkova
10	Seattle	(17-15)	Suzy Batkovic
11	Charlotte	(18-14)	Dana Cherry
12	New York	(18-14)	Sonja Mallory
13	San Antonio	(20-12)	Ke-Ke Tardy
14	New York from Houston	(24-8)	K.B. Sharp
15	Los Angeles	(25-7)	Schuye LaRue

THIRD ROUND (not affected by the Lottery)

Team	(2002 Record)		
1	Detroit	(9-23)	Syreeta Bromfield
2	Minnesota	(10-22)	Carla Bennett
3	Cleveland	(10-22)	Shaquala Williams
4	Phoenix	(11-21)	Telisha Quarles
5	Washington from Sacramento	(14-18)	Trish Juhline
6	Phoenix from Miami	(15-17)	Marion Jones
7	Connecticut	(16-160	Lindsey Wilson
8	Indiana	(16-16)	Ashley McElhiney
9	Washington	(17-15)	Tamara Bowie
10	Seattle	(17-15)	Chrissy Floyd
11	Houston from Charlotte	(18-14)	Constance Jinks
12	New York	(18-14)	Nicole Kaczmarski
13	San Antonio	(20-12)	Brooke Armistead
14	Houston	(24-8)	Oxyana Rokhmaxulina
15	Los Angeles	(25-7)	Mary Jo Noon

In 2002, the WNBA concluded its sixth season by drawing 2,558,559 fans for the regular season and playoffs. The league averaged 9,372 fans per game. The fourth annual WNBA All-Star game was held in Washington D.C. as All-Star MVP Lisa Leslie led the Western Conference over the Eastern Conference 81-76 at a sold out MCI Center (19,487).

The 2002 WNBA Playoffs saw the Los Angeles Sparks successfully defend their WNBA title by sweeping through the entire postseason. The back-to-back champion Sparks began the 2002 WNBA Playoffs by sweeping the upstart Seattle Storm 2-0 in first round play. The Sparks kept the brooms out during the Western Conference Finals as they swept the Utah Starzz 2-0 in advancing to the 2002 WNBA Finals. Los Angeles captured their second consecutive league championship by defeating the Eastern Conference Champion New York Liberty 2-0 in an exciting 2002 WNBA Finals match-up.

New York earned the right to play the Sparks in the WNBA Finals by outlasting the Washington Mystics 2-1 in the Eastern Conference Finals. Washington advanced to the Eastern Conference Finals by eliminating the Charlotte Sting with a 2-0 series sweep in first round play. New York opened its first round play with a come-from-behind 2-1 series win over the Indiana Fever.

WNBA Final Standings - 2002 Regular Season

Eastern Conference

		W	L	PCT.	GB	Home	Road	Last 10	Streak
1	New York	18	14	.562	–	10-6	8-8	5-5	Lost 2
2	Charlotte	18	14	.562	–	11-5	7-9	5-5	Won 4
3	Washington	17	15	.531	1	9-7	8-8	2-8	Lost 1
4	Indiana	16	16	.500	2	10-6	6-10	7-3	Won 2
	Orlando	16	16	.500	2	10-6	6-10	6-4	Won 2
	Miami	15	17	.469	3	9-7	6-10	5-5	Won 1
	Cleveland	10	22	.312	8	4-12	6-10	2-8	Lost 6
	Detroit	9	23	.281	9	7-9	2-14	5-5	Lost 2

Western Conference

		W	L	PCT.	GB	Home	Road	Last 10	Streak
1	Los Angeles	25	7	.781	–	12-4	13-3	7-3	Won 3
2	Houston	24	8	.750	1	14-2	10-6	8-2	Won 1
3	Utah	20	12	.625	5	12-4	8-8	5-5	Won 1
4	Seattle	17	15	.531	8	10-6	7-9	7-3	Lost 1
	Portland	16	16	.500	9	9-7	7-9	3-7	Lost 4
	Sacramento	14	18	.437	11	10-6	4-12	8-2	Won 1
	Phoenix	11	21	.344	14	10-6	1-15	3-7	Lost 1
	Minnesota	10	22	.312	15	7-9	3-13	3-7	Lost 3

Individual Accolades

WNBA MVP
Sheryl Swoopes, Houston Comets

WNBA Coach of the Year
Marianne Stanley, Washington Mystics

Defensive Player of the Year
Sheryl Swoopes, Houston Comets

Rookie of the Year
Tamika Catchings, Indiana Fever

Kim Perrot Sportsmanship Award Winner
Jennifer Gillom, Phoenix Mercury

Most Improved Player of the Year
Coco Miller, Washington Mystics

Championship Series MVP
Lisa Leslie, Los Angeles Sparks

All-WNBA First Team

Forward	Sheryl Swoopes, Houston Comets
Forward	Tamika Catchings, Indiana Fever
Center	Lisa Leslie, Los Angeles Sparks
Guard	Sue Bird, Seattle Storm
Guard	Mwadi Mabika, Los Angeles Sparks

All-WNBA Second Team

Forward	Chamique Holdsclaw, Washington Mystics
Forward	Tina Thompson, Houston Comets
Center	Tari Phillips, New York Liberty
Guard	Shannon Johnson, Orlando Miracle
Guard	Katie Smith, Minnesota Lynx

bring it.

