

Twitch will stream NBA G League games and let its livestreamers do play-by-play

December 15 2017, by David Pierson, Los Angeles Times

Twitch made its mark as the place to watch video gamers in action. But over the past two years, the Amazon-owned property has expanded its offerings to include livestreams of artists, musicians and even knitters.

Now Twitch is experimenting with live professional sports. On Friday, the video platform will begin regularly broadcasting games of the NBA G League, pro basketball's minor league, formerly known as the D League.

What's unusual about the arrangement is that the broadcasts will not only be available on the G League's Twitch channel, but also on channels belonging to select Twitch personalities who can try their hand at play-by-play announcing.

"We're empowering them with the ability to provide their own commentary," said Jeff Marsilio, the NBA's vice president of global media distribution. "Think of the implications of this. There's currently one version of the [game](#). This project allows for many versions. You might find commentary that's numbers-driven for stats heads. You may find someone with a comedic perspective. And you might find somebody else speaking in their native tongue."

The G League has been something of a laboratory for the NBA—used to test new rules such as using four-person referee crews, two-minute overtimes and a shot-clock reset to 14 seconds after offensive rebounds.

Now the league is a testing ground for viewing habits. Fans can expect to see up to six G League games a week on Twitch. So far, more than a dozen Twitch personalities have been selected to [broadcast](#) the contests, including GoldGlove, a gamer with over 1.2 million followers.

The broadcasts will include an overlay for viewers to track statistics. The games will also be available on-demand after the broadcasts are finished.

Sports leagues have increasingly sought digital partnerships to chase cord cutters. YouTube broadcast the 2017 World Series, Twitter has livestreamed professional baseball, basketball, hockey and football, and Facebook has broadcast college football and NBA games.

The NBA's audience skews younger than the other pro leagues, aligning it with Twitch's audience, Marsilio said.

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Citation: Twitch will stream NBA G League games and let its livestreamers do play-by-play (2017, December 15) retrieved 2 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2017-12-twitch-stream-nba-league-games.html>

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