

Image not found or type unknown

## First St. Thomas Yacht Club Invitational Regatta Set for June 27-28

Sports / **Published On June 10, 2020 05:24 AM /**

Staff Consortium **June 10, 2020**

Image not found or type unknown



**ST. THOMAS** — The first annual St. Thomas Yacht Club (STYC) Invitational Regatta sponsored by Leatherback Brewing Co. will take place on June 27 to 28. Run out of the Club's St. Thomas Sailing Center (STSC) in Cowpet Bay, this inaugural event welcomes 11 teams representing all three U.S. Virgin Islands, the British Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, U.S.A., and Sweden, according to a release issued Tuesday.

COVID-19 safety precautions will be in place per the USVI Government's Open Doors phase. Crews are limited to two in the IC24 and will race jib and main, thus eliminating extra crew needed to fly a spinnaker. Plus, sailors will wear facial buffs while sailing. Additionally, there will be a single-handed Hobie Waves class, thus enabling additional sailors to participate.

The STYC Invitational Regatta ticks key boxes at this crucial time: sailing is a healthful activity that's easy to socially distance, the invitational nature promotes a rebound of the territory's marine tourism, and the format tests the waters for a future larger international event in this 'new normal' era. Best of all, the event makes use of and showcases one of the U.S. Virgin Islands' signature and most valuable assets – the surrounding seas. The Regatta will also commemorate a perpetual trophy awarded to the winning teams dedicated to Rudy Thomson and Dick Avery for their long-standing contributions to STYC and Olympic racing inspiring sailors of all ages.

Sailing is socially distancing at its best,” says Chris Rosenberg, STYC rear commodore, regatta founder and innovator of the IC24 (Inter-Club 24) design with boatbuilder Morgan Avery. “The whole idea of creating the IC24 in 2001, after successive hurricanes damaged much of the racing fleet, is that it makes it possible to host regattas with a fleet of identical club owned boats, where teams can fly in, jump aboard and race.”

Teams confirmed to compete in the 2020 STYC Invitational Regatta include Eric Cusin, St. Croix; Ted Reshetiloff, BVI; Marco Teixidor, Efrain 'Fraitó' Lugo and Jaime Balzac from Puerto Rico; Dave Franzel, U.S.A.; and Peter Sernhede, Sweden.

The 2020 STYC Invitational Regatta tests the waters for a larger event in future years where teams from yacht clubs throughout the Caribbean, U.S.A, and Europe will be invited to race. Starting in 2021, the STIR Invitational Regatta will move to a permanent date of the third week in May, May 14-16. This time coincides with the wrap-up of the Caribbean race season and creates an extension to the territory's tourism season, a win-win. In the future, there will be an opportunity for spectators to watch the racing.

The STYC Invitational Regatta is the newest of the events hosted by the St. Thomas Yacht Club, which also includes the St. Thomas International Regatta, International Optimist Regatta, and a match race.

## **Learn to Sail**

Sailing is not only a great way to socially distance, but a positive activity for mind and body. The STSC offers several instructional programs for adults, from learn to sail to advanced bareboat certification and cruising classes. Classes are taught by highly experienced instructors aboard the Club's IC24s. Schedules range from a vacation week format for those who wish to fly in and combine visiting the U.S. Virgin Islands along with sailing instruction, to weekend end and late-afternoon classes for those that live locally and need to schedule around employment. Class registration comes with a 30-day Bluewater Membership, where students to use and enjoy Club facilities and amenities. A \$150 Blue Water Boat Access fee enables students to sail IC24s and Hobie Waves throughout their Blue Water Membership. Students who get hooked on sailing can pursue their passion regularly. The STSC hosts several regular activities such as Ladies Hobie Wave Racing every other Thursday, co-ed Hobie Wave Racing every Thursday, double-handed IC24 racing every Friday and more.

## **Strong Sponsor Support**

The Leatherback Brewing Company and Mutiny Island Vodka, both based on St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands, are co-sponsors of the 2020 STYC Invitational Regatta.

“We are excited to be a part of the first STYC Invitational Regatta! We truly love supporting the active and responsible enjoyment of our great outdoors. We are excited to be more involved in events on St. Thomas as we near the opening of our new Tasting Room and brewery,” says Packy

Gilbert, managing partner of the Leatherback Brewing Company with Aaron Hutchins.

Leatherback Brewing Company brews and packages craft beer in the Virgin Islands with both traditional and uniquely Caribbean ingredients. The company recently began a limited release series and will be featuring its current selection, Acerola Cherry Hefe along with its four flagships at the regatta.

MUTINY Island Vodka, the Caribbean's Original Island Vodka handcrafted from breadfruit, is a first in the world new spirit and created in the USVI. The company will feature its MUTINY Island Vodka and its crafty infusions including Smoked Hot Pepper, Cold Pressed Coffee, and the new ROOTS edition featuring local roots of Ginger and Turmeric at the event.

For more information about the STYC Invitational Regatta and STSC sailing lessons, call Dave Franzel, [dave@stthomassailingcenter.com](mailto:dave@stthomassailingcenter.com), (340) 690-3681, or visit: <https://stthomassailingcenter.com/>

© Viconsortium 2024