

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Kunservative and Blackest Crowned as Groovy and Jumpy Soca Monarchs in St. Croix

Shamall Ferdinand, aka Kunservative, impresses with 'Tie The Knot', winning the Groovy Soca Monarch title

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During the Soca Monarch competition on St. Croix held on December 30th, Kunservative captivated the audience with his groovy segment performance of 'Tie The Knot,' which earned him the winning title. By. V.I. CONSORTIUM/DIVISION OF FESTIVALS, SHOT BY SIN

Kunservative is St. Croix's Groovy Party Soca Monarch, and Blackest the Jumpy Party Soca Monarch, crowned during the Christmas Festival's Soca Monarch Competition on December 30th. Blackest came up shy of a double coronation, placing second in the

Groovy competition with his rendition “Bumz Away”.

However, it was Kunservative, given name Shamall Ferdinand, who prevailed as Groovy King. He performed his tune “Tie The Knot” accompanied by a full wedding ceremony presentation, catching the attention of the audience. In a post-show interview, he thanked the Division of Festivals for hosting the competition and increasing the cash prize to \$10,000. That enhanced incentive, Mr. Ferdinand said, “will help people to push more and do more.” He also commended the Division of Festivals for offering entertainers a chance to “show our talent to the entire world.”

Noting that his path to success was “not an easy road,” Kunservative advised prospective competitors to “prepare to win, and win to prepare.” In a subsequent social media post, he congratulated his fellow competitors, who he said “brought [their] A-game and made the night unforgettable.”

Jumpy Soca Monarch King Darnelle “Blackest” Phillip also commended all contenders, saying that the event was “a great show from the first round.” His Jumpy segment entry titled “J’Ouvert Behavior” earned him his 4th Soca Monarch win, the latest addition to his lengthy list of accolades which include 10 road-march wins.

The Jumpy Soca Monarch title was closely contested, evident by Blackest edging out 1st runner up Jamal by just one point. The response from patrons, it might be said, worked in his favor, as Blackest made sure to include the audience throughout his performance. In the post-show interview, he encouraged competitors to study the judging criteria as a pathway to success, noting that crowd participation indeed accounts for a large chunk of the final mark. He also called on audience members to be more engaged, reminding them that “people are watching” and that their energy could be what attracts more people to the festival.

Meanwhile Temisha's solid performances landed her third place finishes in both competitions.