



***V.I. Pace Runners Bulletin: December 2, 2012***  
***V.I. Champions come out of St. Croix International Marathon and V.I. Half-Marathon***

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The running of the 11<sup>th</sup> St. Croix International Marathon and The 38<sup>th</sup> Virgin Islands Half-Marathon saw some of the best long distance runners in the Virgin Islands history meet the challenge of the St. Croix marathon course advertised as fast and beautiful only to present a surface that for at least 8 of the 26.2 miles, that left a lot to be desired.

J.D. Nielsen of Parachute, Colorado took top honors as he won the 11<sup>th</sup> St. Croix International Marathon with a time of 3 hours 1 minute 51 seconds. Nielsen was unchallenged as he took the lead from the start with a sub-six minute per mile pace which he held for the initial miles of the race. At around the 10 mile mark on the Ham's Bluff road surface which was severely damaged, the pace of all the runners slowed. Two-time Olympic Marathon runner and two-time winner of this marathon, Calvin Dallas of St. Thomas, was steady all the way as he finished second and took the V.I. championship for open as well as the masters (over 40) category with a time of 3:30.01. Mike Klein, winner of the 2012 St. Croix Scenic 50 Mile Ultra, was third with a time of 3:47.16; Steve Horness of St. Croix finished fourth in his first marathon with a time of 3:50.02; and T.J. Vandehey finished fifth for the men with a time of 3:54.15.

V.I. Olympic Marathon runner in the 1992 Barcelona Olympics, Ana Gutierrez took advantage of the cooler morning temps and finished third overall as she became the V.I. Champion and masters winner with a time of 3:33.20; Sissel Holloway of St. Croix found success in her first marathon and took second overall for women with a time of 3:56.08; Christine Mette sailed to St. Croix with her family to do this marathon to celebrate her 60<sup>th</sup> birthday and

finished third with a time 5:04.15 (her 20 year old son joined her in celebration to run his first marathon and finished with the same time for 7<sup>th</sup> male); Yen Nguyen of Houston, Texas and a member of the 50 States Marathon club with a goal of running a marathon on every continent, was the fourth female with a time of 5:50.44; Diane Weaver and her mom Rami Weaver of St. Thomas finished fifth and sixth for women with the same time of 6:20.00 and Susan Daley of Chicago and the only runner in the race to run in the first edition of this race, was seventh with a time of 7:32.10.

The 38<sup>th</sup> V.I. Half-Marathon was run in conjunction with the marathon and was highly competitive for the top five runners. In the early going, Shane DeGannes of STAR in St. Thomas was out at well under six minute per mile pace as the runners were in the dark and on the section of the worst road condition for the Butler Bay Ham's Bluff Road 6am start. DeGannes went into the Rain Forest with just a slight lead over former V.I. Champion and National Steeplechase record holder Juan Robles and two of his Turabo Univ. teammates from Colombia including Diego Panesso the defending champion of the race and Arbrey Escobar who has a personal best for the distance of 1:06. DeGannes held his slight lead coming out of the rain forest for the first turn around in front of Fort Frederik in Frederiksted at the 5 mile mark. At around the 9 mile mark the Colombians and Robles put in the surge while the road was ok and pulled away to finish in the following order: Pasnesso first in 1:18.26; Escobar second in 1:18.35 and Robles third for the V.I. Championship in 1:18.42 in one of the closest finishes in the race's 38 year history. Forty year old DeGannes had a strong performance with a fourth place finish in 1:24.13 also took the master category; Paul Evora of St. Croix traveled all the way to New York for the NY City Marathon last month only to face its cancelation due to Hurricane Sandy to finish fifth with a time of 1:39.50.

Ruth Ann David representing STAR from St. Thomas added to her string of successes in this half marathon as well as the St. Croix Marathon. finished first for women with a time of 1:32.52 as she became the V.I. Champion. Theresa Harper top V.I. Triathlete and winner of most of the St.Croix International Marathon titles, was second over all and the masters category winner with a time of 1:39.50; Ashley Benson of St. Thomas was the third female with a time of 1:46.29; Heidi Snow a past St. Croix Marathon champion was fourth in 1:53.22 and Camila Jensen of Denmark and St. Croix was fifth in 1:55.09.

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Notes:

1] While the condition of portions of the race courses were less than standard, next year the road will be newly paved and the course will be re-certified according to IAAF standards.

2] The races on Sunday included two Virgin Islands Olympians: Calvin Dallas Seoul 1988 Marathon and Barcelona Marathon 1992 and Ana Gutierrez Barcelona 1992 Marathon. Our condolences to Ana on the passing of her father Manuel last week.

3] Lillian Sanpere traveled to St. Croix with a group from Florida to compete in the V.I. Half-Marathon and visit her father Sal Sanpere a member of the 1972 Muncie Olympic Shooting Team.

4] Diane Weaver and her daughter Rami traveled from St. Thomas to run the marathon and finished together.

5] Rober Robello has run enough marathons that the total miles more than circle the globe.

6] In a show of support for the home-town event, Theresa Harper, (Philadelphia Marathon), Mike Klein and Troy Holloway (Great Barrier Wharf-To-Wharf Marathon in New Zealand); Paul Evora traveled to New York to run the New York Marathon only to have it canceled due to the impact of Tropical Storm Sandy; Ruth Ann David and Shane DeGannes of St. Thomas won the BVI Half-Marathon two weeks ago.

7] Frederiksted and the finish line of both the St. Croix International Marathon and the V.I. Half-Marathon is famous because it is the exact location where the emancipation of slaves in the Danish West Indies took place in 1848.

8] For photos of the marathon and half-marathon, logon to <http://virginislandspace.org/stxmarathon2012.htm>

9] In an effort to improve the St. Croix International Marathon and the V.I. Half-Marathon, participants in the races can win \$100 by completing the online survey and the 2012 Marathon Quiz by logging on to: <http://virginislandspace.org/stxmarathon2012.htm>

10] Thanks go out to: the V.I. Police Dept.; St. Croix Rescue, The St. Croix Track Club, The V.I. Cycling Federation, V.I. Triathlon Federation, V.I. Port

Authority, V.I. Dept. of Tourism, The Buccaneer Hotel, V.I.Pace Runners volunteers and all for helping to make the event a success.

11] The following partners helped to make the event possible (they join other to be named in helping The V.I.Pace Runners celebrate its 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2013): LNL Publishing, Joel H. Holt Attorney, Plaza Extra Supermarket, HH Tire and Battery, Quality Auto Parts, Williams Chiropractic Center, Bohlke Airways.

12] The St. Croix International Marathon and the Virgin Islands Half-Marathon is organized by the Virgin Islands Pace Runners, sanctioned by the Virgin Islands Track and Field Federation and affiliated with the IAAF, NACAC, CAC and Road Runners of America.