In 2001, the WNBA concluded its fifth season by drawing 2,528,898 fans for the regular season and playoffs. The league averaged 9,075 fans per game. For the first time in the league's five-year history the WNBA did not expand and remained at 16 teams divided into two conferences. The third annual WNBA All-Star game was held in Orlando, Florida as All-Star MVP Lisa Leslie led the Western Conference over the Eastern Conference 80-72 at a sold out TD Waterhouse Centre (16,906).

The 2001 WNBA Playoffs were three rounds and were perhaps the league's most exciting postseason ever as four of the seven three-game playoff series reached the decisive third game. The Eastern Conference saw considerable parity as each of its three-game playoff series went the distance. Upstart Charlotte used a seven game regular season ending win streak as momentum towards their upset of the #1 seeded Cleveland Rockers. The Sting defeated the Rockers 2-1 in the First Round of Eastern Conference play. The #2 seed New York Liberty were pushed to three games by the #3 seed Miami Sol, but prevailed 2-1 and advanced to the Eastern Conference Finals for the fourth time in five years. Despite not having home court advantage for the second consecutive playoff series, Charlotte toppled New York 2-1 in the Eastern Conference Finals and advanced to its first-ever WNBA Championship Round.

First Round play in the Western Conference saw the brooms come out as #1 seed Los Angeles swept #4 seeded Houston 2-0 and #2 seed Sacramento swept #3 seed Utah 2-0. Los Angeles then outlasted Sacramento 2-1 to win the Western Conference Finals and advance to its first-ever WNBA Championship Round. The Sparks proved their regular season league-best 28-4 mark was no fluke as they swept the Sting 2-0 in the 2001 WNBA Championship Series, capturing their first-ever WNBA title. The WNBA broke its postseason attendance record when a crowd of 13,141 attended the last game of the league finals in Los Angeles. The 2001 WNBA Playoffs drew 205,734, up from last year's record of 199,936.

WNBA Final Standings

2001 Regular Season
Eastern Conference

	W	L	PCT.	GB	Home	Road	Last 10	Streak
1 Cleveland	22	10	.687	—	14-2	8-8	5-5	Lost 3
2 New York	21	11	.656	1	13-3	8-8	5-5	Won 1
3 Miami	20	12	.625	2	10-6	10-6	7-3	Lost 1
4 Charlotte	18	14	.562	4	11-5	7-9	9-1	Won 7
Orlando	13	19	.406	9	10-6	3-13	4-6	Won 1
Detroit	10	22	.312	12	6-10	4-12	4-6	Won 1
Indiana	10	22	.312	12	7-9	3-13	3-7	Lost 1
Washington	10	22	.312	12	8-8	2-14	4-6	Lost 1

Western Conference

	W	L	PCT.	GB	Home	Road	Last 10	Streak
1 Los Angeles	28	4	.875	—	16-0	12-4	9-1	Won 1
2 Sacramento	20	12	.625	8	12-4	8-8	7-3	Won 4
3 Utah	19	13	.594	9	9-7	10-6	3-7	Won 1
4 Houston	19	13	.594	9	11-5	8-8	4-6	Lost 1
Phoenix	13	19	.406	15	10-6	3-13	3-7	Lost 1
Minnesota	12	20	.375	16	6-10	6-10	5-5	Won 2
Portland	11	21	.344	17	6-10	5-11	0-10	Lost 10
Seattle	10	22	.312	18	5-11	5-11	2-8	Lost 3

Individual Accolades

WNBA MVP
Lisa Leslie, Los Angeles Sparks

WNBA Coach of the Year
Dan Hughes, Cleveland Rockers

Defensive Player of the Year
Debbie Black, Miami Sol

Rookie of the Year
Jackie Stiles, Portland Fire

Kim Perrot Sportsmanship Award Winner
Sue Wicks, New York Liberty

Most Improved Player of the Year
Janeth Arcain, Houston Comets

Championship Series MVP
Lisa Leslie, Los Angeles Sparks

All-WNBA Second Team

Forward	Tina Thompson, Houston Comets
Forward	Chamique Holdsclaw, Washington Mystics
Center	Yolanda Griffith, Sacramento Monarchs
Guard	Ticha Peicherio, Sacramento Monarchs
Guard	Tamecka Dixon, Los Angeles Sparks

All-WNBA First Team

Forward	Katie Smith, Minnesota Lynx
Forward	Natalie Williams, Utah Starzz
Center	Lisa Leslie, Los Angeles Sparks
Guard	Janeth Arcain, Houston Comets
Guard	Merlakia Jones, Cleveland Rockers

WNBA 2000 Year in Review

In 2000, the WNBA eclipsed its own total attendance record for women's professional team sports, attracting over 2.5 million fans. More than 7,000,000 fans have attended WNBA games since the league's launch in 1997. The league's two conferences expanded to eight teams each as the WNBA welcomed expansion teams Indiana and Miami in the eastern conference, as well as Portland and Seattle in the western conference. The 2nd annual WNBA All-Star game was held in Phoenix as All-Star MVP Tina Thompson led the Western Conference over the Conference at a sold out America West Arena.

