

VIOC IN ACTION

Virgin Islands Olympic Committee Newsletter



Virgin Islands Olympic Committee

A Message from Our Chef de Mission for Sochi 2014



For over two weeks the premier winter sports athletes from around the world will compete in the 2014 Winter Olympics to see who will take home the GOLD. I'm excited to have the opportunity to lead the Virgin Islands Olympic delegation as "Chef de Mission". Having volunteered with the Virgin Islands Olympic Committee (VIOC) for over 8 years in different capacities, including Vice President of the VIOC and President of the Wrestling Federation, this is my first time as "Chef" and I'm honored by this new opportunity.

As Chef de Mission (French for Head of the Mission), I will be responsible for the logistics of Team Virgin Islands while staying in the Mountain Cluster in Sochi. These duties include everything from sports accreditations, meals, lodging and transportation to athlete support.

I look forward to supporting Jasmine Campbell of the Virgin Islands on this world stage as she participates in Slalom and Giant Slalom. I also look forward to networking with the other Chefs representing countries around the world while being an ambassador for the Virgin Islands.

Ansen Sligar
Chef de Mission
2014 Sochi Winter Olympics

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The Winter Sports Athletes



The last issue of our newsletter introduced you to our three Winter Sports Athletes who are aiming for Sochi, Russia for the Winter Olympics in February. Jasmine Campbell, Veronica Gaspar and Katie Tannenbaum have turned their passion for sport into a bid for an Olympic spot. This is a remarkable feat, however, these ladies went above and beyond remarkable when they became Olympic-good in Winter Sports while calling our islands in the Caribbean home. Check out page two for their interviews on what their sports are and what they do about our lack of snow and ice!

News: SPORTS FEDERATIONS



The Wrestling Federation organizes a match for the youth.

News: SPORTS FEDERATIONS



V.I. Sports Federations work together for Running Events.

THE OLYMPIC COMMITTEE



Hosting CANOC at the Marriott.

Who is going to Sochi?



The VIOC makes its announcement.

Winter Athlete Introduction: Katie Tannenbaum

What exactly is your sport?

My sport, Skeleton, along with Bobsled and Luge, make up the Olympic sliding sports. We all compete on the same track, but on very different equipment. Skeleton is an individual sport performed on a low, flat (but heavy!) sled. We have a sprinting start and then drive down the track facing head-first on our sleds, reaching speeds of over 80mph.

How many years have you been competing?

This is my 4th season doing skeleton and my 3rd season competing.

What are your favorite reactions when you tell people you are a Winter Athlete for the United States Virgin Islands?

It's funny because most people will say something about not having any snow (or in my case, ice) in the V.I. However, there are only 16

Skeleton tracks in the world, the majority of them in Europe (the U.S. only has two). Most athletes, no matter what nation they're from, do not live near a track during the off-season, when the tracks are closed. All of us go home and do the same dry-land training to try and be as fit and fast as we can for the next season. I've made friends from all over the world doing this sport, and personally I love being in a race line-up that includes athletes from Australia, Korea, Brazil, Israel and Jamaica.

What winter-specific injuries have you sustained training?

Last year I broke my arm while training in Germany. It wasn't a bad break, but enough to keep me from competing the last few weeks of the season. However, I hesitate to tell people this, because most people think Skeleton is a much

more dangerous sport than it really is. Major injuries are a lot less frequent than in other sports like skiing, snowboarding, or even football.

