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Drake Bulldogs Defeat Tarleton State Texans to Win 2022 Paradise Jam Tournament

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The Drake Bulldogs men's basketball team represents Drake University, located in Des Moines, Iowa, in NCAA Division I basketball competition and is coached by Darian DeVries. The program is best known for making the 1969 Final Four. By. PARADISE JAM

The Drake Bulldogs emerged as victors over the Tarleton State Texans during the 2022 Men's Paradise Jam Basketball Tournament final game Monday night, overcoming a run by the Texans and ending the game with a 7-point lead.

The annual tournament, a partnership between Basketball Travelers and the V.I. government, is meant to help promote the USVI as a tourism destination, among other benefits, and local leaders

were in attendance for the final — among them Governor Albert Bryan Jr.

The win also resulted in Bulldogs Head Coach Darian DeVries 100th career win as a head coach. The team's leading players also outdid themselves, with Tucker DeVries going 5-for-5 from the field, 8-for-8 from the free throw line, and ending the game with a solid 22-point performance.

Bulldogs Garrett Sturtz recorded a double-double, 13 points and 11 rebounds.

Their efforts contributed to a solid victory, even as they faced a formidable challenger in the Tarleton State Texans.

Though the Texans fell short, the team, led by Freddy Hicks, fought until the bitter end, with Hicks putting on a stunning performance with a career-high 30 points on 10-of-20 shooting, plus 8-of-11 from the free throw line, and just missing out on a double-double with nine rebounds and two steals. His 30 points are the most scored by a Texan in a game over the past two seasons, according to Tarleton Sports.

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Here's a breakdown of the game from [Tarleton Sports](#):

Drake got off to a hot start in the title bout, going up 6-0 and then 9-3 while clamping down defensively. Tarleton remained calm after the first timeout and tied it 9-9. The two teams went back-and-forth most of the first half, all the way down to around four minutes remaining and the Bulldogs leading 25-22. Drake ended the half on a 10-3 run to lead by double figures at halftime, 35-25.

The three-point line was the difference in the first 20 minutes, as Drake made 6-of-11 (.546) from beyond the arc, 12-of-24 overall from the floor. Tarleton got plenty of good looks in the first half but just couldn't get them to fall, a change of pace from their previous games, something they had to work through coming out of the locker room.

And work through they did. Down 10, 45-35, with under 14 minutes remaining, a game-changing sequence occurred. First Shakur Daniel made a tough layup, then on the other end, Drake seemingly had a dunk, but the ball clanged off the rim. Tarleton grabbed it and hustled down the floor, leading to a Jakorie Smith three-ball that sparked the energy in the team and the gym, showing Tarleton wasn't going to go away so easily.

Drake responded with a jumper after a timeout, but Hicks buried a three right back to get within four. The Bulldogs then led 51-45 before Tarleton made another run. Hicks made two free throws,

the Texans got a stop, Hicks made another bucket, and then Tiger Booker stole the ball and immediately finished a quick layup to tie the game 51-51 with 7:20 left. Drake, an established D1 program in their own right, kept their composure and took control back from there, ultimately winning by seven to take the Paradise Jam crown.

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