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## V.I. Men's Basketball Team World Cup Qualification Hopes End With Loss To Bahamas

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The Virgin Islands Men's Basketball team's qualification hopes for the 2023 FIBA World Cup are officially over after falling to the Bahamas 97-80 at the UVI Sports and Fitness Center Friday night.

The game was tied at 24 after the first quarter but the Bahamas began to distance themselves on the scoreboard with a dominant second quarter.

The Bahamas opened the second quarter with a 9-2 scoring run and led 33-26 before the Virgin Islands called a timeout with 7:14 remaining in the half.

After the timeout, the Bahamas made a free throw to extend the lead to eight but the Virgin Islands scored the next five points to quickly cut the deficit back down to three points with just under six minutes left in the quarter.

The Bahamas outscored the Virgin Islands 18-8 in the final six minutes of the first half and led 52-39 at halftime.

Buddy Hield, Bahamas and Indiana Pacers guard, scored eight early second-half points as part of a 10-2 Bahamas run to start the third quarter which gave the visitors a 22-point lead three minutes into the second half.

At the end of the third quarter, the Virgin Islands trailed 77-62 and did not get closer than 15 points in the fourth quarter.

At the end of the game, the Virgin Islands team stood at center court and applauded the home fans that came out to support.

Hield was the game's leading scorer with 24 points. Kentwan Smith had 17 points and Franco Miller added 16 points for the victors.

Walter Hodge led the Virgin Islands in scoring with 18 points and Georgio Milligan had 17 points for the hosts.

The Virgin Islands will play against Canada on Monday at the UVI Sports and Fitness Center.