

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Hundreds Of Tennis Players Descend On St. Croix For First USVI Cup

Sports / **Published On May 12, 2019 12:28 PM /**

Staff **May 12, 2019**



Hundreds of junior tennis players, coaches and tournament officials began arriving on the island of St. Croix this weekend for the first-ever USVI Cup, an International Tennis Federation (ITF)-sanctioned tournament, the Department of Tourism (D.O.T.) has announced. Organizers estimate more than 200 tennis players will participate in both boys and girls (under-18) back-to-back tournaments, taking place May 13 to 18 and May 20 to 25 at the landmark Buccaneer hotel.

"St. Croix will be brimming with parents, players and coaches, hailing from international destinations like Mexico, Spain, Czech Republic, Switzerland, Brazil, China and The Netherlands," said award-winning Canadian tennis coach Nima Naderi, who is acting as

the IMG Academy Caribbean Cup Tennis Series tournament director.

Mr. Naderi has more than 20 years of coaching experience and, as an industry expert, is the co-host of the Tennis Connected podcast and frequent contributor to tennis-related outlets such as TennisPro magazine and Tennis View Magazine. Joining Mr. Naderi as president of the IMG Academy Caribbean Cup Tennis Series is Jamaican Karl Hale. Hale is an international tennis player and coach and is the tournament director of Rogers Cup in Canada.

"The main purpose for the event is to develop a cadre of local players and provide an opportunity to play a professional junior event," Mr. Naderi said. "Our aim is to develop the infrastructure of Caribbean tennis and help build a brand and grow the game."

Joseph Boschulte, D.O.T. commissioner, noted the importance of such events and sports tourism to the territory. "We are getting back into the game as we share with the world that we are open for business, and look forward to welcoming these talented athletes to our territory," he said.

The IMG Academy Caribbean Cup Tennis Series kicked off recently in Jamaica and continues on St. Croix, the Cayman Islands and then later in the year in Barbados, Curaçao, Anguilla, Antigua and the Bahamas.

"The tournament will help to expose travelers to the beauty of the Caribbean ... and visitors traveling to St. Croix will help boost the local economy. Hopefully they will enjoy their experience, spread the word and make this a bigger and better series next year," Mr. Naderi stated.

The Buccaneer has partnered with the event as the official tournament hotel. Naderi reported that close to 450 room nights have been booked on St. Croix, at the host hotel as well as at surrounding accommodation facilities.