



## 49th INTERNATIONAL SMALL FRY TOURNAMENT

**Ozzie Mazzetta Challenge Round:** Small Fry changed its format in 2006, adding a Monday Challenge round to qualify the final eight teams for the International field. Therefore, 24 teams now travel to Orlando with an opportunity to win the International crown.

### The 2017 International field includes:

- Five former International champions: Bucaplaa, PR; Chicago Heights, IL; Highwood, IL; Ponce, PR; Avalon Runners.
- Teams from Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, Columbia and 4 states: Florida, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin.
- A “Moe Reed” Friendship Tournament and Rookie Tournament in 2017 expands the overall field of teams in Orlando to 37.
- Eleven returnees from 2016 Final 16: Robert Taylor, Kenosha, Marquette Best, Prodigy Elite, Bucaplaa, Chi-Town NBN, Harvey, Highwood, Chicago Heights, Philly All-Stars, St. Croix.
- Eight first-time qualifiers: Columbia, Florida, Guaynabo Mets, IL Huskies, Philly Swaghawks, Rexville Bayamon, Richton Park, Southern Ponce.
- Three of last year’s Final Four: Robert Taylor, Kenosha, Marquette Best.

Bucaplaa’s 2012 title-game win over Chicago Heights made it eight titles in nine years, the most impressive title string in history. On two other occasions, teams have won at least three straight crowns, including Liga Interclub (1976-79) and the Highwood Heat (1997-99). After winning seven titles from 1991-2000, the Midwest has been shut out the last 16 years.

- Four teams from Puerto Rico have claimed multiple titles, including Liga Interclub (five), Fraigcomar (two), Ponce (four) and Bucaplaa (1986, 2004-2009, 2011-2012).

- Prior to the Highwood Heat’s three-peat in 1997-99, six different states/territories had won International crowns in six years. Starting with 1992 in New Orleans, the title was won by New Jersey (Newark, 1992), Puerto Rico (Fraigcomar, 1993), Wisconsin (Racine, 1994), Indiana (Gary, 1995), Chicago (Runners, 1996) and Illinois (Highwood, 1997).

- Twenty-two different teams have won International tournaments, as Bucaplaa became the 11th multiple winner in

2004. Other multiple winners include Racine (1972, 1981, 1987, 1994); Highwood (1997-99), the New York Harlem Satellites (1970, 1971, 1974); Liga Interclub of St. Juan (1973, 1976-79); Chicago Heights, Ill. (1980, 1991); Ponce, Puerto Rico (1984, 1990, 2010, 2015); Fraigcomar (1989, 1993), Puerto Rico (1989, 1993), Homewood (85, 2000) and W Pullman Runners (88, 96).

- Three straight Bucaplaa-Fraigcomar title-game matchups (2006-08) was a first. Two different regions had met in five straight International title games prior to 2006, but the last two title games have been decided within the same region. However, before 2001 the International title had been decided within the same geographical region in nine of 10 years. The streak included: 1991— Chicago Heights over Highwood Small Fry; 1992— Newark over Riverside, N.Y.; 1993— Fraigcomar over Torrimary; 1995— Gary, Ind. over Highwood Small Fry; 1996— Chicago West Pullman Runners over Highwood Small Fry; 1997— Highwood Small Fry over Chicago Marquette Best. 1998— Highwood Small Fry over Chicago Heights. 1999— Highwood Small Fry over Chicago Washington Jaguars. 2000— Homewood over Chicago Washington Jaguars.

- Bucaplaa is the seventh team to play in at least four title games with 10, joining former co-leaders Racine and Highwood (seven each), Liga Interclub, Fraigcomar, Harlem Satellites, Chicago Heights (five each) and Homewood.

- Ponce (4-0) is one of eight teams to be perfect in title games, including Liga Club (5-0), Aibonito (1-0), Arecibo (1-0), And One (1-0), WC Outlawz (1-0), Solo Pirates (1-0) and Bayamon ABB.

- The Midwest or Chicago has been represented in the title game 28 of the last 38 years.

- Puerto Rican teams have a 24-9 record in championship games.

- The 48 previous champions have represented five different regions: Carribean (25), Midwest (12), East (5), Chicago (5) and West (1).

- Small Fry’s famous alumni include Tyler Ulis, Phoenix Suns (Chicago Heights), Nick Van Exel, Portland Blazers (Kenosha), Charley Scott, Boston Celtics (New York), Craig Hodges, Chicago Bulls World Champs (Chicago Heights); Mike Tomczak, Chicago Bears (Homewood); Butch Lee, Marquette 1977 National Champs (New York); Veltra Dawson, Villanova 1985 National Champs (Highwood); Will Bynum, Georgia Tech 2004 NCAA Runner Up (Chicago); and Donovan McNabb, Minnesota Vikings (Homewood). Sweet 16 NCAA qualifiers the last five years included Highwood alum Chris Wroblewski (Cornell), Homewood alum D.J. Cooper (Ohio) and Ulis (Kentucky).

### CONSECUTIVE INTERNATIONALS:

13— Marquette Best.

7— Robert Taylor.

6— Chicago Heights.

5—Ponce Constanca.

4—Chi-Town NBN, Philly All-Stars.

3— Bucaplaa.

2— Kenosha, Prodigy Elite, Harvey, Highwood, St. Croix.

