

Image not found or type unknown

V.I. Women's Basketball Team's Historic Victory to be Celebrated in Parade in Christiansted on Saturday

Sports / **Published On August 01, 2023 07:27 AM /**

Staff Consortium **August 01, 2023**

Image not found or type unknown



The V.I. Senior Women National Team following their victory in San Salvador, El Salvador against the Dominican Republic on Wed. June 28, 2023.

The Virgin Islands Senior Women's National Basketball Team, who recently made history by becoming the first-ever team sport to win a gold medal at the Central American and Caribbean (CAC) Games, will be celebrated in a parade on Saturday, August 5. The event is set to take place on King Street in Christiansted, beginning promptly at 10 am.

The Virgin Islands Basketball Federation (V.I.B.F.), established in 1962, has been a member of the International Basketball Federation (FIBA) since 1964. The Basketball Federation is a founding member of the Virgin Islands Olympic Committee (V.I.O.C.) and one of six Virgin

Island Sports Federations affiliated with International Bodies.

The road to gold started back in 1966, when the V.I.O.C. participated in the 10th CAC Games on a trial basis. The Women's National Team, in its inaugural appearance, clinched fourth place after defeating Puerto Rico in their first game. The team returned to the CAC Games in 2010 and 2018, finishing fourth and fifth respectively.

Following the dissolution of the Caricom Basketball Confederation in 1999 by FIBA, the Caribbean Basketball Confederation (CBC) was established, providing a clear path for female basketball qualifiers. This move made Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands mandatory CBC members, with Belize assigned to the Central America region. The Women's National Team participated in their first CBC Championship in 2000 in Bridgetown, Barbados.

Over the years, the team has won several medals in the CBC Championships. A noteworthy achievement was in 2017 when the V.I.B.F. hosted the Women's Centro-Basket Championship on St. Thomas. The team went on to win the gold medal against the top seven teams in the Central American and Caribbean region. In March 2021, during FIBA's coronavirus protocols, the team captured the silver medal at the Centro-Basket Championship in San Salvador, El Salvador. These victories qualified the team for their first and second appearances at the FIBA Americas Women Championship.

Despite the Virgin Islands Senior Women's National Team being unable to attend the Centro-Basket qualifier for the 2023 CAC Games held in Chihuahua, Mexico, they were given a second chance. The withdrawal of the Bahamas Women's National Team from the games opened the door for the Virgin Islands' team to serve as a replacement. Seizing the opportunity, the team clinched their first-ever gold medal at the CAC Games, marking the 12th gold medal won under the auspices of the V.I.O.C.

The triumphant delegation included players Kadasha Barry, Lanese Bough, Kaya Evans, J-Naya Ephraim, Shomyra Francis, Anisha George, Natalie Kleeman-Day, November Morton, Naja Ngongba, Keshara Romain, and Imani Tate. The team staff comprised Head Coach Tajama Ngongba, Assistant Coach Clint Williams, Team Manager Rufus Horton, and Delegate La Reina Robinson.