

FUL TROT

Daniel de Kort, a former asst. managing director of a local bank in charge of treasury turned petrol head, now runs the non-profit SDDK Motorsports which, among others, seeks to promote Curacao motorsports to a more sustainable level. Danny is a former go kart racer with a couple of podium finishes and a professional mountain motor pro stock car owner and driver. Unbeknownst to most, he's the local Curacao International Raceway track record holder, a FIA-accredited race photographer, a classic car owner and restorer, and a reluctant motorsports event organizer. Danny will be contributing to Curacao Sports Weekly with a wide variety of topics regarding motorsports.



Like many of us, I subscribe to the idea that when one door closes in life, another one opens. You just have to be willing to step outside of your comfort zone. And the further away you venture, the greater the journey tends to be.

So, when I got a chance to get behind the steering wheel of an eighteen hundred horsepower door slammer almost a decade ago, to race against drag racing legends such as the American Pat Musi, I didn't hesitate. And when that ride was over, I knew that another exciting and exhilarating trip was about to begin. And it did.

The last five years have been a riot. What started out as a small car meet called "Hot Cars & Hot Cakes" underneath a tamarind tree in the neighborhood of Cerito, has evolved into several exciting "adventures", such as the unique contingency sponsorship program for drag racing called DRAP, the 50th anniversary celebration of the Porsche 911, and a museum dedicated to the motorsport history of Curacao.

One may ask, 'why devote so much time and energy to motorsports? What's the purpose?'



The 2018 Dodge Challenger of Anuar Jacobus at the start of the 2019 Hillclimb.

Well, the motivation is three-fold:

First, it's a passion of mine so it gives me a great deal of joy and satisfaction, especially when something entirely new to Curacao is created. Second, the islanders have been practicing various forms of motorsports since the 1960's and at high level, even getting on the podium in several international races. Why not provide a rugged platform for others to compete and excel at? Besides, practicing sports promotes important attributes such as perseverance, dedication, commitment, and confidence.

Third, as a country heavily dependent on tourism, with plenty of competition from

other islands in the Caribbean also promoting "Sea, Sand & Sun", I firmly believe we need to better differentiate ourselves from the rest. One way to achieve this is by having more to offer. In other words, there's more going on here than elsewhere. Herein lies one of our greatest opportunities for standing out. And having a high-level motorsport culture is a way to add to it. Nowadays, entertainment is key; and if provided at the required levels, even event tourism can be created.

As we continue reviving past motorsports activities, such as hill climb and karting (through Vintage Karting Curacao), or creating new ones altogether, we will always maintain our focus on promoting them with an international audience. In doing so, over time, we hope to establish a motorsports culture that others would want to be associated with. Accordingly, in time this will create an opportunity to increase the number of tourist visitors to the island, not just in order to attend motorsports events. Tourists will choose Curacao over other destinations in the Caribbean, because they have a "motorsports" connection with the island.



Foto's: Ramilla de Kort

Daniel at the Curacao International Raceway.