

Alia Atkinson breaks 100m breaststroke national record, makes historic World Championship finals



Jamaica's Alia Atkinson qualified for the final of the 100 metre breaststroke with a new national record of 1:06.21 at the swimming world championships in Kazan, Russia.

Atkinson finished second behind Russian rival Yulia Efimova (1:05.60) in the semifinals to touch the wall in the new Jamaican record, which lowers her old national record of 1:06.59 - set on July 17 on her way to PAN AM Games silver. Incidentally, her time also betters the Gold medal winning time of 1:06.26 by American Katie Meili.

Though clearly not showing all her cards at this stage, Atkinson was still aggressive through the early stages of the race, splitting 30.91.

Atkinson continues to make history for Jamaica and the CARIFTA region in qualifying for the final of the 100 metre breaststroke. This is the first Long course World Championship final for any CARIFTA region female swimmer in this event. Atkinson started off the day moving out of the preliminary stage with a swift 1:07.09 (split 31.72).

Winning the first semi-final was Lithuanian World and championship record holder Ruta Meilutyte in 1:05.64.

Atkinson is attempting to become the World champion in both long course (50 metre pool) and short course (25 metre pool) formats. She created history in December 2014 when she took the 100 metre breaststroke title in Doha.

So after months of waiting the top seeds heading into tomorrow's finals are Efimova, Meilutyte and Atkinson.

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