



Three from USVI in P.R. to compete in World Surfing Games | Sports

Description

Tommy Gibney has been working hard for several years to get the U.S. Virgin Islands a place in the Olympic Games in the sport of surfing. This weekend, he is participating in the 2024 ISA World Surfing Games in Puerto Rico, representing the USVI.

The 27-year-old native of St. John will be part of a three-man team. With him, there are two other surfers, Cody Merritt (26) and Ocean Petersen (39), both from St. Thomas. This competition is the final qualifier for the 2024 Paris Olympics.

"There are only six spots for men this summer for Tahiti, where the surfing games will take place in the Paris Olympics. So, this competition is crucial," Gibney said in an exclusive chat with The Daily News. The World Surfing Games will start on Saturday and end on March 3rd. It will take place on three surf areas near La Marginal scenic spot in Arecibo, Puerto Rico.

"The surf here is similar to what we have in the Virgin Islands. It's not entirely a new experience for us. But, there is a little more consistency in the waves in Puerto Rico," Gibney explained.

To secure a place in the Paris Olympics, the surfers need to perform exceptionally well in the World Surfing Games. There are two opportunities that might favor the USVI team. One is the team championship, where the top team gets a slot for Tahiti. The second is the "universality allocation," where a surfer is chosen by the International Olympic Committee's Tripartite Commission.

In the end, the performance at the World Surfing Games is very important. Surfing is unpredictable, as it is based on waves, so surfers require good technique, smart choices, and the ability to perform under pressure.

Gibney and Merritt have participated in these games before. Merritt's advice was, "You have to enjoy the event and not take it too seriously. There are surfers from different countries, and being able to see world-class surfing is a great experience."

Petersen, hailing from Tahiti, is the newbie on the team. He grew up on the water and has competed in local and regional surfing events. Petersen believes in adopting a calm mindset. He said, "You have to pretend you're with friends at your local break and enjoy yourself. The mind game can trip you if you let the pressure get to you."

Vocabulary List:

1. **Qualifier** // (noun): A preliminary competition that determines who will advance to the main competition.
2. **Consistency** // (noun): The quality of achieving a level of performance that does not vary greatly in quality over time.
3. **Performance** // (noun): The act of carrying out a task or action; how well a person does a particular activity.



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4. **Tripartite** // (adjective): Involving three parties or elements.
 5. **Adopting** // (verb): To take on or assume something, such as an attitude, idea, or behavior.
 6. **Mindset** // (noun): A person's way of thinking and their opinions.

CATEGORY

1. Uncategorized

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