

SPORTS

31 athletes to represent The Bahamas at upcoming 2017 IAAF/BTC World Relays

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The grand spectacle that is the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) World Relays will take place in The Bahamas once again and the hype continues to escalate as the weekend opening day approaches.

Of course, there were questions as to how the team would look this time around. Those questions were answered this past Wednesday, April 5, as the host nation named the 31 athletes selected to represent The Bahamas for the BTC title sponsored event.

Out of that number, seven of Grand Bahamians were named to the list, which was highlighted by Olympic 400-meter champion Shaunae Miller-Uibo.

Grand Bahamians – Blake Bartlett, Shavez Hart and Javan ‘50’ Martin – will suit up with athletes Samson Colebrooke, Warren Fraser, Adrian Griffith, Robert Johnson and Ian Kerr in the men’s 4x100m event.

Michael Mathieu and Demetrius Pinder, both Olympic medalists, will make their return to the World Relays stage April 22 -23 in the men’s 4x400m.

They will join Andretti Bain, Chris “Fireman” Brown, Andre Colebrooke, Steven Gardiner, Elroy McBride, Ramon Miller, Stephen Newbold and Ashley Riley.

On the women’s side of the 4x100m, budding sprinters Brianne Bethel and Devine Parker will join the likes of Rashan Parker, Ivanique Kemp, Jermecka McBride, Wendira Moss, Tamara Myers and V’Alonee Robinson.

The 4x400m team is expected to feature Miller-Uibo, Tayla Carter, Lanece Clarke, Tynia Gaither and Antonique Strachan.

So far 42 countries are expected to participate in the 2017 edition.

Grand Bahama Amateur Athletic Association (GBAAA) president, Iram Lewis, is happy and confident in the Grand Bahama athletes named to the team and the team’s chances to succeed overall.

Lewis highlighted the mixture of youth and veteran leadership that make up the 31-member team, which he said speaks to the longevity of track and field.

“With a person like Michael Mathieu, an elder statesman, who’s been working at this world class level for some time



DEVINE PARKER

now and still competing with the best. Then you go all the way down to Devine (Parker), who is the youngest and named Junior Athlete of the Year. So the gap between those two is about 20 years.

“And they are making us proud by strongly representing Grand Bahama and I expect them to make a major, major difference in the World Relays,” he expressed.

Lewis is also confident that young sprinters, Martin and Bethel, will continue to grow from the experience while providing a significant impact. He noted that he expects (Shavez) Hart to be at the top of his game and is more than pleased to see Pinder back, and believes he has a “point to prove.”

“As I look at it right now and reflect on those names, I don’t think we have a weakness from the Grand Bahama team. I think they will all make a great impact with respect to the World Relays.”

GBAAA General Secretary, Dion Britton, talked up the young Grand Bahamian sprinters and drove home the point of the ‘Second City’ having a long history of producing excellent athletes.

According to Britton, the young ath-

letes’ resumes prove they belong on the World stage.

“We have awesome performers. We have Shavez Hart, a renowned 100m/200m (sprinter). He’s represented the country at CARIFTA, World Championships and the Olympics. We have Blake Bartlett, who is a CARIFTA medalist. We have Javan Martin, who’s a CARIFTA athlete and who competed in the relays in 2015.

“Then you have Brianne Bethel, awesome performer. She would have competed in CARIFTA, but due to Collegiate responsibilities could not make it. She’s a medalist for CARIFTA. When people look at the young lady’s performance back in 2015 (at the World Relays), they underestimated her; they didn’t know how powerful she could be.

“We look at Devine Parker, a native of Holmes’ Rock, Grand Bahama but lives in Nassau. She had an awesome performance at last year’s CARIFTA and a medalist at last year’s CARIFTA Games. She’s young, but she’s powerful. Devine has had some of the best times even with our senior athletes.

“So I applaud them and wish them well at the World Relays.”

Photo essay of Team Bahamas in action at 2017 CARIFTA Games



WINNING COMBINATION – Pictured are Johnathan Smith, Karon Dean, Tavonte Mott and Holland Martin of the 4x100m.



Grand Bahama’s Javan Martin is pictured at center in competition. (PHOTOS: SHAYNE STUBBS)



FAN SUPPORT – Track enthusiasts Sophia Higgs and Dion Britton are pictured cheering the Bahamian athletes at the 2017 CARIFTA Games. At right Quanisha Marshall, pose with the flag after winning the 800 silver medal.



IN THE STANDS – Pictured in the stands are Sebastian Cote and ‘Golden Girl’ Pauline Davis-Thompson, along Bahamians who traveled to support Team Bahamas at the 2017 CARIFTA Games.

The **46th** Carifta **GAMES**

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