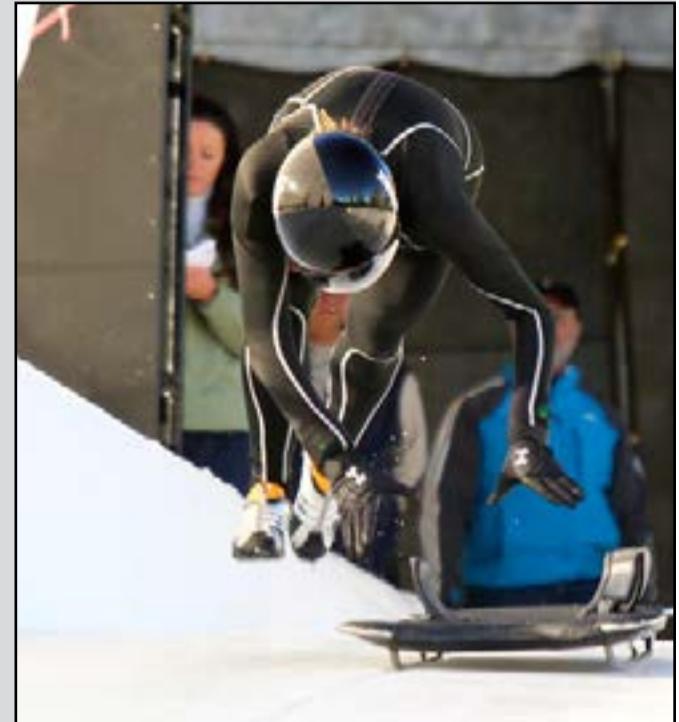
Where do you practice?

During the season I primarily train in Park City, Utah. In the off-season I train at the track at CAHS.

If you could have chosen a Summer Sport, which one do you think your Winter Sport skills would help you with the best?

Since Skeleton has a sprinting start, that's an easy one: sprinting. Almost all of

our off-season training revolves around being more explosive, powerful and faster. We do a lot of the same training and conditioning that sprint athletes do.



Winter Athlete Introduction: Veronica Gaspar

Tell us about your connection to the Virgin Islands.

A few years ago, my dad's work took him down to the USVI, and our family moved to St. John. It's a lovely place, and we love it here, especially all the carnivals.

What exactly is your sport?

My sport is alpine ski racing, which is basically going down a mountain around sticks set in the ground on skis. It's really fast, and it usually takes a minute to make it down the course. In alpine ski racing, each competitor goes on the course one at a time, with the goal being making it down with the fastest time.

How many years have you been competing?

I have been skiing for fun since I was five, but I didn't start racing in international competitions until 2011.

What are your favorite reactions when you tell people you are a Winter Athlete for the United States Virgin Islands?

When I tell people I ski for the United States Virgin Islands, they nod but have no idea where the Virgin Islands are. I always start with asking people if they know where Puerto Rico is, and they normally do. I just tell them that the Virgin Islands are to the right of it on the map.



Winter Athlete Introduction: Jasmine Campbell

Tell us about your connection to the Virgin Islands.

I was born on St. John.

What exactly is your sport?

I am an Alpine racer. I compete in Slalom and Giant Slalom, but our country is not allowed to partake in Super G or Downhill because of safety restrictions.

How long have you been competing?

After I moved to Idaho I began racing when I was 10. I quit at 16 after suffering a back injury and due to other complicating factors. I decided to resume ski racing at Whitman College after my good friend, Torey Anderson, coerced me into doing so. Although I've been participating in various collegiate races when I have the free time, it was not until this past summer that I began to seriously train in preparation for the Olympics.

When did you realize you were

good enough to qualify for the Olympics?

After I arguably beat my father down a GS course. He claims I won because his edges weren't sharp, or had the wrong skis on. I, and the running time, beg to differ.

What are your favorite reactions when you tell people you are a Winter Athlete for the United States Virgin Islands?

When they respond, "So then you're like the Jamaican bobsled team, right?" or, "But you're not even tan."

Where do you practice?

Wherever I can with whoever will take me. Generally it's at home in Sun Valley, Idaho with Sun Valley Ski Education Foundation. Ruben Makaya is the truly wonderful director there and is the man responsible for sending me to South America over the summer. I owe him big time. I've also been training with Hailey Duke who is also training for the upcoming Olympics trying to

represent the U.S.

If you could have chosen a Summer Sport, which one do you think your Winter Sport skills would help you with the best?

I love soccer. Period. I used soccer to train for skiing over the summer.

How much time are you spending training a week?

I train as much as I can when it is

accessible. At home I try to get some sort of training in 6 days a week. Generally on heavy duty days I ski some 3-5 hours and do dry land for 2. Over the holidays when everyone is at home my father keeps us busy with his "4 Sport Days" where we ski in the morning, play hockey in the afternoon, which is followed by rock climbing and pool games.



