PRESS RELEASE
For immediate release
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Flying Jenny & Chili Pepper Win Classes @ Round the Rocks Race – 49th St. Thomas International Regatta Kicks Off Friday

St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands. Over a dozen sleek sailing yachts raced counter-clockwise around the neighboring island of St. John under a mix of sun, squalls, and winds blowing 18 to 20 knots from the northeast in today's Round the Rocks Race. In the end, the USA's Sandra Askew's Cape 31, Flying Jenny, won the CSA Spinnaker 1 Class in the Round the Rocks Race, while the USVI/Puerto Rico-based Bastian Sarh's Beneteau First 10 Modified, Chili Pepper, finished first in the CSA Spinnaker 2 Class. The race was a great one-day warm-up for the kickoff of the 49th St. Thomas International Regatta, Friday through Sunday.

"We are delighted to welcome all of our sailors to our 49th annual St. Thomas International Regatta. With a forecast for ideal Caribbean sailing conditions, our professional race committee here to set competitive round-the-islands and round-the-buoys, and Virgin Islands hospitality both on land and sea, we are looking forward to a fantastic weekend of sailing. As we like to say, 'We love it here' and we think our sailors do too," says Pat Bailey, STIR regatta co-director with Greer Scholes.



Photo: L to R: Flying Jenny, Final Final and Blitz at the start of CSA Spinnaker Racing 1's Round the Rocks Race. Credit: Dean Barnes

Round the Rocks Winners

The rapidly popular one-design Cape 31 proved its prowess today by besting a class of bigger boats. Save for one other Cape 31, Flying Jenny not only won the CSA Spinnaker 1 Class but completed the course around the 19-square-mile island of St. John with the fasted elapsed time of 3 hours, 7 minutes, and 52 seconds.

"We kept the land on the left and kept the rocks tight," says Josie Gliddon, tactician aboard Flying Jenny. "There was more current than we expected. In the first half of the race there was flat water, then the second half it was all about flying in clear air. Sailing in the Caribbean is a shake-down for us to get ready for the summer racing in Europe. The conditions here, the breeze, make for a great training ground as we are a relatively new team."

The USVI's Peter Corr, driving his Summit 40, Blitz, finished second in CSA 1 less than a minute after Flying Jenny on corrected time.



Photo: Bastian Sarh's Chili Pepper team accepts their Round the Rocks prize. Credit: Dean Barnes

In CSA Spinnaker 2, Sarh's team on Chili Pepper showed they were on fire in the big breeze.

"Every year we try to focus as a team on improving our skill set. Since our boat doesn't do well in the chop, our strategy was to stay closer to shore and that worked. Overall, we had a wonderful time. The weather was fantastic. And it was beautiful. After all, it was St. John."

The USA's Martin Van Breems, at the helm of his 39' Judel Vrolijk, Bermuda High, finished second in CSA Spinnaker 2.

STIR Starts Friday

Flying Jenny, Blitz, Chili Pepper, and Bermuda High are four of nearly 50 yachts registered for STIR 2023. The fleet spans from the Virgin Islands' own 24-foot IC24s to vessels up to 70-foot. This fleet will race in CSA Spinnaker Racing, CSA Non-Spinnaker, and One-Design classes. Skippers and crews hail from the Caribbean, USA, Europe, and Australia.

One team that used the day for practice was Stark Raving Mad IX, the USA's Jim Madden's Carkeek 47.

"Today we had the kind of conditions to achieve the speed this boat was designed for," says Anthony Kotoun, tactician, and former Virgin Islands sailor now living in the USA. "This is the first time the boat has raced since September, and the ideal conditions gave us a chance to tick the boxes on our to-do list and be ready to race tomorrow. What we're looking forward to are the round-the-islands courses. Some 99% of what we do is around-the-buoys. It's much more intricate, different, and entertaining to race around natural markers like islands. We're looking forward to a great weekend of racing."

Schedule of Events

Racing for STIR kicks off for an 11 a.m. start on Friday through Sunday. Racecourses will be set off the southeast, northeast, and east end of St. Thomas

and in Pillsbury Sound between St. Thomas and St. John, with specific courses for each class designated daily by the Race Committee based on weather.

To follow the action, check out STIR on Facebook (www.facebook.com/stirvi), Twitter @stirvi, and Instagram #STIRVI.

Real-time results for today's Round the Rocks race are at https://yachtscoring.com/emenu.cfm?eID=15495. STIR results will be located at https://yachtscoring.com/emenu.cfm?eID=15496

Strong Sponsor Support

Regatta organizers are pleased to announce that Bacardi Rum, Milagro Tequila, Stoli Vodka, and Leatherback Craft Beer, distributed by the West Indies Company, and Carib Beer and Coors Light, distributed by Bellows International, are the official beverages of STIR 2023. One of the quintessential facets of a Caribbean regatta is the after-racing camaraderie ashore to discuss the tacks and gybes of the day and selections from the regatta's special beverage menu add to the fun. The menu features specialty cocktails like the Bacardi Lime In Da Coconut, Bacardi Pain Killer, Stoli Masthead Mule, Milagro Rock 'n' Rita, and for beer, Leatherback, Carib, and Coors Light.

STIR organizers thank the USVI Department of Tourism; The Moorings; Cardow Jewelers; Bacardi Rum, Milagro Tequila, Stoli Vodka, and Leatherback Craft Beer, distributed by the West Indies Company, and Carib Beer and Coors Light, distributed by Bellows International; Ocean Surfari; and The K3 Company for strong sponsor support.

For more information, visit www.stthomasinternationalregatta.com, Email: manager@stthomasyachtclub.org, 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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