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After Successful Round The Rocks, Sailors Look Forward To Friday's Start of St. Thomas International Regatta

Sailors reunite and sharpen skills in a prelude to the weekend's premier sailing event

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Flying Jenny & ShotGunn at the start of the Round the Rocks race. By. DEAN BARNES

Thursday's Round the Rocks race was a "tune-up" event for Friday's St. Thomas International Regatta, according to the St. Thomas Yacht Club. Eleven boats in four classes sailed counterclockwise around the island, some crews re-acquainting themselves with each other after months apart.

“We just brought the boat down and got a practice day in on Wednesday, the first we’ve sailed together since November,” said USA’s Donald Nicholson, who captained the J121 Apollo to the top of the CSA Spinnaker 2 class on Thursday. “There’s nothing like sailing in a race to get the boat handling down and hone our skills for regattas in the BVI and Antigua later this spring.”

Some sailors took the opportunity to test out different roles. “My wife usually drives, but I was at the helm today,” said USA’s David Askew, who steered Flying Jenny to the finish in the CSA Spinnaker 1 class less than a minute ahead of his challenger.

USA’s David Hensley’s experience at the helm of the J42 Trinity IV was also something unusual. “This was the first time,” he noted. “I raced on this boat last year as crew.” The Round the Rocks course is the first time Trinity IV’s crew has ever sailed together, and the experiment was a success, as the vessel topped the CSA Spinnaker 3 class.

The winner of the Large Multihull class, Little Wing, was crewed by several sailors experiencing Caribbean waters for the first time. “We like people who haven’t sailed here, knowing they’ll have a great time and be back,” said USA’s Ron Bohem, who took the helm during Thursday’s race.

Racing during Friday, Saturday and Sunday’s St. Thomas International Regatta starts at 11:00 am daily, with real time results posted on the Regatta’s [website](#).