The 2000 WNBA Playoffs were three rounds and expanded to include four teams from each conference for a total of eight qualifying playoff teams. First Round action saw both #1 seeds sweep their #4 seed opponents as the eastern conference New York Liberty eliminated the Washington Mystics 2-0 and the western conference Los Angeles Sparks defeated the Phoenix Mercury 2-0. Both #2 seeds also advanced to their respective conference finals as the Cleveland Rockers held off the #3 seed Orlando Miracle 2-1 in the east and the defending champion Houston Comets pushed back the #3 seed Sacramento Monarchs 2-0 in the west. New York came back from a 0-1 deficit to defeat Cleveland 2-1 and claim the Eastern Conference Championship. Houston swept 2000 WNBA regular season champion Los Angeles 2-0 in winning their fourth consecutive Western Conference title and setting up a rematch with New York for the 2000 WNBA Championship. Houston marched to their fourth consecutive WNBA championship and remained the only champion the WNBA has ever had by defeating New York 2-0 for the 2000 WNBA Championship. The WNBA attracted record crowds during all three rounds of the 2000 Playoffs, including sell-outs of both games during the championship round.

WNBA Final Standings
2000 Regular Season
Eastern Conference

	W	L	PCT	GB	Home	Road	Last-10	Streak
1 New York	20	12	.625	-	12-4	8-8	7-3	Lost 1
2 Cleveland	17	15	.531	3	13-3	4-12	4-6	Lost 2
3 Orlando	16	16	.500	4	11-5	5-11	2-8	Lost 1
4 Washington	14	18	.438	6	7-9	7-9	4-6	Won 1
Detroit	14	18	.438	6	8-8	6-10	4-6	Won 2
Miami	13	19	.406	7	9-7	4-12	5-5	Won 3
Indiana	9	23	.281	11	5-11	4-12	3-7	Won 1
Charlotte	8	24	.250	12	5-11	3-13	3-7	Lost 2

Western Conference

	W	L	PCT	GB	Home	Road	Last-10	Streak
1 Los Angeles	28	4	.875	-	15-1	13-3	9-1	Lost 1
2 Houston	27	5	.844	1	14-2	13-3	8-2	Won 5
3 Sacramento	21	11	.656	7	13-3	8-8	8-2	Won 1
4 Phoenix	20	12	.625	8	11-5	9-7	6-4	Won 1
Utah	18	14	.563	10	12-4	6-10	6-4	Won 2
Minnesota	15	17	.469	13	8-8	7-9	5-5	Lost 1
Portland	10	22	.313	18	6-10	4-12	3-7	Lost 4
Seattle	6	26	.188	22	4-12	2-14	3-7	Lost 2

Individual Accolades

WNBA MVP
Sheryl Swoopes, Houston Comets

WNBA Coach of the Year
Michael Cooper, Los Angeles Sparks

Defensive Player of the Year
Sheryl Swoopes, Houston Comets

Rookie of the Year
Betty Lennox, Minnesota Lynx

Kim Perrot Sportsmanship Award
Susie McConnell Serio, Cleveland Rockers

Most Improved Player of the Year
Tari Philips, New York Liberty

American Express Small Business Service
WNBA Entrepreneurial Award Winner
Monica Lamb, Houston Comets

Championship Series MVP
Cynthia Cooper, Houston Comets

ALL-WNBA FIRST TEAM

Forward	Sheryl Swoopes, Houston Comets
Forward	Natalie Williams, Utah Starzz
Center	Lisa Leslie, Los Angeles Sparks
Guard	Cynthia Cooper, Houston Comets
Guard	Ticha Penicherio, Sacramento Monarchs

ALL-WNBA SECOND TEAM

Forward	Katie Smith, Minnesota Lynx
Forward	Tina Thompson, Houston Comets
Center	Yolanda Griffith, Sacramento Monarchs
Guard	Teresa Weatherspoon, New York Liberty
Guard	Betty Lennox, Minnesota Lynx
Guard	Shannon Johnson, Orlando Miracle

bring it.

In 1999, the WNBA concluded its third regular season by drawing 1,959,733 fans and setting a new attendance record for the league and women's professional team sports. The league averaged 10,207 fans per game and toppled the four million mark in all-time attendance since the league's inaugural season in 1997. The league's two conferences expanded to six teams each as the WNBA welcomed expansion teams Minnesota and Orlando. The inaugural WNBA All-Star game was held in New York City as All-Star MVP Lisa Leslie led the Western Conference over the Eastern Conference 79-61 at a sold out Madison Square Garden (18,649).

