

SHAWNEE, OK – A historic season came to a historic end on Sunday night as the Potawatomi Fire beat the St. Louis Griffins 119-108 to win the 2024 TBL Championship. The Fire become not only the first ever back-to-back champion, but they also become the first ever two-time champion in The Basketball League’s history. The Fire also completed the first ever perfect season, finishing 28-0.

“From the start of training camp this team had one goal and that was another championship,” said Fire head coach, and two-time TBL Coach of the Year, [Mark Dannhoff](#). “Every day they came in a worked. And every night, the battled the best their opponent could throw at them and they always answered the call. We had a target on back all season long and it didn’t faze this team. What an incredible group of men.”

To achieve history, the Fire had to overcome a bit of self-induced adversity. Fire captain and 2024 TBL MVP [Chuck Guy](#) was ejected just 3:12 into the game. Guy was thrown out after making contact to the head of St. Louis guard NiSean Rigmaiden during an altercation early in the first quarter. But the Fire rallied, and like they did all year long, overcame the adversity to get one final win.

“This team has fought all year long,” said Dannhoff. “We had our toughest fight tonight but the leadership of this team showed and the guys weren’t going to be denied tonight.”

[Deshawn Munson](#) led the Fire the rest of the way, controlling the game and coming up with big shot after big shot. Munson finished with 30 points, 13 rebounds, five assists, three steals, and a block on his way to earning TBL Playoff MVP honors.

“Deshawn was outstanding tonight,” said Dannhoff. “He never came off the floor and he made plays for us all night long.”

TBL 6<sup>th</sup> Man of the Year [Ricky Artis II](#) led the Fire in scoring on the night finishing with 34 and seven rebounds off the bench. Artis II also finished with three steals and a pair of blocks defensively. [K.D. Moore](#), who missed Game 1 with an illness, finished with 20 points, four rebounds, two assists, two steals, and two blocks. [Paul Harrison](#), who is now TBL’s only three-time champion, finished with 16 points, seven rebounds, and five assists. Finally, [Jachai Simmons](#) finished with 11 points on the night and made four clutch free throws in the fourth quarter to ice the game. Simmons also had two rebounds, two assists, and three blocks.

A full box score is available [here](#).

“I am so proud of this team and the way they came together tonight,” said Dannhoff. “It could have been easy for us to fold up and come back for Game 3 but they came together and were connected as a team and won this title as a team.”

With the win, the Fire finished the season 28-0 to become the first undefeated team in TBL history.

Be sure to follow the Fire on social media ([Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [X](#)) to stay up to date with all the latest information on the Fire.

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The Potawatomi Fire are the first professional basketball team owned by a Native American tribe (Citizen Potawatomi Nation) in Oklahoma. The Fire compete in the Central Conference of The Basketball League (TBL), a men's professional basketball league, now with 38 teams across the U.S. and Canada. Along with winning the TBL championship in 2023, the Fire organization was named the 2022 winner of the Jim Koch Award as TBL's Best Ran Business. The dance team of the Fire, the Fire Girls, were named TBL's 2022 Best Dance Team and Central Conference Best Dance Team in 2023.

The TBL season begins in February and runs through June, concluding with a championship playoff tournament. The players that make up the rosters of the TBL teams are former NCAA (Division I, II or III) or NAIA athletes. Many have played in the NBA's developmental G-League and/or professionally overseas.

*Story by Chris Cox / Photos by Kent Bush*