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St. Croix Scenic 50 Ultramarathon Garner's Highest Runner Participation in 11-Year History

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From left to right: Sissel Holloway; Megan Lambert; Kathleen Brownsdon; William R. Bohlke; Jessica Carter; Michael Klein; Matthew Halk; Erin Williams; Jack Pilla; and Bridget Klein. By. ASHLEY SMITH

ST. CROIX — Sixty-three runners braved rain and flood conditions on Saturday to participate in the eleventh annual St. Croix Scenic 50 Ultramarathon, a release issued Monday has made known. Athletes competed in one of three categories: 50-mile individual, 50-mile relay or the 50-kilometer individual race. The long course went from Christiansted to Frederiksted and back, with both courses ending on the beach at The Buccaneer.

Completing the 50-mile individual course first, was St. Croix resident Jessica Carter in a time of 8:48:28. Erin Williams of Virginia came in second and George Forbes of Colorado came in third. Race founder Matthew Halk came in fourth at the 10:23:19 mark. Catherine Seguin completed the list of individuals who successfully finished the long course.

“It was great to be home and see the race thriving and growing,” said Matthew Halk, who established the St. Croix Scenic 50 race in 2010 with only 10 finishers that first year. “I am endlessly grateful to Michael and Bridget Klein for their dedication to this race and its potential to positively influence young runners on-island.” Halk’s sister in-law, Elizabeth Armstrong, owns The Buccaneer, which sponsored the race and hosted today’s awards breakfast.

The 50-mile relay was the most popular event this year, drawing 32 runners. Leading the eight, four-person relay teams was The Crushers, finishing in a time of 7:06:42. Running together for the third consecutive year, the winning relay team included Dr. Esther Ellis; Bridget Klein; Megan Lambert; and Julie Sommer. The team X-Country X-Croix finished approximately 20 minutes behind the leaders, with team Lost in Pace taking third.

The 50-kilometer race began atop The Beast and drew 22 runners this year. St. Croix’s William R. Bohlke took the top spot and set a new course record of 4:54:04. Kathleen Brownsdon, also of St. Croix, took second place. Sissel Holloway of Washington took third, with her father Troy Holloway also completing the 50km race.

“It’s great to see so many active, young people competing in the Scenic 50 this year,” said William R. Bohlke, who now holds the records for both the 50-mile and 50-kilometer courses. “Seeing a relay team from a local high school was encouraging. This next generation of runners will carry on the legacy of this and other St. Croix races.” His company, Bohlke International Airways, also sponsored the run.

Additional sponsors of the 2020 St. Croix Scenic 50 Ultramarathon were AVC Bank; Cruzan Gardens; GoToStCroix.com; Holloway Solar; ib designs jewelry; I-Cycle; Jolly Roger sailing; Leatherback Brewing Company; Synergy Light; Twin City Coffee House; and the Virgin Islands Pace Runners.

The St. Croix Scenic 50 Ultramarathon combines the challenges of heat, hills and humidity to create a beautiful, brutal and undeniably challenging course. With 50-mile, 50-kilometer and relay options, along with generous cutoff times, this ultramarathon caters to a variety of running skill levels. Founded in 2010 by Matthew Halk and currently run by Michael and Bridget Klein, the St. Croix Scenic 50 Ultramarathon grows in participation annually, drawing both U.S. Virgin Islands residents and visitors alike. More information may be found at StCroix50.com.