The 1999 WNBA Playoffs were expanded to three rounds and each conference regular season champion received a first round bye. Round One saw the #3 seed Charlotte Sting defeat the #2 seed Detroit Shock in a one game playoff in the Eastern Conference and saw the #2 seed Los Angeles Sparks defeat the #3 seed Sacramento Monarchs in a one game playoff in the Western Conference. The New York Liberty outlasted Charlotte 2-1 in the Eastern Conference Finals while the defending champion Houston Comets slipped by Los Angeles 2-1 in the Western Conference Finals. Houston was crowned three-time WNBA champions as they held off New York 2-1 in a memorable WNBA Championship.

WNBA Final Standings
1999 Regular Season

Eastern Conference

		W	L	PCT	GB	Home	Road	Last-10	Streak
1	New York	18	14	.563	—	12-4,	6-10	6-4	Lost 1
2	Detroit	15	17	.469	3	7-9,	8-8	5-5	Won 2
3	Charlotte	15	17	.469	3	8-8,	7-9	3-7	Lost 5
	Orlando	15	17	.469	3	8-8,	7-9	6-4	Lost 1
	Washington	12	20	.375	6	6-10,	6-10	6-4	Lost 3
	Cleveland	7	25	.219	11	5-11,	2-14	2-8	Won 1

Western Conference

		W	L	PCT	GB	Home	Road	Last-10	Streak
1	Houston	26	6	.813	—	15-1,	11-5	8-2	Won 1
2	Los Angeles	20	12	.625	6	13-3,	7-9	4-6	Lost 1
3	Sacramento	19	13	.594	7	11-5,	8-8	5-5	Lost 3
	Minnesota	15	17	.469	11	8-8,	7-9	3-7	Won 1
	Phoenix	15	17	.469	11	12-4,	3-13	5-5	Lost 2
	Utah	15	17	.469	11	11-5,	4-12	7-3	Won 2

Individual Accolades

WNBA MVP
Yolonda Griffith, Sacramento Monarchs

WNBA Coach of the Year
Van Chancellor, Houston Comets

Defensive Player of the Year
Yolonda Griffith, Sacramento Monarchs

Rookie of the Year
Chamique Holdsclaw, Washington Mystics

Kim Perrot Sportsmanship Award
Dawn Staley, Charlotte Sting

Newcomer of the Year
Yolonda Griffith, Sacramento Monarchs

American Express Small Business Service WNBA Entrepreneurial Award Winner
Dawn Staley, Charlotte Sting

Championship Series MVP
Cynthia Cooper, Houston Comets

ALL-WNBA FIRST TEAM

Forward	Sheryl Swoopes, Houston Comets
Forward	Natalie Williams, Utah Starzz
Center	Yolanda Griffith, Sacramento Monarchs
Guard	Cynthia Cooper, Houston Comets
Guard	Ticha Penicherio, Sacramento Monarchs

ALL-WNBA SECOND TEAM

Forward	Chamique Holdsclaw, Washington Mystics
Forward	Tina Thompson, Houston Comets
Center	Lisa Leslie, Los Angeles Sparks
Guard	Teresa Weatherspoon, New York Liberty
Guard	Shannon Johnson, Orlando Miracle

In 1998, attendance continued to soar during the WNBA's second season as the league welcomed expansion teams Washington and Detroit. League attendance increased by 12% in 1998 as over 1.6 million fans were entertained throughout the season. On June 19, Washington played host to the largest crowd in 1998 and in WNBA history as 20,674 fans filled the MCI Center to watch the Mystics battle the Starzz. Washington equaled the feat on July 21 when 20,674 fans watched Washington play the Charlotte Sting.

The 1998 playoffs were expanded into a best two out of three format. The semifinals saw the Phoenix Mercury outlast the regular season Eastern Conference champion Cleveland Rockers two games to one. Defending WNBA champion Houston swept the Charlotte Sting two games to zero in their semifinals matchup and Houston, led by 1998 league MVP Cynthia Cooper, successfully defended their title by defeating Phoenix two games to one in the 1998 WNBA Championship.

WNBA Final Standings
1998 Regular Season
Eastern Conference

		W	L	PCT	GB	Home	Road	Last-10	Streak
2	Cleveland	20	10	.667	-	11-4	9-6	8-2	Won 4
4	Charlotte	18	12	.600	2	9-6	9-6	4-6	Won 1
	New York	18	12	.600	2	12-3	6-9	7-3	Lost 2
	Detroit	17	13	.567	3	11-4,	6-9	6-4	Won 2
	Washington	3	27	.100	17	3-12	0-15	1-9	Lost 5

Western Conference

		W	L	PCT	GB	Home	Road	Last-10	Streak
1	Houston	27	3	.900	-	14-1	13-2	8-2	Won 2
3	Phoenix	19	11	.633	8	12-3	7-8	7-3	Won 4
	Los Angeles	12	18	.400	15	8-7	4-11	5-5	Lost 2
	Sacramento	8	22	.267	19	5-10	3-12	2-8	Lost 2
	Utah	8	22	.267	19	5-10	3-12	1-9	Lost 3