## A LOOK AT INTERNATIONAL QUALIFIERS (24)

### CHICAGO (6)

**Robert Taylor:** The Panthers own 10 berths overall, including a 57-45 loss to Bucaplaa A in the 2011 title game and 49-47 setback to Bayamon ABB in the 2016 title tilt. They enter this year as the unbeaten Windy City champions.

**Marquette Best:** A visitor to the Final Four on nine occasions, the Windy City squad returns for the 21<sup>st</sup> time overall. Marquette captured a second place in 1997 with a 48-41 title-game loss to the Highwood Heat, was second in 2010 with a 41-37 setback against Ponce and fell to the Solo Pirates in the 2014 title contest, 47-35.

**Avalon Runners:** A returnee to the field after missing last year, but a 24-time qualifier, the Runners captured crowns in 1988 with a 71-70 decision over Caguas Prebac and a 66-54 victory over Highwood in 1996.

**Chi-Town NBN:** Making its eighth overall appearance, the Windy City entry turned in all-time best third place finishes in 2011 and 2014, while winning the consolation crown in 2015.

**Illinois Huskies:** The Windy City entry is seeking its first bid into the Sweet 16.

**Prodigy Elite:** Making its third appearance, the Elite captured fifth place last year for its best showing.

### EAST (2)

**Philadelphia All-Stars:** Introduced as a consolation entry in 2013, the All-Stars own an 11<sup>th</sup> place, 13<sup>th</sup> place and 15<sup>th</sup> place finish in the Big Show.

**Philly Swaghawks:** Seeking to make a splash in its initial qualifying opportunity.

### MIDWEST (5)

**Kenosha, Wis.:** A qualifier for the 14<sup>th</sup> time in 20 years, Kenosha earned third place in 2016. The Midwest champs for the second year in a row have played in three title contests, falling to Liga Club in 1978 and 1979 and dropping a decision to Canovanas in 1983. Has advanced to the Final Four eight times since 1980.

**Highwood Heat:** Making its 22<sup>nd</sup> appearance in 25 years, Highwood won the its first International crown in 1997 in Tampa with a 48-41 decision over Marquette Best, then followed it up with a 58-35 title-game victory over Chicago Heights in 1998 in New Orleans and a 60-50 title-contest decision over the Washington Jaguars in 1999. The Heat has captured the runner-up spot at International four times— at Racine in 1985, Newark in 1991 and 1996, and Tampa in 1995. The Heat is making its 43<sup>rd</sup> International appearance.

**Harvey:** A visitor to the field for the 11<sup>th</sup> time, the Wildcats turned in a best finish of eighth in 2012.

**Chicago Heights, Ill.:** A five-time host of the International Tourney, the Green Streaks captured the 1980 title at home with a 51-46 victory over rival Homewood, then added the 1991 title at Newark with a 42-36 win over Highwood Small Fry. Also finished second in 1975, 1998, 2009 and 2012.

Chicago Heights made three Final Fours in the 1990s and added a fourth-place finish in 2002.

**Richton Park:** A visitor to the field for the second time, the Stars earned a 12<sup>th</sup>-place finish in 2014.

### PUERTO RICO (7)

**Bucaplaa A:** Following up a 56-49 championship game loss to St. Rocco in 2003, Bucaplaa became the first team to win six straight titles with a 45-42 comeback victory over Homewood in 2004, a 49-33 win over the Rainbow Jaguars in 2005, three straight title-game wins over Fraigcomar (48-26 in 2006, 45-36 in 2007 and 77-62 in 2008) and 42-41 over Chicago Heights in 2009. The Pumas were back on top in 2011 with a 57-45 title-game win over Robert Taylor for their eighth crown and added a ninth with a 57-45 decision over Chicago Heights in 2012. It was Bucaplaa's 10th title-game appearance, as it defeated Racine, 52-40, for the 1986 championship. A 24-time qualifier, Bucaplaa has made 13 Final Fours.

**CIAPR:** A qualifier for the 11<sup>th</sup> time overall, CIAPR owns a best showing of fifth place in 1986.

**Guaynabo Mets:** An entry in the field for the first time, although Guaynabo has sent a tourney representatives on five occasions.

**Ponce Constancia:** A visitor to the field for the 16th time, Constancia captured the 2010 crown with a 41-37 decision over Marquette Best and won its second championship in 2015 with a 42-39 decision over crosstown rival Ponce Lomas. Ponce has also won titles in 1984 and 1990.

**Rexville Bayamon:** Although a first-time participant, Rexville hails from the same town as last year's champion.

**Southern Ponce:** From a basketball-rich area of the island, Southern Ponce is hoping for first-year success.

**Toa Baja:** Hoping to build on a 15<sup>th</sup>-place finish in its lone other appearance in 2013.

### VIRGIN ISLANDS (2)

**St. Thomas, Virgin Islands:** Now a sixth-year entry after Small Fry branched out to a new Carribean area for the first time in 2012, St. Thomas captured the 2013 consolation crown in its first International Tourney appearance and improved to 7<sup>th</sup> place in 2015.

**St. Croix:** Traveling to Orlando for the fourth time, St. Croix took 16<sup>th</sup> place in the Big Show in 2016.

### SOUTH (1)

**Florida:** Small Fry now boasts a "hometown entry" in the field after the local squad won the Moe Reed Friendship Tournament in 2016

### SOUTH AMERICA (1)

**Columbia:** The Moe Reed tourney participant the last two years seeks its first visit to the Sweet 16.