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St. Thomas International Regatta Crowns Four Class Winners as Nearly 40 Boats Compete

Hosted by the St. Thomas Yacht Club, the 2026 regatta drew nearly 40 boats from across the Caribbean, the U.S., the UK and Ireland, with Privateer, Cachondo, Papi and Boogie Board Bandits finishing on top.

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Privateer sails to victory in the CSA Spinnaker Racing Class at the 2026 St. Thomas International Regatta, where the Cookson 50 finished first after three days of competition off St. Thomas. By. STIR/WWW.INGRIDABERY.COM

Nearly 40 boats from across the Caribbean, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the mainland United States, and Europe converged on St. Thomas for the 2026 St. Thomas International Regatta, where three days of racing ended with Privateer, Cachondo, Papi, and Boogie Board Bandits emerging as class winners.

Hosted by the St. Thomas Yacht Club from April 3–5, the regatta featured competition in CSA Spinnaker Racing and one-design classes, including IC24, ISCA (Sunfish), and Hobie Wave. Sailors came from all three U.S. Virgin Islands, the British Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and St. Maarten, as well as several U.S. states, from Massachusetts to California, and from the UK and Ireland, underscoring the event's place as a highlight of the Caribbean sailing calendar.

On the third and final day, colorful spinnakers on the IC24 class boats popped up like Easter bonnets on parade.

"Congratulations to this year's competitors and class winners for an exceptional performance," says Jennifer Matarangas-King, Commissioner of the U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Tourism. "The St. Thomas International Regatta reflects the strength of our sailing tradition and the extraordinary conditions that continue to draw top competitors to the U.S. Virgin Islands year after year."

In the CSA Spinnaker Racing Class, Privateer, the USA's Ron O'Hanley's Cookson 50, finished first with a slim two-point lead over Puerto Rico's Enrique Figueroa on the Melges 24, Exodus. Puerto Rico's Juan Mari on his J/100, Freelance, placed third.

"The first day was all about figuring out the starts due to the disparity of boat speeds in the class. There was flat water on the first day, but on the second, it got lumpier, which favored us. Today, we had a clean start in the first race. In the final race, a huge rain squall blew through Pillsbury Sound with a 70-degree wind shift and gusts up to 27 knots. We had a gear failure and dropped the spinnaker in the water. It cost us the race, but we had a good enough cushion of a lead to win the class," says Tim Dawson, tactician, of the Newport, RI-based race boat sailing under the burgee of the Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron.

Puerto Rico's Marco Teixidor, helming Cachondo, topped the highly competitive IC24 class. Teixidor's crew was Geraldo Fernandez, tactician; Juan Llavat, deck; Guillermo Toruella, trim; and Ivan Aponte, foredeck.

"We had fifteen races, five each day, kept focused as a team, and stuck to our game plan. There was such tight racing, especially in the top five boats, that it was important to stay consistent and avoid having any bad races," says Teixidor, who last won this class in 2015.

The U.S. Virgin Islands' Teddy Nicolosi, sailing Bill T, finished second in the class, with Olympian Thomas Barrows and U.S. SailGP grinder Mac Agnese as crew. The BVI's INTAC, with Mark Plaxton at the helm, finished third.

In the ISCA class, St. Croix's Peter Stanton sailing Papi won handily. Stanton, the 1999 Sunfish Youth World Championship, has attended 13 ISCA/Sunfish World Championships, is the current ISCA Master's World Champion, and a bronze medalist at the 2018 Central American and Caribbean Games. He also led an instructional clinic for the class before the regatta began.

"I had the most experience of anyone in the class, but I knew if I took my foot off the gas, the rest would be ready to overtake me," he says. "The big shifts and big puffs were challenging today, so I had to be on my toes."

Stanton's brother, Scott Stanton, sailing Stormy, finished second, while St. Croix's David Walworth, helming Kittikins, placed third.

In the Hobie Wave class, St. John's Hunter Reinbold, 12, and St. Thomas' Kip Hodgens, 11, held onto their day-one lead to win aboard Boogie Board Bandits.

"This is our first STIR regatta," says Reinbold. "We were in it to have fun, and it felt good to be first yesterday. Today, the racing was closer. We got two-thirds and a fourth and thought our competition overtook us, but they didn't."

Finn Hodgens, brother of Kip Hodgens, and St. Thomas' Will Zimmerman finished second in WINN, while St. Thomas' Rowan Walters, sailing Hobie Speed, took third.

Real-time results for STIR are posted at yachtscoring.com/emenu/50483. The principal race officers for STIR 2026 were Mark Foster, Richard Neville, and Diana Margarita.

Organizers are already looking ahead to the 53rd STIR. Mark your calendar now to race in the 53rd STIR, set for March 26-28, 2026, with the Round the Rocks Race on Thursday, March 25, 2027. The dates coincide with the Easter holiday weekend, offering what organizers described as a perfect time to travel with family and friends, enjoy Virgin Islands hospitality, and race on the best courses in the world's top yacht racing conditions.

The NOR and entry on www.stthomasinternationalregatta.com and www.yachtscoring.com will open in late summer. IC24s and Hobie Waves will be available for charter through the St. Thomas Sailing Center. Caribbean Regatta Logistics, owned and operated by St. Thomas native Ben Beer, can assist owners and teams in bringing their boats to race.

STIR organizers also thanked the V.I. Department of Tourism, The Moorings, K3 Waterproof Gear, Ocean Surfari, and Mount Gay, Gosling's, Tito's Handmade Vodka, Surfside Iced Tea & Vodka, Aperol Spritz, and Michelob Ultra, distributed by CC1 USVI, for their sponsorship support.

STIR 2026 is a Sailors for the Sea Clean Regatta featuring green initiatives.