Individual Accolades

WNBA MVP
Cynthia Cooper, Houston Comets

WNBA Coach of the Year
Van Chancellor, Houston Comets

Defensive Player of the Year
Teresa Weatherspoon, New York Liberty

Rookie of the Year
Tracy Reid, Charlotte Sting

Sportsmanship Award Winner
Suzie McConnell Serio, Cleveland Rockers

Newcomer of the Year
Suzie McConnell Serio, Cleveland Rockers

Championship Series MVP
Cynthia Cooper, Houston Comets

ALL-WNBA FIRST TEAM

Forward	Tina Thompson, Houston Comets
Forward	Sheryl Swoopes, Houston Comets
Center	Jennifer Gillom, Phoenix Mercury
Guard	Cynthia Cooper, Houston Comets
Guard	Suzie McConnell Serio, Cleveland Rockers

ALL-WNBA SECOND TEAM

Forward	Cindy Brown, Detroit Shock
Forward	Eva Nemcova, Cleveland Rockers
Center	Lisa Leslie, Los Angeles Sparks
Guard	Andrea Stinson, Charlotte Sting
Guard	Teresa Weatherspoon, New York Liberty

bring it.

The Women's National Basketball Association made its debut on June 21, 1997 and enjoyed a very successful inaugural campaign. Eight teams, divided into two conferences, competed in the 1997 WNBA season. In the one-game playoff semifinal, Houston swatted down the Charlotte Sting 70-54 and New York cooled off the Phoenix Mercury 59-41 to set up a showdown of the Eastern Conference's top two teams in the one-game WNBA Championship. Led by 1997 league MVP Cynthia Cooper, Houston defeated New York 65-51 in the championship at The Summit to become the first-ever WNBA Champion.

Including the 1997 playoffs, the WNBA averaged 9,804 fans per game, amounting to more than one million fans over the entire season. Phoenix led the league in attendance, averaging 13,703 per game and Charlotte set the 1997 single-game attendance record versus Houston on August 16 when 18,937 fans converged upon the Coliseum to watch the Sting defeat the Comets.

WNBA Final Standings
1997 Regular Season
Eastern Conference

		W	L	PCT	GB	Conference	Last-10	Streak
1	Houston	18	10	.643	-	6-6, .500	7-3	Lost 2
3	New York	17	11	.607	1	8-4, .667	3-7	Won 1
4	Charlotte	15	13	.536	3	5-7, .417	5-5	Won 1
	Cleveland	15	13	.536	3	5-7, .417	5-5	Lost 1

Western Conference

		W	L	PCT	GB	Conference	Last-10	Streak
2	Phoenix	16	12	.571	-	9-3, .750	7-3	Won 3
	Los Angeles	14	14	.500	2	8-4, .667	6-4	Lost 1
	Sacramento	10	18	.357	6	4-8, .333	5-5	Won 1
	Utah	7	21	.250	9	3-9, .250	2-8	Lost 2

Individual Accolades

WNBA MVP
Cynthia Cooper, Houston Comets

WNBA Coach of the Year
Van Chancellor, Houston Comets

Defensive Player of the Year
Teresa Weatherspoon, New York Liberty

Sportsmanship Award Winner
Haixia Zheng, Los Angeles Sparks

Championship Game MVP
Cynthia Cooper, Houston Comets

ALL-WNBA FIRST TEAM

Forward	Tina Thompson, Houston Comets
Forward	Eva Nemcova, Cleveland Rockers
Center	Lisa Leslie, Los Angeles Sparks
Guard	Cynthia Cooper, Houston Comets
Guard	Ruthie Bolton-Holifield, Sacramento Monarchs

ALL-WNBA SECOND TEAM

Forward	Wendy Palmer, Utah Starzz
Forward	Rebecca Lobo, New York Liberty
Center	Jennifer Gillom, Phoenix Mercury
Guard	Teresa Weatherspoon, New York Liberty
Guard	Andrea Stinson, Charlotte Sting

THE PALACE OF AUBURN HILLS

	GAMES	TOTAL	AVERAGE
1998	15	153,435	10,229
1999	16	135,753	8,485
2000	16	107,449	6,716
2001	16	109,348	6,833
2002	16	100,479	6,280
5 YR. Total	***79***	***606,464***	***7,677***

SHOCK ROAD ATTENDANCE

	GAMES	TOTAL	AVERAGE
1998	15	152,960	10,197
1999	16	144,651	9,041
2000	16	162,382	10,149
2001	16	142,717	8,920
2002	16	158,861	9,929
5 YR. Total	***79***	***761,571***	***9,641***

TOP 10 ALL-TIME SHOCK CROWDS AT THE PALACE:

16,246 vs. New York 1998
15,574 vs. Charlotte 1998
15,338 vs. Houston 1998
14,181 vs. Los Angeles 1998
13,378 vs. New York 2001
12,378 vs. Orlando 1999
12,106 vs. New York 1999
11,253 vs. Utah 1999
10,893 vs. New York 2002
10,248 vs. Sacramento 1998

BIGGEST SHOCK HOME OPENING NIGHT CROWD:

June 13th, 1998 - 15,574 vs. Charlotte

BIGGEST SHOCK HOME PLAYOFF CROWD:

