

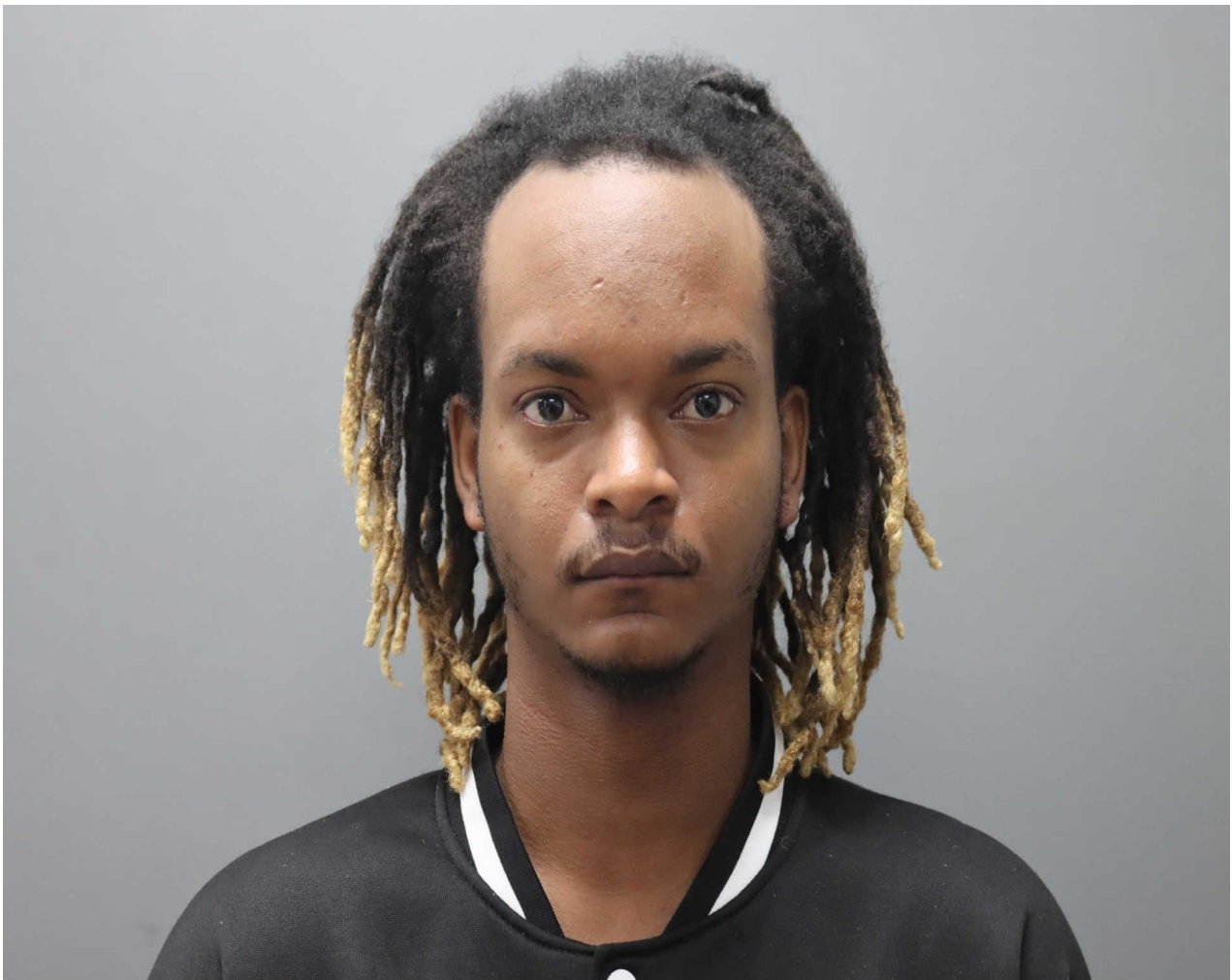
The Virgin Islands Consortium

Missing Front Plate Leads to Traffic Stop, Gun Arrest and Felony Charges on St. Thomas

Police say the stop began over a missing front license plate on Julian Jackson Drive, but escalated after officers smelled marijuana, searched the vehicle, and found a loaded 9mm Glock, additional magazines, and ammunition inside a bag.

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Mugshot of Antonio Camacho. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT.

ST. THOMAS — What began as a traffic stop over a missing front license plate early Wednesday morning escalated into a felony gun case after officers said they smelled marijuana, searched the vehicle, and found an unlicensed firearm and ammunition inside

a bag in the car.

Police said officers were on duty during the early morning hours when they observed a white Acura sedan traveling west on Julian Jackson Drive without a license plate attached to the front of the vehicle.

The car was stopped, and officers found two people inside.

According to police, once the windows were lowered, officers detected a strong odor of marijuana. That prompted them to ask both occupants to get out of the vehicle so a search could be conducted.

Police said the driver, Antonio Camacho, told officers there were no drugs or firearms inside the car.

During the search, officers reportedly found a bag inside the vehicle. The passenger told police the bag did not belong to them, while Camacho reportedly acknowledged that some of the items inside belonged to him.

Inside the bag, police said they found a 9mm Glock 45 loaded with one round in the chamber and 15 rounds in a 17-round magazine.

Officers also found an empty 17-round Glock magazine, along with another magazine of unknown brand and capacity, according to police.

Camacho reportedly told officers that he did not have a license to own or carry a firearm in the Virgin Islands.

He was then arrested and charged with unlawful possession of a firearm, unlawful possession of ammunition, and failure to securely attach a license plate.

Police said he was unable to pay the initial bail amount of \$60,000 and was remanded into custody pending his advice of rights hearing.

During a court appearance on Thursday, Magistrate Simone VanHoltten-Turnbull found probable cause to uphold the charges against Camacho and set bail at \$50,000.

Of that amount, \$3,000 must be paid in cash for release, with the remainder signed as an unsecured bond.

If released from pretrial detention, Camacho will be required to report to the probation office twice a week — once in person and once by telephone.

He must also comply with standard restrictions on travel, controlled substance use, and possession of dangerous weapons.

His next court appearance is scheduled for April 17.