The Virgin Islands Consortium

Coloradans Win Top Prizes At St. Croix's Iron Man, Locals Did Not Disappoint

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ST. CROIX -- They call it the most difficult course that they've ever raced, but the two Coloradans who went home with the male and female first place medals and $10,000 each, would have it no other way; because St. Croix's Half Iron Man 70.3 course was also the most satisfying track they've ever ridden.

The annual competition took place on Sunday at Fort Christianvaern, beginning with a 1.2-mile (1.9 km) swim, a 56-mile (90 km) bike ride, and a 13.1-mile (21.1 km) run -- covering locations on the east, west, north and south sides of the island. There were relay and sprint races as well in which locals performed strong.

Matt Chrabot, 32, from Colorado Springs, the male winner of this year's Iron Man 70.3 race, was visiting St. Croix the second time having won the sprint competition in 2005, and said he came back for the island's hospitality and because he's very good at racing in the sun. His special training for such events is to sit in a sauna and allow his body to become acquainted with heat.

Pictures of St. Croix's 2015 Iron Man Competition

FINIS
Captain Morgan
IRONMAN
70.3
St.Croix
US Virgin Islands
TREK

Captain Morgan
IRONMAN
70.3
St.Croix
US Virgin Islands
3

FINIS
Captain Morgan
IRONMAN
70.3
St.Croix
US Virgin Islands
Captain Morgan
TREK
HOKA ONE ONE
TYR
performer
SMITH

Captain Morgan
IRONMAN
70.3
St.Croix
US Virgin Islands

CYCLING TEAM

VINE
Cycling Team

1024

Captain Morgan

TYR
1033

IRONMAN 70.3 ST. CROIX
1038

FLEX
YOUR
FACE
1039

TRIATHLON
Captain Morgan
IRONMAN 70.3 ST. CROIX
1068

1006
1027

1014

1056

Captain Morgan
IRONMAN 70.3 ST. CROIX
1004

IRONMAN
70.3
VIRGIN ISLANDS

650

ISV
V
Virgin Islands
Cycling

adidas
654

ST. CROIX
SUNDAY MAY 3, 2015
653

FLEET
FEET
Sports
KAILUA
1068

START
IRONMAN
70.3
217

NO
PARKING
ON
THIS
STREET

ENDURANCE
Captain Morga
The Best

FURUNO

SOAS

"Coming from winter and snow in Colorado, you kind of have to prepare yourself somehow," he said.

As for what the champion will do with his $10,000 award, paying bills takes first priority as Chrabot revealed the bulk of the money will go into mortgage on a home he recently purchased.

While Chrabot's next race will be another 70.3 in Raleigh, North Carolina in 4 weeks, he will remember St. Croix's challenging course and said he'd love to be back next year to defend his title.

The female first place medalist, seemingly effortlessly running to the finish line, said the race was anything but easy.

"The race was challenging, and it was really different than any other race that I've done, so you've got to pace yourself," Lauren Goss of Boulder, Colorado said, adding, "I felt pretty slow on the bike and pretty slow on the run, but I just didn't die. It's survival on this course."

Goss, 27, said it was her second time winning a 70.3 race having competed in about 8. The champion also revealed that she'd been on a losing streak all year, so the St. Croix win means a lot.

The Coloradan again mentioned the difficulty of Iron Man on the island, and said at one point she felt like jumping into the ocean and giving up.

"It was so challenging. It was relentless," she stressed. "If there weren't hills there was wind, if there wasn't wind, there were holes in the road. The swim was choppy, the bike run was hilly and windy -- and it's so hot."

Even so, Goss said St. Croix's Iron Man was inviting because of the challenge it presented, and the fact that all the races in the states tend to be the same.

"All the races in the states are flat and boring and everyone just ends up in groups. This really separates the strong cyclists and I just wanted to come here," Goss said, revealing that she had an option to race in California or Utah, "but I decided to buy my $700 plane ticket to come here and take my chances."

In the end, however, Goss said stopping and appreciating the victory born out of hard work is important, and planned to celebrate with her boyfriend, Scott Drew, 24, who's also from Boulder, Colorado.

Before heading to a medical tent where competitors received care upon finishing their courses, Goss said of all races she's competed in before, St. Croix's Iron Man was the hardest.

While the territory's athletes were not among the top 70.3 racers, local talent dominated the spring and relay competitions, with Dedrick Luikens taking home the gold medal in the sprint competition, Kuipers Kuczynski winning first place in the sprint relay race, while Ellis Swanton Bolke took home gold in the relay competition. All three of the aforementioned competitors are local.

Top Iron Man 70.3 Male Results:

1: Matt Chrabot

2: Richie Cunningham

3: Drew Scott

Top Iron Man Female Results:

1: Lauren Goss

2: Kirsty Jahn

3: Amanda Stevens

Top Iron Man Spring Relay Results:

1: Kuipers Kuczynsi

2: Panthers

3: Fast Furious Fifth Graders

Top Iron Man Sprint Results:

1: Dedrick Luikens

2: Deve Barbour

3: Marcus Sydney

Top Iron Man Relay Results

1: Ellis Swanton Bolke

2: RedRum Racers

3: Eat This!

Half Iron Man Qualifiers are here.

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