

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Paradise Jam Basketball Tournament Tips Off Friday At UVI

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ST. THOMAS -- The University of the Virgin Islands will host the 2018 Paradise Jam beginning Friday, Nov. 16, in the Sports and Fitness Center on the St. Thomas Campus, UVI has announced. The highly anticipated basketball tournament tips off at 2 p.m. with the men's games when Oregon University goes up against Old Dominion University.

According to the release, this year's men tournament will also include teams from Kennesaw State University, Missouri University, Northern Iowa University and Penn, Eastern Kentucky and Kansas University. The championship men's game is scheduled for 8:30 p.m. on Monday, Nov. 19.

The action in the women's tournament begins on Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, Nov. 22, and continues to Saturday, Nov. 24. The women's tournament will feature two divisions, Island Division and Reef Division. In the Island Division are Kentucky University, South Florida University, North Carolina University and University of California Los Angeles. The Teams playing in the Reef Division are St. John's University, Purdue University, Ole Miss and University of Connecticut.

"Our UVI coaches and administration are very excited about Paradise Jam. This is my first year being involved with the planning and preparation of Paradise Jam and we have been working hard and long hours to ensure a successful event," said Athletic Director, Wilberto Ramos. "Our students and student athletes are excited about the tournament and are looking forward to seeing the UVI Buccaneers play on Saturday night."

"We are bringing a well-trained staff with exceptional service and a great facility, the Sports and Fitness Center, which is undergoing major improvements for the tournament," Nels Hawkinson, chief executive officer of Basketball Travelers said.

UVI's Sports and Fitness Center has hosted the tournament for 17 years. The renovated facility will feature internal and external upgrades including painting, new lighting, court and pothole repairs.

"Our staff is excited to be back. Last year's experience taught us that, you do not know what you have until you no longer have it. That is the feeling we had having cancelled last year's tournament here," Hawkinson said.



"It's a surreal experience to be back. Canceling the tournament last year was one of the most difficult decisions I have had to make. In January, we made a commitment that we would come back this year because the Virgin Islands needed us and we needed the support of the Virgin Islands," said Tournament Director, Jennifer Ashby,

In 2017, Paradise Jam was cancelled, after the Virgin Islands was struck by Hurricanes Irma and Maria. The men's tournament was hosted at Liberty University in Virginia while the women's tournament was hosted by George Washington University in Washington, District of Columbia.

"Although we had to relocate the tournament last year because of the storms, we really wanted to keep the Virgin Islands flavor of the tournament. We still called it the U.S. Virgin Islands Paradise Jam and encouraged fans to donate to our hurricane relief fund for the USVI," said Director of Media and Communications, Jim Crawford. "Our company, Basketball Travelers, donated \$25,000 to the relief efforts and the university that hosted the event donated all of the ticket sales to the recovery process, as well."

Media Coverage

Paradise Jam will livestream on UVI's official Facebook page- <https://www.facebook.com/UVI.edu/>. FloSports, a subsidiary company of FloHoops will also livestream each game of both the men's and women's tournaments via www.paradisejam.com. The UVI student-run radio station, WUVI - 97.3 FM will provide live radio broadcast and commentary for each game. The games will also be radio broadcasted by each of the competing teams' official university radio station.

Men's Basketball Schedule

- Nov. 16 at 2 p.m. - Oregon vs. Old Dominion
- Nov. 16 at 4 p.m. – Kennesaw vs. Missouri
- Nov. 16 at 6:30 p.m. – Northern Iowa vs. Penn
- Nov. 16 at 8:30 p.m. – Eastern Kentucky vs. Kansas
- Nov. 17 at 4 p.m. - Loser Game 1 vs. Loser Game 2
- Nov. 17 at 6 p.m. - Loser Game 3 vs. Loser Game 4
- Nov. 18 at 6:30 p.m. - Winner Game 1 vs. Winner Game 2
- Nov. 18 at 8:30 p.m. - Winner Game 3 vs. Winner Game 4
- Nov. 19 at 2 p.m. - 7th and 8th Place
- Nov. 19 at 4 p.m. - 4th and 6th Place
- Nov. 19 at 6:30 p.m. - Consolation (3rd place/5th place) Game
- Nov. 19 at 8:30 p.m. - Championship Game

Women's Basketball Schedule

- Nov. 22 at 2:00 p.m. – Kentucky vs. South Florida
- Nov. 22 at 4 p.m. – North Carolina vs. UCLA
- Nov. 22 at 6:30 p.m. – St. John's vs. Purdue
- Nov. 22 at 8:30 p.m. – Ole Miss vs UConn
- Nov. 23 at 2 p.m. – UCLA vs. Kentucky
- Nov. 23 at 4 p.m. - South Florida vs. North Carolina
- Nov. 23 at 6:30 p.m. – Purdue vs. Ole Miss
- Nov. 23 at 8:30 p.m. – Uconn vs. St. John's
- Nov. 24 at 2 p.m. – North Carolina vs. Kentucky
- Nov. 24 at 4 p.m. – South Florida vs. UCLA
- Nov. 24 at 6:30 p.m. – St. John's vs. Ole Miss
- Nov. 24 at 8:30 p.m. – Purdue vs. UConn

UVI Men's Bucs Basketball to Play on Saturday

Fans of UVI's Buccaneers basketball will see their team come up against Johnson University of Miami, Florida at 8 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 17 during the men's round of this year's Paradise Jam.

UVI supporters are encouraged to share their Paradise Jam experiences on UVI's official Facebook page at www.facebook.com/uvi.edu and on Twitter at www.twitter.com/UVI_edu and follow the handle @UVI_edu.

Paradise Jam tickets are available at the UVI Bookstore, Urban Threadz and at the door. Tickets prices are: adults - \$15 and seniors or military personnel - \$10. UVI students, faculty and staff as well as students and teachers across the U.S Virgin Islands will pay \$5 with a school ID.

For more information, visit www.paradisejam.com.