August 24th, 1999 - 6,917 vs. Charlotte

TOP 10 SHOCK ROAD CROWDS:

1.19,766 Shock@Washington 2002
2.19,093 Shock @ Washington 2001
3. 17,906 Shock @ Washington 1998
4. 16,548 Shock @ Washington 2000
5. 15,755 Shock @ New York 1999
6. 15,223 Shock @ New York 2001
7. 15,198 Shock @ Indiana 2001
8. 15,114 Shock @ New York 1998
9. 14,398 Shock @ Phoenix 1998
10. 14,314 Shock @ Washington 1998

BIGGEST SHOCK ROAD PLAYOFF CROWD:

N/A

TOP 10 SINGLE-GAME ATTENDANCES IN WNBA HISTORY

t1. 20,674, 06/10/1999
WAS 73 vs CHA 83 - MCI Center
t1. 20,674 , 06/19/1998
WAS 85 vs UTA 76 - MCI Center
t1. 20,674 , 07/21/1998
WAS 67 vs CHA 84 - MCI Center
t1. 20,674, 07/21/1999
WAS 68 vs CLE 85 - MCI Center
5. 19,974, 08/14/1999
WAS 55 vs LA 53 - MCI Center
6. 19,839 , 08/21/1999
WAS 45 vs MIN 48 - MCI Center
7. 19,766, 07/18/2002
WAS 63 vs DET 59 - MCI Center
t8. 19,563, 08/08/1999
NY 74 vs HOU 71 - Madison Square Garden
t8. 19,563, 08/11/2002
NY 58 vs CHA 71 - Madison Square Garden
t8. 19,563, 07/23/2000
NY 69 vs HOU 64 - Madison Square Garden
t8. 19,563, 08/15/1998
NY 70 vs HOU 54 - Madison Square Garden

LEAGUE-WIDE YEAR-BY-YEAR ATTENDANCE

Season	Teams	Games	Attendance	Ave.
2002	16	256	2,362,412	9,228
2001	16	256	2,323,164	9,075
2000	16	256	2,322,822	9,074
1999	12	192	1,959,733	10,207
1998	10	150	1,630,315	10,869
1997	8	112	1,082,963	9,669
TOTALS	X	966	11,681,409	12,093

ALL-TIME WNBA ALL-STAR ATTENDANCE:

18,649 (Sell-out) @ New York 1999
17,717 (Sell-out) @ Phoenix 2000
16,906 (Sell-out) @ Orlando 2001
19,487 (Sell-out) @ Washington 2002

WNBA All-Time Franchise Records

bring it.

WNBA CHAMPIONS

SEASON	CHAMPION	W-L	FINALIST	W-L
1997	Houston	18-10	New York	17-11
1998	Houston	27-3	Phoenix	19-11
1999	Houston	26-6	New York	18-14
2000	Houston	27-5	New York	20-12
2001	Los Angeles	28-4	Charlotte	18-14
2002	Los Angeles	25-7	New York	18-14

ALL-TIME FRANCHISE RECORDS
REGULAR SEASON

WINNING PERCENTAGE	
Houston Comets	.758
Los Angeles Sparks	.683
New York Liberty	.602
Phoenix Mercury	.505
Miami Sol	.500
Sacramento Monarchs	.495
Charlotte Sting	.495
Cleveland Rockers	.489
Orlando Miracle	.469
Utah Starzz	.468
Detroit Shock	.411 (11)
Minnesota Lynx	.406
Portland Fire	.385
Indiana Fever	.365
Washington Mystics	.354
Seattle Storm	.344

WINS-LOSSES	RECORD	W	L
Houston Comets	141-45	23.5	7.5
Los Angeles Sparks	127-59	21.2	9.8
New York Liberty	112-74	18.7	12.3
Phoenix Mercury	94-92	15.7	15.3
Sacramento Monarchs	92-94	15.3	15.7
Charlotte Sting	92-94	15.3	15.7
Cleveland Rockers	91-95	15.2	15.8
Utah Starzz	87-99	14.5	16.5
Detroit Shock	65-93	13.0	18.6 (9)
Orlando Miracle	60-68	15.0	17.0
Washington Mystics	56-102	11.2	20.4
Minnesota Lynx	52-76	13.0	19.0
Miami Sol	48-48	16.0	16.0
Portland Fire	37-59	12.3	19.7
Indiana Fever	35-61	11.7	20.3
Seattle Storm	33-63	11.0	21.0

HOME	W	L	PCT
Houston Comets	77	16	.818
Los Angeles Sparks	72	21	.774
New York Liberty	69	24	.742
Phoenix Mercury	66	27	.710
Sacramento Monarchs	58	35	.624
Orlando Miracle	39	25	.609
Charlotte Sting	56	37	.602
Cleveland Rockers	55	38	.591
Miami Sol	28	20	.583
Utah Starzz	54	39	.581
Indiana Fever	22	16	.579
Detroit Shock	39	40	.494 (12)
Minnesota Lynx	29	35	.453
Portland Fire	21	27	.438
Washington Mystics	33	46	.418
Seattle Storm	19	29	.396

