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MAJOR LEAGUE ANNOUNCEMENT: WNBA'S NEWEST HOME



Nolan Richardson speaks Tuesday at a press conference announcing that the WNBA is coming to Tulsa. At left are Bill Cameron of the ownership group and Donna Orender, WNBA president. STEPHEN PINGRY/Tulsa World

HAPPY HOOPING

It's official: Women's pro basketball is on its way

BY SHANNON MUCHMORE
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Major league sports is coming to Tulsa. A WNBA team that is yet to be named will be tipping off at the BOK Center in May, investors and state officials formally announced Tuesday afternoon.

Gov. Brad Henry and Mayor Kathy Taylor joined the team's new owners and coach for the announcement in the Mayo Hotel downtown.

"We applaud the leadership of Tulsa — of this great state — and we're excited for what will come in a state that really does have great basketball tradition," WNBA President Donna Orender said.

Oklahoma City businessmen Bill

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Cameron and David Box, lead investors in Tulsa Pro Hoops LLC, are moving the Detroit Shock and its roster to Tulsa for the 2010 season. The team name and colors will be decided by fans, Box said. "You all are going to be a part from start to finish, because it's your team," he said.

Season tickets, which begin at \$25 a game and go up to \$105 per game, are on sale now.

Nolan Richardson, the new team's coach and general manager, is no stranger to Tulsans. He's new to

women's basketball, but he coached men's basketball at the University of Tulsa in the early 1980s and went on to win a national championship at the University of Arkansas in 1994.

"I am looking so forward to coaching these women from the Detroit Shock basketball team," he said. "Watching them play excites me."

The WNBA has 13 teams that play seasons of 34 games, including 17 at home. The league represents the highest level of women's professional basketball.

"This is a day we're going to remember, not because of what we've accomplished, but because of what we've begun," Cameron said.

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