

## Doha Déjà vu - Finishing with a Flourish



Jamaica finished its campaign at the 2019 World Championships with a flourish, collecting medals on October 4, 5 and 6. Among them was the team's third gold medal of the meet and a second one for super sprinter Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce.

This last tranche of medals began with a touch of irony. A mature run gave Rushell Clayton the bronze in the 400 metre hurdles on October 4. With American Dahlilah Muhammad off in the distance setting a world record, Tracey clocked the same time - 53.74 seconds - as Ristananna Tracey did in taking the bronze at the 2017 World Championships.

October 5 saw Shanieka Ricketts win Jamaica's second World Championships medal in the triple jump with a leap measured at 14.92 metres. In a show of national proficiency, 2018 World Indoor runner-up Kimberly Williams twice jumped to a lifetime best of 14.64 metres in fourth position. The day ended with gold as Natalliah Whyte, Fraser Pryce, 100 metres finalist Jonielle Smith and 400 metre bronze medallist Shericka Jackson winning the 4x100 metres relay in 41.44 seconds. The last baton exchange was not smooth but Jackson nevertheless sped away to a big win. With Fraser Pryce zooming the second leg, Jamaica raced to its 5<sup>th</sup> gold medal and its 15<sup>th</sup> medal overall in the women's 4x100 metres relay.

Natasha Morrison shared in the glory as she ran the final leg in the heats.

2015 World Champion Danielle Williams clipped an early barrier in the 100 metre hurdles final but stayed on her feet and took bronze in the 100 metre hurdles in 12.47 seconds to start the medal collection on October 6, the last day of the meet. Janeek Brown was sixth.

Jamaica's other finalist Megan Tapper didn't finish but she should be encouraged by the personal best of 12.61 seconds she set on her way to her first major global final.



Given Jamaica's famous relay history, our last two medals in Doha fittingly came in the 4x400 metres. Anastasia Le-Roy, Tiffany James, Stephenie-Ann M<sup>c</sup>Pherson and Shericka Jackson ran solidly to third in 3 minutes 22.37 seconds, with M<sup>c</sup>Pherson showing why she reached the individual

400 metre final with a spritely 49.7 stint. Minutes later, Akeem Bloomfield gave Jamaica a good start in the men's 4x400 metres relay final. Nathon Allen, surprising Terry Thomas and Demish Gaye finished the silver medal run in 2 minutes 57.90 seconds.

Thomas set tongues wagging with a 44.3 second leg to close the gap to a dominant USA team.

Only once has a Jamaican team gone faster and that was the legendary 1997 World Championships team with its national record 2 minutes 56.75 seconds.

That run brought the curtain down on a fine effort that garnered 3 gold, 5 silver and 4 bronze medals by a team that could be largely intact when the 2021 Olympics open in Tokyo, Japan. In point of fact, only 12 of the 42 Jamaicans who contested individual events in Doha will be 30 years old or over in Tokyo. With leaders like Fraser-Pryce likely to be in that squad, the prospects are bright.