

ATKINSON LOWERS BUTTERFLY RECORD



Photo by Michael Lyn

Alia Atkinson

At the Speedo Champions which ran from March 13 to 16 in Plantation Florida Series, Alia Atkinson once again set another national record. This time the two time Olympian lowered her own 100 metre butterfly record of 1:01.17 set at the 2011 PANAMERICAN Games in Guadalajara, Mexico to 1:01.16 .She posted this time while racing to the silver medal in the Championship final behind Theresa Michalak of the Gator Swim club 1:01.01. That new record is under the Amateur Swimming Association's A standard of 1: 01.88 for the Commonwealth Games

Swimming in events outside of her primary breaststroke and individual medley events, Atkinson showed excellent form in recording personal bests. Swimming in the 200 metre freestyle finals, she was in a four woman battle at the 100 metre mark. The early leaders were Patricia Castro Ortega (SwimMac Carolina) 59.44, Paige Schultz (Toronto Swim club) 59.97, Clara Smiddy (AquaKid sharks) 1:00.43 and Atkinson 1:00.47 closing the door on those under 1:01. Atkinson had the best closing 50metres of the four coming home in 30.43 seconds. She used that final

burst to overhaul Smiddy and Schultz and power her way to the silver medal in 2:02.85 behind Castro Ortega 2:00.88. Schultz finished with the bronze in 2:02.95 and Smiddy fourth in 2:04.73. That personal best by Atkinson is the fastest time by a Jamaican woman since the 2004 retirement of Janelle Atkinson and just outside of the ASAJ A standard of 2:02.54 for the Commonwealth Games for the event. The National record was set by a 16 year old Janelle Atkinson at 2:01.11 en route to three silver medals at the 1999 PAN AMERICAN GAMES in Winnipeg, Canada.

Atkinson was among the medals in the relays. In the 200 metre medley relay she showed the field what it means to be a world class swimmer when she clocked 30.80 for her breaststroke leg .That time was more than two seconds faster than any other breaststroker in the field-. It powered her South Florida Aquatics -A Team to the silver in 2:00.87 behind Marlins Aquatics 1:59.10

She would yet again provide the fastest split in the 200 freestyle relay when she clocked 26.08 on her second leg duties. This time her efforts yielded the top prize. South Florida A won the event in 1:49.40 over Pine Crest A 1:49.48.

She would also taste gold in the 800 freestyle relay as her SOFLO A team pocketed the gold in 8:35.94 .The victory was by more than ten seconds as Blue Dolphins finished second in 8:50.06

Breanna Roman, who had just finished her high school career in Tennessee, was also in Florida representing her Baylor High School. She had a 6th place showing in the 100 m breaststroke with a 1:14.58, a 3rd place in the consolation finals of the 50 free in 28.18 after posting 28.07 in the heats and a 1:01.15 in the heats of the 100 freestyle.

Junior swimmers still eligible for CARIFTA Sidrell Williams and siblings Matthew and Annabella Lyn were also in action. Williams was 19th in the 50 freestyle in 24.84. He had earlier raced to 24.71 in the heats. He was 20th in the 100 freestyle in 55.60 and 15th in the 200 butterfly in 2:17.22 after earlier clocking 2:15.76 in the heats.

Matthew Lyn had swims of 200 freestyle 2:07.04 (62nd), 400 freestyle 4:27.08 for the heats 4:26.68 (32nd) and 1500 freestyle 17:04.79 (13th). He was also 57th in the 100 butterfly in 1:02.99. Annabella was 18th in the 800 freestyle in 10:01.91

Contributed by

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