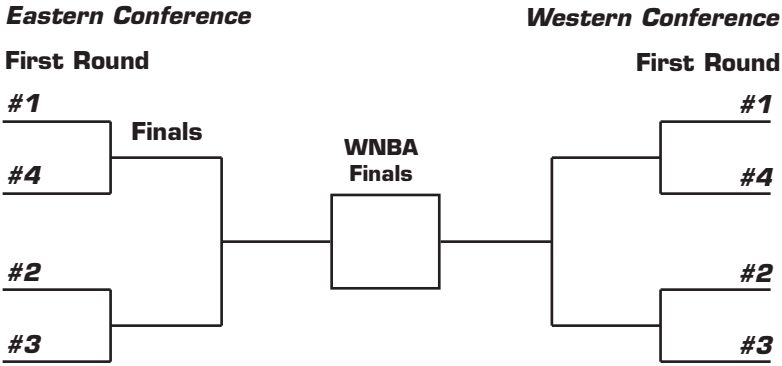
ROAD	W	L	PCT
Houston Comets	64	29	.688
Los Angeles Sparks	55	38	.591
New York Liberty	43	50	.462
Cleveland Rockers	36	57	.387
Charlotte Sting	36	57	.387
Miami Sol	18	30	.375
Sacramento Monarchs	34	59	.366
Minnesota Lynx	23	41	.359
Utah Starzz	33	60	.355
Portland Fire	16	32	.333
Detroit Shock	26	53	.329 (11)
Orlando Miracle	21	43	.328
Phoenix Mercury	28	65	.301
Seattle Storm	14	34	.292
Washington Mystics	23	56	.291
Indiana Fever	13	35	.271

CONFERENCE WINNERS

SEASON	EAST	W-L	WEST	W-L
1997	Houston	18-10	Phoenix	16-12
1998	Cleveland	20-10	Houston	27-3
1999	New York	18-14	Houston	26-6
2000	New York	20-12	Los Angeles	28-4
2001	Cleveland	22-10	Los Angeles	28-4
2002	New York	18-14	Los Angeles	25-7

2003 WNBA Playoff Format

Eight teams qualify for 2003 WNBA Playoffs, the top four teams from each conference. The first and fourth place teams and the second and third place teams will each play a best-of-three first round series. The winners of the first round series in each conference the play a best-of-three conference final. The two conference final winners will meet in a best-of-three championship series called the WNBA Finals.



Tie-Break Procedure:
Two-way tie between teams in the same conference
In order to break a tie, the following criteria will be utilized in the order set forth:

1. Better record in head-to-head games
2. Better winning percentage within own conference
3. Better winning percentage against all teams with .500 or better record at the end of the season
4. Better point differential in games head-to-head
5. Coin Toss

Two-way tie between teams in different conferences
In order to break a tie, the following criteria will be utilized in the order set forth:

1. Better record in head-to-head games
2. Better winning percentage against teams in the opposite conference
3. Better winning percentage against all teams with .500 or better record at the end of the season
4. Better point differential in games head-to-head
5. Coin toss

More than two teams tied
In order to break a tie, the following criteria will be utilized in the order set forth:

1. Better winning percentage among all head-to-head games involving tied teams
2. Better winning percentage against teams within conference (if all teams are from the same conference) or better record against teams in the opposite conference (if one or more teams are in different conferences)
3. Better winning percentage against all teams with a .500 or better record at the end of the season
4. Better point differential in games involving tied teams
5. Coin toss

WNBA All-Time Playoff Results (1997-2002)

bring it.

1997

Semifinals

Charlotte
Houston (1-0)
Houston

WNBA Championship

Houston (1-0)

Semifinals

New York
New York (1-0)
Phoenix

1998

Semifinals

Charlotte
Houston (2-0)
Houston

WNBA Championship

Houston (2-1)

Semifinals

Cleveland
Phoenix (2-1)
Phoenix

1999

Eastern Conference
First Round

Charlotte
Detroit
Charlotte (1-0)
Bye
New York
New York

Finals

Charlotte (1-0)
New York (2-1)

Western Conference
First Round

Sacramento
Los Angeles
Los Angeles (1-0)
Bye
Houston
Houston

Finals

Los Angeles (1-0)
Houston (2-1)

WNBA Championship

Houston (2-1)

2000

Eastern Conference
First Round

Orlando
Cleveland
Cleveland (2-1)
Washington
New York
New York (2-0)

Finals

Cleveland (2-1)
New York (2-1)

Western Conference
First Round

Phoenix
Los Angeles
Los Angeles (2-0)
Sacramento
Houston
Houston (2-0)

Finals

Los Angeles (2-0)
Houston (2-0)

WNBA Championship

Houston (2-0)

2001

Eastern Conference
First Round

Miami
New York
New York (2-1)
Charlotte
Cleveland
Charlotte (2-1)

Finals

New York (2-1)
Charlotte (2-1)

