PRESS RELEASE
For immediate release
September 2022

Registration is Open! 49th St. Thomas International Regatta Set for March 24-26, 2023

St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands. Get ready to STIR up the fun! Registration is now open for the 2023 St. Thomas International Regatta (STIR) (yachtscoring.com/emenu.cfm?eID=15496), set for March 24-26, 2023. This is the place to be for world-class racing, and the chance to trade tacks and tactics with professional crews as well as with weekend warriors who have sailed year-round in anticipation of besting fellow competitors. What's more, register too for the Round the Rocks Race (RTR) (yachtscoring.com/emenu.cfm?eID=15495), which circumnavigates the neighboring island of St. John on March 23. RTR is a terrific opportunity to tune up for STIR and provides an additional chance to land a podium finish at the prizegiving. Add the one-stop venue at the St. Thomas Yacht Club (STYC), the quintessential beachfront Caribbean vibe, and organizers 'can do' attitude toward competitors, and it's easy to see how STIR earned its motto, 'We Love It Here' You will too!

"For nearly a half-century, the St. Thomas Yacht Club has offered sailors professionally set courses by some of the best race management in the world matched with the friendliness, hospitality, and 'can do' spirit of a club-run event ashore," says Pat Bailey, who co-directs STIR 2023 with Greer Scholes. "We invite you to register now and join us in March."

50% Discount on Early Registration

Everyone is invited! STIR 2023 invites CSA (Caribbean Sailing Association-handicap rule), racing, cruising, and bareboat classes; ORC; Large Multihull; Hobie Waves, and One-Design classes with a minimum length of 20 feet. Register now for STIR 2023: yachtscoring.com/emenu.cfm?eID=15496. Pay only US $170, or 50% off the regular entry fee, between now and January 31, 2023. From February 1 to March 23, 2023, the entry fee increases to US $340 and for IC24s and Hobie Waves to US $230. A limited number of Hobie Waves and IC24s are available for charter.



Photo: The Fast 40 Tschuss racing in the 2021 STIR. Credit: Dean Barnes.

Early bird registrants can win customized long-sleeve high-performance team shirts! The name of your registered vessel may be randomly drawn to win this highly coveted prize. The drawing will take place on December 31.

“STIR has been on the *Touch2Play* calendar for many years. It is an absolute blast to race between and around the beautiful islands of the U.S. Virgin Islands. The waters are breathtaking, warm, and with the right amount of azure. The race management focuses on getting quality racing and has been fantastic in every version we’ve been at. If you’ve not done this event, you owe it to yourself to fall in love with STIR,” says Larry Huibers, team member.

BYOB or Charter

Bring your own boat (BYOB) or charter!

Caribbean Regatta Logistics, owned and operated by St. Thomas native Ben Beer, can assist owners and teams in bringing their boats to race. Beer handles logistics for big international race teams that compete in the Caribbean such as *Vesper*, *Prospector*, *Spookie*, and all the 72s. (Tel: 340-998-6203; Email: benbeer13@aol.com), Web: stthomasinternationalregatta.com/faq/caribbean-regatta-logistics/)

Chartering makes it especially easy to fly in, jump on a race-ready yacht, and sail! Over half a dozen outfits are offering vessels to charter either by boat or crew spot for STIR 2023.

One of these is the St. Thomas Sailing Center (stthomassailingcenter.com/st-thomas-international-regatta), with its fleet of IC24s. There are a limited number of IC-24s available for race charter for STIR 2023. The charter fee is US $3200 with new sails (used in no more than two previous regattas) and US $2800 with very good sails. Either choice includes the use of an IC-24 for the Friday through Sunday event, a practice day on Thursday, and a 30-day membership in the St. Thomas Yacht Club. To reserve, Email: info@stthomassailingcenter.com or call (340) 690-3681.



Photo: One-design IC24s offer some of the hottest racing action in STIR. Credit: Dean Barnes

"Imagine a J-24 with a Melges 24 cockpit. That's an IC-24. You sail with main, jib, and spinnaker, and everyone sits comfortably, legs in. Why no genoa? Because it was designed here in St. Thomas, where the wind blows out of the east at 10-20 knots about 90% of the time. We generally get 18 – 22 ICs competing in STIR, with several teams from Puerto Rico, as well as St. John, St. Croix, and Tortola. Competition is intense. We typically run as many as 15 races in this event, with a mixture of windward/ leeward and very scenic island races," says Robert 'Bobby' Brooks, director of the St. Thomas Sailing Center.

Beyond this, the J/120, *J-aguar*, with a custom T-bulb, deeper rudder, and carbon sails, is available by the yacht or crew spot from www.caribbeanraces.com or Email: mrbenjelic@gmail.com.

"After a successful season in 2022, we are looking forward to the 2023 season. STIR is a great friendly regatta in the beautiful St. Thomas archipelago. Race courses are smartly laid out in scenic waters and the after-parties are great," says Ben Jelic, who charters *J-aguar*.

The Farr 65, *Spirit of Juno*, with a new North 3Di main, is available for individual charter or small group slots onboard. A Beneteau First 40.7 is ready for whole boat charter. Both can be chartered from OnDeck (www.ondecksailing.com) in Antigua by Emailing: peter@ondecksailing.com

"Many people still don't realize how accessible it is to take part in a Caribbean regatta. Accessible on price, but also for non-racers to participate and learn in a major sporting event. We always have fun, and the camaraderie and new friendships are long-lasting. STIR hits that button with strong competition for those that want it in a fun environment," says Peter Anthony, director of OnDeck.

The STIR Website will be regularly updated regarding race charter opportunities.

Book Flights and Accommodations Now!

Hands-down, STIR is the easiest to reach of all the Caribbean regattas. Host destination, St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, welcomes direct flights on six major airlines from U.S. mainland gateway cities. These include:

● American Airlines (Boston, Miami, New York, San Juan)

● Delta (Atlanta, New York)

● Frontier (Miami, Orlando)

● JetBlue (Boston)

● Spirit (Fort Lauderdale)

● United (Chicago, Newark, Washington-Dulles, Newark)

Air Sunshine, Cape Air, and Sea Flight are airlines that operate within the Caribbean with service to St. Thomas.

Accommodations on St. Thomas include resorts, hotels, inns, bed and breakfasts, and timeshares. Plus, there are approximately 600 villa units and 200 charter yachts on St. Thomas/St. John. Airbnb listings number over 1,000 on St. Thomas. For more information about the U.S. Virgin Islands, visit: www.visitusvi.com

For more information, visit www.stthomasinternationalregatta.com, Email: stycisv@gmail.com or Regatta Co-Director Pat Bailey at simpleislandboy51@gmail.com, or call (340) 775-6320. Check STIR out on Facebook (www.facebook.com/stirvi), Twitter @stirvi, and Instagram #STIRVI

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