

The Virgin Islands Consortium

USVI Men's U-23 National Team Hosts First Round Of Olympic Qualifiers July 17-19 On St. Croix

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The new Bethlehem Soccer Complex in St. Croix will host the first round of Olympic qualifying games for men's soccer, according to U.S. Virgin Islands Soccer Association officials.

The initial game will be on Wednesday, July 17, when the USVI Men's U-23 National Team will play against Cuba. The second game follows on Friday, July 19 with a faceoff between Barbados and Cuba – and the final game, pitting USVI against Barbados, is scheduled for Sunday, July 21.

All games will start at 5:30 p.m. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children under 12, and can be bought at the door on game days starting at 4:30 p.m.

The winner of the group will advance to the next stage of qualifying games where two spots are available for the region in the 2020 Olympics.



“What this means to us as an Association, our players, and fans is a hope and a dream,” National Team Assistant Coach and Association 1st Vice-President Joseph Limeburner said. “I remember myself as a former national player when we played countries like Antigua and Haiti on St. Croix and struggled because we did not have a facility there. Our games were not at the level they should be – but to be able now to give our athletes in the U.S. Virgin Islands the opportunity to play at an international level right here at home is beyond what I could have ever imagined.”

Limeburner added that next week's games position the USVI team for the "next stage" of competition.

"We want to move up," he said. "Now, it's time to take it to the next level and really create our own identity – and, with our new facility, I think that identity is going to push through. What we're looking forward now to getting there, walking on that field and once we enter, our hope and dream is that all of the hard work we've put in, shines through. To get these guys here, onto the field, and ready to take the victory – that's the dream."

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