Western Conference
First Round

Utah
Sacramento
Sacramento (2-0)
Houston
Los Angeles
Los Angeles (2-0)

Finals

Sacramento (2-0)
Los Angeles (2-0)

WNBA Championship

Los Angeles (2-0)

2002

Eastern Conference
First Round

Washington
Charlotte
Washington (2-0)
Indiana
New York
New York (2-1)

Finals

Washington (2-0)
New York (2-1)

Western Conference
First Round

Utah
Houston
Utah (2-1)
Seattle
Los Angeles
Los Angeles (2-0)

Finals

Utah (2-1)
Los Angeles (2-0)

WNBA Championship

Los Angeles (2-0)

2003 WNBA All-Star Game

The 2003 WNBA All-Star game will be played at Madison Square Garden and will be hosted by the Eastern Conference's New York Liberty on July 12, 2003. The league's fifth annual mid-summer event will be televised by ABC at 4:00 p.m. EDT, marking the first-time the game will be shown nationally on network television.

2003 WNBA All-Star Game Media Information:
Camille Currie, New York Liberty PR, 212.465.6208
John Maxwell, WNBA PR 212.407.8641

2002 WNBA ALL-STAR GAME:

Site: MCI Center, Washington D.C.
Host: Eastern Conference Washington Mystics
Attendance: 19,766 (Sellout)
Shock All-Stars: —
Game Recap: 7/15/02-The West All-Stars beat the East All-Stars 81-76 at the sold out MCI Center in Washington, D.C. The five-point margin marked the closest in WNBA All-Star history. Los Angeles' Lisa Leslie won her second straight MVP award while collecting 18 points and 14 rebounds and coming up with two key blocks down the stretch as the Western Conference recorded its fourth straight win in the WNBA Midseason Classic.

2001 WNBA ALL-STAR GAME:

Site: TD Waterhouse Centre, Orlando, FL
Host: Eastern Conference Orlando Miracle
Attendance: (17,306) Sellout
Shock All-Stars: —
Game Recap: 7/16/01-The Western Conference All-Stars claimed their third straight victory by beating the East, 80-72. Los Angeles Sparks center Lisa Leslie earned All-Star Most Valuable Player honors for the second time in three years scoring 20 points and grabbing nine rebounds.

2000 WNBA ALL-STAR GAME:

Site: America West Arena, Phoenix, AZ
Host: Western Conference Phoenix Mercury
Attendance: 17,717 (Sellout)
Shock All-Stars: Forward Wendy Palmer
Palmer Stat Line: 14 minutes, 1-6 FG, 1-2 FT, 2 rebounds, 1 personal foul, 3 points
Game Recap: 7/17/00-The West defeated the East 73-61, improving to 2-0 all-time, in front of an ESPN national television audience and Houston Comet center Tina Thompson was voted Most Valuable Player.

1999 WNBA ALL-STAR GAME:

Site: Madison Square Garden, New York, NY
Host: Eastern Conference New York Liberty
Attendance: 18,649 (Sellout)
Shock All-Stars: Guard Sandy Brondello
Brondello Stat Line: 11 minutes, 4-8 FG, 3 rebounds, 1 assist, 8 points
Game Recap: The WNBA played its inaugural All-Star game before an ESPN national television audience and drew a sell-out crowd of 18, 649. The Western Conference All-Stars, led by the game's Most Valuable Player Lisa Leslie, defeated the Eastern Conference All-Stars, 79-61. Whitney Houston rocked with her rendition of the national anthem and celebrities such as Tyra Banks, Gregory Hines and Spike Lee along with six members of the U.S. Women's Soccer Team, including Mia Hamm, helped keep the fans cheering throughout the historical event.

bring it.

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Patty Broderick

Director of Referee Development
Dee Kantner

2003 WNBA OFFICIALS

(Numerical)

Sue Blauch	4
Matt Boland	6
Clarke Stevens	7
Daryl Humphrey	8
Denise Brooks-Clauser	9
Bob Trammell	10
Scott Yarbrough	15
Darla Foutz Stevens	17
Kurt Walker	18
Teresa Dahlem	20
Melissa Barlow	21
June Courteau	22
Sally Bell	23
Barb Smith	25
Ken Drayton	28
Lisa Mattingly	30
Troy Raymond	31
Leslie Claybrook	32
Lisa Jones	33
Zach Zarba	34
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John Fullilove	36
Cameron Inouye	37
Lamont Simpson	38
Michael Price	39
Bonita Spence	41
Roy Gulbeyan	42
Terri Maddock	43
Tom Mauer	45
Eli Roe	46
Tina Napier	47
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Jeneane Pence	49
Shelley Nakasone	50
Kim Watt	51
Jeff Smith	53
Laura Morris	54
Eric Brewton	55
Carla Fountain	56

(Alphabetical)

Melissa Barlow	21
Sally Bell	23
Sue Blauch	4
Matt Boland	6
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Jeff Smith	53
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Bob Trammell	10
Kurt Walker	18
Kim Watt	51
Scott Yarbrough	15
Zach Zarba	34

President
Valerie B. Ackerman