The Virgin Islands Wrestling Federation Presented All Saints School vs Montessori School

St. Thomas, VI – The Virgin Islands Wrestling Federation presented the first ever All Saints School vs. Montessori High School wrestling exhibition. It took place at Montessori School on December 11, 2013 at 1:30 pm and featured student athletes from the All Saints and Montessori high schools.

The Virgin Islands Wrestling Federation was proud to bring the All Saints School vs. Montessori School high school wrestling exhibition to the Montessori School for the first time. The wrestling exhibition showcased the wrestling skills of both the All Saints and Montessori Schools' wrestling clubs.

Officers of the Virgin Islands Wrestling Federation as well as representatives of the All Saints and Montessori wrestling clubs were at the All Saints School vs. Montessori School high school wrestling exhibition. The event was refereed Dr. Kevin Lenahan.

The Virgin Islands Wrestling Federation (VIWF) is a nonprofit organization that regulates and oversees all wrestling activities in the USVI. They are a member of the International Federation of Associated Wrestling Styles (FILA) that sanctions wrestling throughout the world. For more information contact: Mr. S.G. Slaughter at 340-690-8632 or email: gabrielslaughter@gmail.com.



When were the first Winter Olympic Games held?



Answer: 1924 in Chamonix, France

V.I. Sports Federations Hold End of Year Running Events

With cooler temperatures of the winter month experienced in the Virgin Islands, VIOC sports federations concentrate on staging endurance events. These events showcase local talent, name national champions and at the same time offer visitors the opportunity to get out of the cold and run in the sun and experience the natural beauty and rich history of our Virgin Islands.

The Virgin Islands Track and Field Federation, The Virgin Islands Pace Runners of St. Croix and The St. Thomas Association of Road Runners of St. Thomas combined hosted over 50 annual running events for participants from 1 year old to 100 and distance from under a half mile to 50 miles. The events are staged on our historic streets, on the beaches, on the trails and highways. Many of these events are also fundraisers for local charities.

The V.I. Pace Runners held several annual events in December and January including two events that are VITFF sanctioned National Championships. They attracted the top long distance runners in the Territory. In fact two V.I. Olympians figured prominently in the race as Calvin Dallas (1988 Seoul, 1992 Barcelona) won the marathon championship at the age of 61 and Ana Gutierrez (1992 Barcelona) finished third in the marathon to take the V.I. female masters title.

Juan Robles the top long distance runner in the V.I. won the Half-marathon championship for men and Ruth Ann David, like Dallas, took the V.I. Half-Marathon title for overall and master. New-comer Bridgett Campbell is the new V.I. Marathon Champion. Shane Degannes took the Master title for the Half-Marathon.

These races run on St. Croix's North Shore were just footsteps from historic Salt River Bay National Historic Park and Ecological Preserve and where it is believed that Christopher Columbus anchored on his second voyage to the Western Hemisphere. They attracted runners from Norway, Denmark and the Caribbean including celebrities Cicilie Skog, a professional adventurer from Norway and Truls Svendsen, a popular radio and media personality in Oslo, Norway. They made a special trip to St.Croix for the race and to use it as preparation for their planned trek across the Arctic Circle. Brent Weigner of Cheyenne, Wyoming ran the St. Croix Marathon after running the Mount Everest Marathon three weeks before and is the first ultra-marathon runner to run an ultra-marathon (more than 26.2 miles) on every continent. Vicent Ma of San Jose, California started running marathons in 2008; his first was the Big Sur Marathon in California. St. Croix's marathon race was number 344 for him; he runs a marathon or an ultra- marathon every weekend.

Both V.I. Pace Runners and STAR held their last races for the year. STAR founder and VITFF Vice-President Roy Watlington staged the annual Kwanza 7-Kilometer Run/Walk in St.Thomas. He says seven kilometers has particular meaning since each kilometer represents one of the seven principles (Nguzo Saba) observed during Kwanzaa's seven days.

The annual Cane Bay Jingle Bell Road Race was the last race of the year. In its 27th year, the event kicked off with a festive mood as each of these V.I. Pace/VITFF races kicked-off the annual Crucian Christmas Festival Children and Adult Parades with hundreds of onlookers cheering the runners on.



