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2019 Paradise Jam Basketball Tournament Tips off Friday as Event Celebrates 20th Anniversary

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Paradise Jam

The University of the Virgin Islands will host the 2019 Paradise Jam Basketball Tournament beginning Friday in the Sports and Fitness Center on the St. Thomas Campus. The highly anticipated basketball tournament tips off at 2 p.m. with the men's games when Valparaiso University goes up against Grand Canyon University. This year's men tournament will also include teams from Fordham University, University of Nevada, Illinois State University, University of Cincinnati, Bowling Green State University and Western Kentucky University. The championship men's game is scheduled for 9 p.m. on Monday, Nov. 25.

The action in the women's tournament gets underway on Thursday, Nov. 28, and runs until Nov. 30. There are two divisions of women's play. In the "Island Division" are UT Arlington, University of Louisville, Oklahoma State University and University of Oregon. The teams playing in the "Reef Division" are Washington State University, Baylor University, Indiana University and University of South Carolina.

To mark its 20th anniversary in the Virgin Islands, Paradise Jam 2019 will be celebrated under the theme: "Community, Compassion and Courage." To mark this milestone anniversary, local reggae artiste, Pressure, is expected to make a special half-time appearance.

Nels Hawkinson, executive director of Basketball Travelers Inc., said that Paradise Jam has grown significantly over the years since its inception. "Looking back on 20 years here in the U.S. Virgin Islands has been incredible," he said. "We have made lifelong memories and friends, and our connection with the islands grows each year we have this tournament," Hawkinson noted. "Thank you to everyone who has played a part in our 20-year history here, and we hope to continue to bring high-quality basketball to the islands every year."

Speaking of the growth of Paradise Jam in the Virgin Islands, Tournament Director, Jennifer Ashby said, "We are excited to announce that for the first time in the tournament's history, a participating team, Grand Canyon University, will be bringing an entire charter plane full of supporters, band, and cheerleaders to St. Thomas. We are also excited to welcome four women's teams ranked in the national top 10 for this year's 20th anniversary celebration."

"For 19 of the 20 years Paradise Jam has been in the Territory, the University has been the host of this dynamic and exciting tournament of outstanding men's and women's basketball teams," said UVI President David Hall. "We are honored to be the host because the excellence and creativity displayed by the teams on the basketball court, are the same excellence and creativity the University strives to embody in our classrooms, laboratories and all other activities."

The President stated that basketball is more than a game. "It is a testing ground for life and a cubicle where students develop the character, perseverance, courage and resilience that they will need throughout their lives," he added. "This is why we are honored and excited about hosting this tournament and having our teams play during the tournament. We look forward to growing and expanding with Paradise Jam for many years to come."

UVI Men's and Women's Bucs Basketball Teams to Play on Saturday

Fans of UVI's Buccaneers basketball will see their men's and women's teams come up against Rust College at 1 p.m. and 8 p.m., respectively, on Saturday, Nov. 23, during the men's round of this year's Paradise Jam.

Men's Basketball Schedule

- Nov. 22 at 2 p.m. - Valparaiso vs. Grand Canyon
- Nov. 22 at 4:15 p.m. – Fordham vs. Nevada
- Nov. 22 at 6:45 p.m. – Illinois vs. Cincinnati
- Nov. 22 at 9 p.m. – Bowling Green vs. Western Kentucky

- Nov. 23 at 4 p.m. - Loser Game 1 vs. Loser Game 2
- Nov. 23 at 6 p.m. - Loser Game 3 vs. Loser Game 4
- Nov. 24 at 6:30 p.m. - Winner Game 1 vs. Winner Game 2
- Nov. 24 at 8:30 p.m. - Winner Game 3 vs. Winner Game 4
- Nov. 25 at 2 p.m. - 7th and 8th Place
- Nov. 25 at 4:15 p.m. - 4th and 6th Place
- Nov. 25 at 6:45 p.m. - Consolation (3rd place/5th place) Game
- Nov. 25 at 9 p.m. - Championship Game

Women's Basketball Schedule

- Nov. 28 at 2:00 p.m. – UT Arlington vs. Louisville
- Nov. 28 at 4:15 p.m. – Oklahoma State vs. Oregon
- Nov. 28 at 6:45 p.m. – Washington State vs. Baylor
- Nov. 28 at 9 p.m. – Indiana vs. South Carolina
- Nov. 29 at 2 p.m. – Louisville vs. Oklahoma State
- Nov. 29 at 4:15 p.m. - Oregon vs. UT Arlington
- Nov. 29 at 6:45 p.m. – Baylor vs. Indiana
- Nov. 29 at 9 p.m. – South Carolina vs. Washington State
- Nov. 30 at 2 p.m. – Oklahoma State vs. UT Arlington
- Nov. 30 at 4:15 p.m. – Louisville vs. Oregon
- Nov. 30 at 6:45 p.m. – Washington State vs. Indiana
- Nov. 30 at 9 p.m. – South Carolina vs. Baylor

Media Coverage

UVI Men's and Women's Bucs Basketball Game will livestream on UVI's official Facebook page- <https://www.facebook.com/UVI.edu/>. FloSports, a subsidiary company of FloHoops will livestream each Paradise Jam 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.

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, the Box Office in the Sports and Fitness Center, and at the door. Ticket prices for adults with local resident ID - \$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.