

SPORTS

World class jumper Ferguson left out of Cabinet mix by PM

Michael Pintard is gone from the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture. That was expected.

No meaningful strides were made for The Bahamas Sports Brand, while he was in charge of the government's national sports jurisdiction. Once Prime Minister Dr. Hubert Minnis opted to shake his Cabinet up, it figured that Pintard would be one of the changes. Replacing him is a female.

Not many in the sports fraternity guessed right about that. If his choice was to be a member of the fairer sex, the expectation, understandably, would have been that the one exalted female international sports figure at his disposal would have been the PM's selection. I refer to former world class and Commonwealth Games gold medal long jumper, Shonel Ferguson.

I don't wish to be a prophet of doom for the new Minister of Youth, Sports and Culture, Lanisha Rolle. In comparing sports background though, Ferguson should have been a no-brainer pick over Rolle. That being said, I support the view expressed by Bahamas Olympic Committee President, Romell Knowles.



LANISHA ROLLE

I advise all sports leaders throughout the nation to seek to work with this lady in the hope of jumpstarting The Bahamas Sports Brand once again. She inherits a stagnant product.

There was been no substantive forward



MICHAEL PINTARD

ward movement for sports over the last year. The National Sports Academy is still, little more than just a name, even though a lot of work was done during the last three years of the previous administration.

The sports complex in Moore's Island is still the lament of noted youth mentor Rev. Anthony Williams, a coach of the highest order. Nothing at all has happened in the way of progressing the facility since the Free National Movement won the government over a year ago.

The plug has once again being pulled on the Chris Brown Bahamas Invitational. Long-time associate of the Ministry of Sports Summer Camp in Grand



SHONEL FERGUSON

Bahama, Gladstone "Moon" McPhee has been pushed aside this year, even though he brought much credit and substance to that particular government's sports program.

Also, (and hopefully this information from a noted source is wrong), I have been told that the government will not be endorsing the International Association of Athletics Federation (IAAF) Fourth World Relays in 2019. If this happens to be the case, I would consider the decision to be one of the most outrageous determinations by PM Dr. Minnis and his colleagues.

The World Relays is a product that is the envy of the wider world. There have been three World Relays, one of

the IAAF's core international events. They have all taken place right here in The Bahamas, 2014, 2015 and 2017. The next is scheduled for 2019 and the IAAF has already agreed, in principle for the event to once again be hosted by The Bahamas.

If the government pushes away the World Relays, our international sports-hosting reputation would take a serious blow.

It is from this backdrop that Rolle must now operate.

It's not an enviable position. I noted that just around \$28 million have been allocated from the national budget for her tripartite ministry. That's really peanuts, when one thinks of the importance of each portfolio, youth, sports and culture. So, no doubt, Rolle will be challenged, and unless she surprises and presents a sports leadership capacity of worth, the new government point person for sports will be swamped.

At the very least, given the financial limitations, Ferguson is knowledgeable of the nation's quality sports leaders and if selected she would have been able to call upon her very own historic understanding of situations, having been an integral part of the national sports landscape for 25 years of her life, as a junior and then world elite senior athlete.

Nevertheless, it is Lanisha Rolle, who has the government's sports reins now.

I say to my colleagues, let's work with her and see where that goes.

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SPORTS SCOPE

BY FRED STURUP



LEADING THE WAY - Buddy Hield, left, and Travis Munnings, right, led Team Bahamas to a thrilling 83-82 win over the Dominican Republic in their final game of the 2019 FIBA World Cup Qualifiers this past Monday in Santa Domingo, Puerto Rico. Hield and Munnings scored 19 points each in the win. (PHOTOS: JOHN-MARC NUTT)

Hield, Munnings lift Team Bahamas over Dominican Republic

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Team Bahamas looked to bounce back after last Thursday's heartbreaking loss to the U.S. Virgin Islands and that is what they did in a thrilling 83-82 win.

Behind the scoring efforts of Grand Bahamians Chavanno "Buddy" Hield and Travis Munnings, The Bahamas picked up the 83-82 victory against the Dominican Republic, Monday (July 2) night, in Santa Domingo, Puerto Rico. With last week's loss, the men's na-

tional team was officially eliminated from contention to qualify for the 2019 FIBA World Cup. Nonetheless, the "surprising victory," as described by others, allowed Team Bahamas to bid farewell to the FIBA Americas Qualifiers on a high note.

Hield and Munnings came away with relatively similar stat lines. Hield totaled 19 points, while shooting 6-for-14 from the field, pulling down eight rebounds and coming away with three steals.

Munnings on the other hand, scored 19 points as well and shot 6-for-12 from the field. He also pulled down eight boards and had as many steals.

Michael Carey, Shaquille Cleare and Kadeem Coleby also added to the scoring charge. Carey poured in 15 points on 5-for-14 shooting to go along with seven assists. Cleare totaled 11 points on 5-for-10 shooting, coupled with six rebounds.

Coleby added 10 points while shooting 3-for-5 from the field, with four rebounds and one block.

The Dominican Republic's Victor Liz turned in a game high 23 points in the loss. Luis Montero added 12 points and four rebounds, while Rigoberto Mendoza supplied 10 points the loss.

It was a defensive battle between The Bahamas and the Dominican Republic.

Both teams struggled in the early goings of the first quarter. Eventually, things began to click offensively for both teams. Nonetheless, The Bahamas eventually held an 18-14 lead over the DR.

The Bahamas led by as much as six points near the end of the second quarter. Still, Team Bahamas went into halftime with a 36-32 lead.

With the DR struggling to mount any offence, Team Bahamas took advantage and began to build on their lead. With momentum on their side, The Bahamas eventually built an 11-point, 58-47, lead with one minute and 59 seconds (1:59) to go in the third quarter.

The DR clawed their way back into a single digit deficit, as The Bahamas led 61-56 to end the quarter.

The Bahamas built a 13-point lead, 77-64, with 3:57 left to go in the fourth quarter. The Dominicans, however, began to mount a comeback deep into the fourth quarter. The Dominican Republic eventually trailed The Bahamas 75-79 with 1:32 left to spare.

With 52 seconds remaining the DR took an 80-79 lead. Munnings, however, regained the lead for The Bahamas, 81-80, with a pair free throws. A two-point basket from Carey eventually gave The Bahamas the lead for good with 32 seconds left.