The tension between world's basketball governing body, FIBA, and its European branch FIBA Europe is about to reach new heights. The latest FIBA's proposal of international calendar changes would give more significance to FIBA World Cup, taking it from EuroBasket.

FIBA wants FIBA World Cup to become the only tournament through which national teams would be able to qualify for the Olympic Games. In addition to that, the tournament itself would be moved to the pre-Olympic year and would replace continental championships.

That way FIBA World Cup would hold more importance for the participants and as a result of that more star players are likely to suit for their respective national team. In addition to that, the tournament is expected to reach more fans since it won't coincide with the FIFA World Cup. The proposed increase of the participating teams from 24 to 32 should bring more exposure as well.

Though the changes mentioned above, if they are approved, would mean that the continental tournaments would lose a lot of their significance. Moreover, according to FIBA's project, continental tournaments would be held every four years instead of every two years as it is now.

FIBA Europe was unhappy with the way that the income from EuroBasket is shared as a significant amount of income must be paid to FIBA. FIBA Europe is not willing to let its most prestigious event (pre-Olympic EuroBasket) to be taken away that easily. Latest speculations suggest that FIBA Europe is considering the option to split from FIBA and to become a separate organization. There are several such examples in other sports, for example football where FIFA and UEFA are separated from each other.

Mindaugas Balciunas, General Secretary of Lithuanian Basketball Federation, published a comment in the magazine "Musu krepšinis" saying that European basketball deserves a different attitude from FIBA. He also spoke about the political games behind the scenes between the two basketball governing bodies.

The most recent example of a clash between the two was the choice of the host country for the Olympic Qualifying Tournament. While European countries supported Lithuania's bid, FIBA had a different opinion and picked Venezuela instead. There are rumours that the South American nation paid FIBA significantly more than it was officialy required to be paid.

FIBA also blocked FIBA Europe's decision to allow national teams to register 14 players for EuroBasket 2011 even though majority of European basketball federations supported the idea.

The only country in Europe that supports FIBA is France, according to Balciunas. That is understandable since Frenchman Yvan Mainini is FIBA President.

FIBA Europe responded to FIBA by choosing Ukraine as EuroBasket 2015 hosts instead of a four-country bid led by France (France, Germany, Croatia and Italy presented a joint bid).

If, however, FIBA's proposal is approved the changes wil come into force in 2017 and the competition system would look the following:

2017 EuroBasket

2018 FIBA World Cup qualifiers

2019 FIBA World Cup

2020 Olympic Games, EuroBasket qualifiers

2021 EuroBasket

FIBA also wants the World Cup qualifiers to take place throughout the season instead of summer. Though it would take some serious effort to organize such windows for national teams since the major leagues will have problems reserving time for the national teams.