

# Carmen's Crew Wins TBT Finals For First Time Since 2019



Ohio State's alumni team Carmen's Crew's run in The Basketball Tournament ended on Sunday afternoon in triumph at Drexel's Daskalakis Athletic Center in Philadelphia, Pa.

Carmen's Crew defeated No. 2 seed Forever Cougs in the championship game to secure its first TBT finals win since 2019, by a score of 69-65. With the win, Carmen's Crew gains the \$1 million prize given to the champions.

Carmen's Crew's win was sealed by none other than tournament MVP Jared Sullinger, who buried a contested mid-range jumper to get the team over the target score 68.

JARED SULLINGER FOR \$1MILLION!!!!!!

CARMEN'S CREW IS YOUR TBT 2024 CHAMPION!!!!

THE @OHIOSTATEHOOPS ALUMNI HAVE DONE IT!!!!!! [pic.twitter.com/L9AXNJqSp0](https://pic.twitter.com/L9AXNJqSp0)

— TBT (@thetournament) August 4, 2024

For the game, Sullinger finished with an incredibly efficient 18 points, shooting 5-of-7 from the field, which included 2-of-2 from three. In addition to leading the team in points, Sullinger also had a team-high eight rebounds.

However, it was Carmen's Crew's defense that propelled them to its second TBT victory in the last six

years. Carmen's Crew held Forever's Cougs to just 40 percent shooting, and 14 percent from three-point range.

Carmen's Crew's defensive toughness was nothing new, though. In five of its six games at The Basketball Tournament, Carmen's Crew allowed 70 points or less.

While it didn't always look as though Carmen's Crew would come out with the victory, as Forever Cougs took a 14-9 lead to open the game, it did look as though the game would go down to the wire.

After the initial 14-9 deficit, Carmen's Crew scored seven straight points to take a two-point lead. Forever Cougs would bounce back before the end of the first quarter to take a 21-18 lead.

Sullinger helped Carmen's Crew have an improved second quarter with two made three-point jumpers in the first four minutes of the quarter.

Carmen's Crew was even able to take the lead before halftime after one of, if not its best, defensive stretches of the game, allowing only six points in the half's final six minutes and 57 seconds.

Carmen's Crew's defense didn't lose any of its tenacity out of the halftime break. Instead, the Buckeye alumni team had another sharp stretch allowing just four points in a nearly five-minute sequence. With the team's defense making things miserable for Forever Cougs, the lead grew to 10.

Forever Cougs ultimately found rhythm again offensively and managed to cut Carmen's Crew's lead to three with time dwindling in the third quarter. Guard Desonta Bradford answered the Forever Cougs run with a 3-point jumper made from the logo.

The stakes couldn't have been higher for Carmen's Crew entering the final quarter with a six-point lead.

Even more so than it had been in the first three quarters, the fourth quarter was a defensive grind for both teams, who combined for 12 points before the start of the Elam ending.

The Elam ending kicks in at four minutes and sets a target score of eight points more than the winning team's total headed into the period. In the case of Sunday's game the target score was 68 as Carmen's Crew led 60-56.

In the final stretch of the game, Sullinger and Kaleb Wesson combined for three free throws to give Carmen's Crew a seven-point advantage and pull within five points of the target score.

Forever Cougs responded with four consecutive points of their own before Kaleb Wesson made a free throw and his brother, Andre Wesson, made an and-one layup to bring Carmen's Crew within just one point of hoisting the championship trophy.

The Wesson brothers were both instrumental in the win for Carmen's Crew, as they were the second and third-leading scorers, Kaleb Wesson finished the game with 15 points while Andre Wesson had 13 points.

Needing just one more basket, Carmen's Crew missed three straight shots, turning their fairly comfortable 7-point lead into a narrow two-point advantage.

Sullinger had seen enough and even through a late double-team, made the mid-range jumper to end

Forever Cougs' late rally.

Sullinger was the only player to make the 2024 All-Tournament team announced shortly after the championship game. But as a team, Carmen's Crew became only the second team to win the competition twice in The Basketball Tournament's 11-year history.