

The Virgin Islands Consortium

St. Croix Poker Run Sees Strong Growth Year-Over-Year; Monetary Prizes Awarded To Winners

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Donna Bellot **April 04, 2017**



ST. CROIX -- Winners of the 2nd Annual St Croix Poker Run were announced and awarded their prizes, at an informal ceremony outside the Hotel Caravelle, on Monday. In addition to sea courses, this year's run—held on Saturday March 25th—also featured land courses as a special contribution to the territory's commemoration of the Centennial Transfer Day.

The island's annual run was held as a means of raising funds to be donated to two charities. Promotor of the event, Davidson Charlemagne, stated the idea was to find a way to help the Boys and Girls Club and the St. Croix Dolphin Association (The Dolphin Swim Team). He further detailed that he had planned the event for the last two years with

the help and support of Senator Kurt Violet.

"I gave him [Senator Violet] the idea of what I wanted to do. He listened [and] was just trying to figure out how we could orchestrate this. But [we] created this and he helped me push to get my sponsors," Mr. Charlemagne said.

Mr. Charlemagne also expressed his elation in seeing how quickly the run has gained popularity on the island, comparing it to similar runs in the British Virgin Islands. "We didn't expect it to be embraced so quickly with the history of the B.V.I. They started in 2001 and when they started, the first year they had 13 boats," he said.

The number of participating boats on St. Croix presented in much larger quantities in the first year, which pulled 43 participating boats; whereas, this year's count reached 53 boats. Mr. Charlemagne added that there is always an expectation that events would get better every year, but he's still amazed at how quickly it was embraced.

He also said he thought the event was a success because it not only allowed the participants an opportunity to get more familiar with the island and many of the local businesses, but it allowed local businesses—especially the ones who participated—an opportunity to gain additional patronage.

The concept behind poker run involved participants using boats—for sea participants—and foot or other means of transportation—for land participants—to visit up to seven checkpoints to draw a playing card. The objective is to build the best poker hand at the end of the run, by keeping five of the seven cards obtained. Participants were able to purchase cards at Shupe's on the Boardwalk between 8:30 and 9:30 a.m. According to Mr. Charlemagne, following years will only include sea runs.

The run officially began at 10:00 a.m. with sea participants starting at Fort Christianvaern, the boardwalk, and land participants starting at Panchi-Gallows Bay. Participants were then required to turn in their cards to draw their poker hand no later than 5:00 p.m. at Shupe's. In addition to the poker prizes, boaters who traveled to Fredericksted for the Wild card/bonus card were automatically qualified to win a raffle prize.

Sea Checkpoints:

1. Cramer's Park
2. Buck Island
3. Deep End Bar and Grill (at Green Cay)
4. Gallows Bay Dock
5. Shupe's on the Boardwalk

WILD CARD/BONUS CARD Stops:

- Fredericksted Fisherman's Boat Ramp
- Rainbow Beach

Land Checkpoints:

1. Cramer's Park
2. Divi East End Pizza

3. Rainbow Beach
4. Chicken Shack
5. Shupe's on the Boardwalk

WILD CARD/BONUS CARD Stops:

- Norma's beer Drinking Pig
- Eat on the North Shore

Poker Prizes and Winners:

- 1st prize: \$7500 –Dan Coult
- 2nd prize: \$3500- Latoya Williams
- 3rd prize: \$2500- Diane Gordon
- 4th prize: \$1000- Moses Guadalupe
- 5th prize: \$500-Summer Heckler

Raffle Prize winners:

- 1st prize: \$1000- Festus Pemberton, captain of "Sick Boy"
- 2nd prize: \$500-Danny Asad, captain of "Casino Royal"
- 3rd prize: \$200- Eldon Lambert, captain of "Dadio"

All prize winners were also awarded a Cardow watch.

The check for the donation funds will be presented to the charities sometime this week. Sponsors of the event include Office of the Governor, Cardow Jewelers, Divi Carina Bay Resort and Casino, Caravelle Hotel Casino, Department of Tourism and the Office of Senator Kurt Violet. Team members include Jense Burge, Janella Simon, Sacha Charlemagne, Anton Kupier and Vicki Locke.

Correction: April 4, 2017

A previous version of this story stated one of the beneficiaries of the event as the St. Croix Golfing Association, when the correct nonprofit is the St. Croix Dolphin Association. We've updated the story.