

## Lerone Clarke Wins 2010 Commonwealth 100 metres



On October 7, 2010, at the Commonwealth Games in New Delhi, Lerone Clarke underlined Jamaica's dominance of men's sprinting with a decisive victory in the 100 metres. Clarke's win, and gold for Trecia Smith in the triple jump, were the highlights of a solid Jamaican campaign in India.

The little man from Hempstead, St Mary looked in full control in the preliminary rounds and eased off the gas in his semi-final when Aaron Armstrong of Trinidad and Tobago edged him with both timed in 10.14 seconds. "From the first round all the way to the final, I was confident, so I felt good going in and I felt good

throughout the rounds and I know that in my mind, I was going to win", he reviewed in a 2018 interview.

He was right. Wearing his trademark black and white gloves, Clarke out-started the field in the final, accelerated strongly and held his form to win in 10.12 seconds well ahead of England's Mark Lewis-Francis.

Though he won a gold medal as a member of the World Championships 4x100 metres relay squad in 2009, he was thrilled to receive the top prize in Delhi. "That is an emotional experience, like an out of body experience when you're there", said the William Knibb Memorial High, GC Foster College and Lincoln University graduate, "but you're looking at yourself from above, just like, am I really here?"

The success placed him in lofty company. That is because Jamaica had previously won the Commonwealth 100 metres title on five occasions, thanks to Keith Gardner in 1958, Donald Quarrie in 1970, 1974 and 1978 and Asafa Powell in 2006. "It's a really great, great, great feeling because Donald Quarrie is one of my greatest idols", he reflected.

In addition, his special moment extended the run of Jamaican dominance in the sprints that started with Powell setting a world record in 2005. Since then, with Clarke's Commonwealth win as a punctuation mark, Jamaica had collected all the major 100 metre titles on offer.

World champion in 2005, Smith aced the triple jump with just one legal mark. That second round effort of 14.19 metres gave Smith a comfortable margin over Ayanna Alexander of Trinidad and Tobago.

On the same day as Clarke's memorable win, Dorian Scott made his own piece of history by repeating his 2006 runner-up finish in the shot put and Sheree Francis leapt to second place in the high jump. Later in the meet, Clarke came back to the track and put his fast start to good use in the 4x100 metres relay where Jamaica won the silver medal. When Nickesha Wilson added a bronze in the 400 metre hurdles, it brought Jamaica's medal tally to 6 overall.

**HL**