

CLASS ACT: ATKINSON WINS GOLD IN FIRST RACE AT DOHA



Alia Atkinson

Photo by Mike Thompson

Legendary swimmer Jamaica's Alia Atkinson kicked off her 2014/2015 FINA World Cup Campaign with a master class in breaststroke sprinting . Swimming from lane 4 in 100 metres breaststroke at FINA/MASTBANK Swimming World Cup in Doha Qatar, Atkinson had a bullet start with a reaction time of 0.69 seconds. By the time she turned at the first wall she already had a body length lead. At the half way mark her split was 30.18 seconds and she was more than half a second ahead of American Breeja Larson. She also "educated" the field on back end speed as she clocked the fastest second 50 metres with a time of 33.61 and win comfortably in a time of **1:03.79**. Some distance behind was American Breeja Larson who touched in 1:05.06 and third was Hrafnhildur Luthersdottir of Iceland in 1:06.88

In Doha last year Alia had won in **1:03.38**. Atkinson holds the fastest time for this event in breaststroke for a Jamaican, male or female, whether it is in a 25 metre pool, 50 metre pool or 25 yard pool. The impressive Alia will be in action tomorrow in Qatar in the 50 metre breaststroke

and the 100 metre individual medley. She will be in for a stern test in the medley race as she takes on top seeded Iron Queen Katinka Hosszu of Hungary. On Day 1 in Doha Hosszu won the 200 individual medley **2:02.61 WORLD RECORD** and meet record, the 200 freestyle **1:51.41** meet record, 50 backstroke **26.18** and the 200 backstroke in **2:01.60**

Bovell added to the Caribbean treasure chest when he took the men's 100 individual medley in equally comfortable win .After trailing the first two legs of the medley (the butterfly and the backstroke) he turned on the speed. He capitalized on his known breaststroke and freestyle sprint abilities as he stroked past early leader Bobby Hurley of Australia with the fastest second 50 of 28.25 to win overall in **52.80** seconds. Winning silver was Leith Shankland of Australia in **53.77** and the bronze was won by Mark Spitzer of Austria in **54.77**. Earlier in the day he missed the final with his 50 metre breaststroke heats time of **27.51** where he finished 10th overall.

The World Cup series of meets which is similar to the IAAF Diamond League series of meets will be held in Doha and Dubai - **Cluster 1**, Hong Kong and Moscow - **Cluster 2**, Tokyo and Singapore - **Cluster 3**.

Contributed by

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