

V.I. University Team Wins Silver at FISU America Games, Qualify for 2027 World University Games

After only two days of practice together, the Virgin Islands university men's basketball team defeated Peru and Argentina, earned silver at the IV FISU America Games in Lima and qualified for the 2027 World University Games in Chungcheong, South Korea.

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The Virgin Islands Basketball Federation University men's team earned silver at the IV FISU America Games in Lima, Peru, and qualified for the 2027 World University Games after entering the international tournament with only two days of practice together.

Made up of local athletes competing at the NAIA and NCAA Division II levels, the team played four games during the July 21-27 competition, defeating host country Peru and traditional

basketball power Argentina before falling twice to a United States team represented by Indiana University.

The Virgin Islands opened pool play with a 93-73 victory over Peru. Guard Amayoa'ah Phillips scored 30 points, while Ajani Blyden contributed 25. Kehjayah Rogers added 14 points, and Khamani Olivacce finished with 10.

The next matchup placed the Virgin Islands against Indiana University, representing the United States. The Indiana program was described as having a recruiting budget exceeding \$10 million and significantly greater roster depth.

The Virgin Islands remained competitive through the first half, with Phillips scoring 22 points before halftime. He finished with 26 before fouling out, but Indiana pulled away for a 120-63 victory.

The semifinal against Argentina carried additional consequences: a win would guarantee the Virgin Islands a place in the World University Games scheduled for next summer in South Korea.

In a closely contested defensive game, the Virgin Islands defeated Argentina 63-61 to secure both a place in the gold-medal game and qualification for the international university competition.

Phillips again led the team, scoring 19 points. Blyden added 13, Rogers recorded 12, and Olivacce and Hasani Rivera contributed nine points each.

The Virgin Islands then faced Indiana University for a second time in the gold-medal final. Indiana won 99-57, with Phillips scoring 14 and Rogers adding 12 for the Virgin Islands.

Despite the loss, the result gave the territory silver medals and secured its participation in the World University Games, scheduled for August 1-12, 2027, in Chungcheong, South Korea.

The team's participation also reflected the broader objectives of FISU competition, including sportsmanship, cultural exchange and academic integrity. Every athlete on the Virgin Islands roster is fully enrolled at his respective university.

The team's organizers said community support will be needed to help the players reach South Korea.

"We will need your help, Virgin Islands in getting the team to South Korea."