

## **Ballers: Howard vs. Hampton equals extra effort**

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### **Story by Nia Little**

"Who is the real HU," you might ask? Well, the Hampton University women's and men's basketball teams take on Howard University Saturday at 4 and 6 p.m. at Hampton University's Convocation Center. Students and alumni from Howard, Hampton and nearby universities attend each year.

Cheerleading teams and dance teams prepare to entertain the crowd. Like other collegiate sports, cheerleaders practice throughout the week to prepare for upcoming games.

**Diamond Broughton**, a sophomore strategic communications major and member of the Blue Thunder cheerleading, squad says "Practice is more fun because we get to come up with new material to show off."

In the past, cheerleading teams would prepare new material for the larger crowd and possible cheer battles. A Hampton vs. **Howard cheer battle** video went viral during football season last fall.

Rivalry games like the visiting Bison vs. the Pirates are far more intense compared to other games during the season.

Said Broughton, "We put a little extra 'umph' into our appearance and performance."

Rival games are more than a battle between basketball teams, they give cheerleaders a chance to battle other squads and score points of their own.

"Other games, we usually don't have anyone to cheer against," said Broughton. "Most people don't realize cheerleaders have their own secret game going on, on the sideline."

What's a basketball game without a crowd? Students who do not regularly attend Hampton home basketball games plan to attend this one. "At games like this, the band plays new music, the cheerleaders are intense, and the crowd is more involved" said sophomore pharmacy major Tyra Smith.

Tristin Davis, a biology major from Memphis, Tennessee, plans to put on his best weekend outfit – a nice pair of jeans and a T-shirt and Nike Jordans – and hang out with friends in preparation for game time.

It is safe to say that the cheerleading team's hard work doesn't go unnoticed. There should be more attendees, dressed to impress at this week's game.

The **Blue Thunder** cheerleading team members said they are ready for this week's rivalry. Watch the cheerleaders live in action Saturday. Tickets can be purchased at [ticketmaster.com](http://ticketmaster.com).

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