

April 7, 2007

By Dominic Lee

The 2007 Carifta Swim Championships commenced in fine style on Saturday evening at the National Stadium Aquatic Complex. The crowd was thoroughly entertained throughout the evening's proceedings as nine meet records were erased courtesy of a thrilling night of competition. At the end of the session **The French Antilles (242.50 points)** led with **Trinidad and Tobago** trailing by 27 points(**215.50**) and the **Bahamas(212.50)** rounding out the top three.

On the female side, **McKayla Lightbourn** and **Arianna Vanderpool-Wallace**, both representing the Bahamas, exhibited impressive performances and each claimed individual records. Lightbourn claimed gold in the Girls 13-14 800 Free where she cruised to victory in a new Carifta record of **9:32.62**. Less than an hour later Lightbourn demolished the field in the 200 Breast with an eye popping **2:38.67**, shaving more than three seconds off the previous mark she set earlier on in the preliminaries. Her team mate Wallace capitalized on a solid back half to secure victory in the Girls 15-17 800 Free in a time of **9:10.50**. She then went on to break Malia Metela's seven year old standard in the 100 Fly posting a scintillating **1:02.93**.

The Girls 15-17 200 Breast featured a thrilling showdown between **Kimba Collymore** (Trinidad & Tobago) and **Alicia Lightbourne** (Bahamas). Accelerating into the wall first at the 150, Lightbourne seemed to have the edge. Yet on the final 50 the undaunted Collymore dropped the hammer making a late surge to claim sweet victory in **2:42.50** to Lightbourne's silver medal effort of **2:42.79** while **Anthaya Rolle** (also of the Bahamas) snared bronze in **2:48.07**.

**Je'Nae Saunders**(Bahamas) also had a satisfactory night as she won two individual medals(gold in the 11-12 200 Breast -**2:56.63** and Bronze in the 50 Back). **Kendese Nangle** brought the home team its first gold via a solid performance of **32.80** just three tenths shy of her morning standard and her team mate **Raynae Hall** maintained the momentum with a bronze medal finish in the 11-12 100 Fly. Other exceptional gold medal performances were turned in by **Allison Fenasse** (French Antilles) in the 13-14 50 Back(**32.28**), **Ariel Weech** (Bahamas) in the 15-17 50 Back(**32.11**), **Kimberlee John Williams**(Trinidad) in the

11-12 100 Fly (**1:07.77**) and her teammate **Samantha Rahael** in the 13-14 100 Fly(**1:09.97**).

The males did not disappoint as they also produced some equally commendable efforts throughout the night. **Mickey Van Der Vaart** (Aruba) got the ball rolling with a **16:53.41** effort to take the 15-17 1500 Free title. **Enzo Vial Collet**(French Antilles) collected the 13-14 title in this event while Jamaican **Dominic Walter** won silver for the local squad. Young **Evante Gibson** (Bahamas) helped to retain his country's dominance in the 200 breast by winning the 11-12 category with a **2:45.53**; **Xavier Boland** (Jamaica) grabbed the silver.

Noticeably, two dorsal standards were eclipsed as **Vali Pelagie**(French Antilles) posted his name in the books with a time of **31.66** in the 11-12 Boys 50 Back and **Christian Homer** lived up to expectations when he stormed down the stretch in **27.99** to break the 13-14 standard. Homer also won gold in the 100 Fly (**59.02**) just ahead of his teammate **Cadell Lyons** (**59.35**). **Bret Fraser** and **Joel Rombough** both mined gold for the Cayman Islands with victories in the 15-17 50 Back (**27.78**)and 200 Breast(**2:33.70**) respectively.

Perhaps the most entertaining race of the night was the 15-17 Boys 100 Fly which boasted **Brad Hamilton**(Jamaica) against rival **Vereance Burrows**(Bahamas). Burrows took the race out with blistering speed and the two men induced an electric atmosphere leading into the final 50. Hamilton brought the crowd to its feet used his trademark finish to outduel Burrows who tired significantly in the final ten metres. His mark of **57.23** was a personal best.

In Relay action, four more meet records were expunged. The Jamaican Team (**Kendese Nangle, Alexia Royal-Eatmon, Breanna Roman** and **Raynae Hall**) captured the 11-12 Girls 400 Free Relay in **4:23.20** to begin the assault. The French Antilles were then crowned champions in the both 11-12 and 13-14 Boys age groups, also in record breaking fashion. However the most dominant team performance of the evening came from the Bahamian 15-17 girls. The quartet of **Teisha Lightbourne, Alicia Lightbourne, Ariel Weech** and **Arianna Vanderpool-Wallace** obliterated the former standard of 4:07.86 by over seven seconds, timed in 4:00.01 much to their delight.

Action continues tomorrow at 9 am. Click on the following link for a timed summary of the first night as well as the cumulative medals table:

[http://www.swimjamaica.com/CARIFTA\\_2007/CARIFTA2007-SUMMARYSHEET-night1.pdf](http://www.swimjamaica.com/CARIFTA_2007/CARIFTA2007-SUMMARYSHEET-night1.pdf)