

'Why not us?' says Hampton U. Pirates about to play No. 1 U. Va.

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By Lexy Brower

For the second year in a row, Hampton University punched their ticket into the NCAA men's basketball tournament. Placed as the No. 16 seed, they will take on No. 1 seed **University of Virginia** 3:10 p.m. Thursday in Raleigh, N.C.

The Hampton Pirates are already viewed as the underdogs, but the players feel pretty confident about taking on what many may call a tough task. Some say it would be a miracle for the Pirates to successfully defeat the Cavaliers. Since 1985, No. 1 seeds are 120-0 vs. No. 16s. Yet there have been close calls, such as Princeton's near upset of Georgetown in 1989.

The score was 50-49.

"I guess some could look at it as being a miracle. It's a 16 seed vs. one seed. It would be a miracle since a 16 seed has never won, but we don't feel like that at all," says senior and Hampton team captain, **Reggie Johnson**. "We feel we have a good chance at winning the game. It's all about a game plan and having confidence that you can get it done more than anything.

"Records are meant to be broken and there are history books for a reason. Why not us?"

Over the last few years, the Pirates have had a master plan to get into the NCAA tournament but this year **Hampton Nation** fans will see if they have plans to advance in the NCAA tournament. Playing against some of the best teams in the country, the 21-win, 10-loss Pirates' consistency proves that they are eager and ready to meet the Cavaliers.

"Last year in the beginning, Hampton made a good run against Kentucky," says former Hampton University Lady Pirate basketball player, **Bayley Coleman**. "So anyone can win a game, no matter the name on the jersey. You also have to prepare yourself, on and off the court. Games like this, you must see their jerseys as blank, like it's any other team you've played."

In 2001, **Hampton**, a No. 15 seed, upset No. 2 seed **Iowa State University** 58-57. MEAC [Mid- Eastern Athletic Conference] allies Coppin



State and Norfolk State universities also pulled off No. 15 vs. No. 2 upsets in 1997 and 2012.

All eyes are in Raleigh today, but which team will come home making Virginia proud?

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