The Virgin Islands Olympic Committee Hosts CANOC for their General Assembly and their Paralympic Workshop

It was a great honor for the Caribbean Association of National Olympic Committees to choose the United States Virgin Islands as the venue for their General Assembly (November 4th and 5th) and their Paralympic Workshop (November 7th and 8th).

The first meeting of the Caribbean Caucus of National Olympic Committees was held in Barbados in February, 1999. The concept for a Caribbean Olympic Caucus was first touted in January 1998 in Melbourne, Australia when a group of Caribbean delegates met to

discuss Caribbean Olympism and other matters of common interest. This group called for the establishment of formal mechanisms for communication and valuable dialogue in order to develop relevant strategies to enhance the regional Olympic Movement.

The newsworthy part of these conferences is that a Memorandum of understanding between the Caribbean Association Of National Olympic Committees and the Caribbean Association Of National Paralympic Committees on cooperation in the promotion of physical activity for all was signed.



It considers the existing relationship between the International Olympic Committee and the International Paralympic Committee and the existing agreements between both organizations, the mandates of both organizations, the mutual interest in developing sport and for the purpose of establishing a long-term mutually beneficial association, the current state of sport in the Caribbean and the immense potential of our athletes and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Article 30.

- See more at: <http://www.canoc.net/canocnews/canoc-news/97-canoc-canpc-memorandum-of-understanding#sthash.lb6sLepE.dpuf>

The Virgin Islands Olympic Committee Announces Jasmine Campbell as Our Winter Athlete Representative

The Virgin Islands Olympic Committee is proud to announce that Jasmine Campbell, formerly from St. John, V.I. was nominated to represent the U.S. Virgin Islands at the 2014 Winter Olympic Games in Sochi, Russia. On January 20, 2014, the International Ski Federation (FIS) officially confirmed that Jasmine Campbell met all qualification requirements to participate in two alpine skiing events: Giant Slalom and Slalom.

Giant Slalom involves skiing between sets of poles (gates) spaced at app. 65 feet distance to each other. The vertical drop for a course is usually around 1,200 feet. Although not the fastest event in skiing, on average a well trained racer may hit speeds of 50 mph. In Slalom, poles are spaced much closer together than in Giant Slalom. Racers must pass approximately 50-60 poles in Slalom to reach the finish. Campbell achieved the required five (5) qualifying finishes in international competitions with her final points of 64.55 for Giant Slalom and 82.24 for Slalom . The amount of points scored each race depends on how far the athlete finished behind the leader with range between 0-140 points.

Jasmine Campbell was born and raised in St. John, U.S. Virgin Islands. Campbell is the daughter of John Campbell who represented the U.S. Virgin Islands in skiing at the 1992 Winter Olympics in Albertville, France. At age 9, Campbell moved with her family to Sun Valley, Idaho. After being introduced to skiing by her father, ski racing became Campbell's instant passion as she was drawn to the speed, exhilaration, and athletic challenge of the sport. At age 13, Campbell won a bronze medal in Giant Slalom at the U.S. National Junior Championship. Unfortunately, during her junior year of high school, Campbell was injured and her enthusiasm to pursue skiing was hindered. Skiing in the Olympics, however, remained in the back of Campbell's mind as an aspiration she had yet to accomplish. After recovering from her back injury, in 2010, Campbell joined a ski racing team at the Whitman College, Walla Walla, Washington and found that her love for the sport was instantly rekindled.

In summer 2013, Campbell decided to take her senior year off to train for the Olympic qualification. In June 2013, she attended ski training camps, at Mammoth, California and Mt. Hood, Oregon organized by the Sun Valley Ski Education Foundation (SVSEF). At the end of the summer, Campbell traveled to South America, where she trained and raced with the Argentinean ski team. In November Campbell trained in Colorado with a former U.S National Team member and a top U.S. ski racer - Hailey Duke. Shadowing such a high-level racer through multiple days of gate-training, gave Campbell a major boost to her training, both mentally and physically. In December 2013, Campbell traveled to China where she participated in series of international ski competitions. Her extensive training paid off and Campbell became the first Virgin Islander skier to reach podium in any international (FIS) ski race. Campbell placed 2nd in Giant Slalom race and the very next day she finished 3rd in another Giant Slalom race.