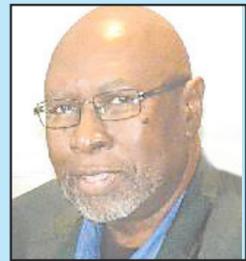


SPORTS

Bahamas could lose quality athletes

TO INTERESTED EUROPEAN NATIONS

Jonquel Jones is of high interest



Sports Scope

by Fred Sturup



JONQUEL JONES



DONALD THOMAS



SHERMAN 'THE TANK' WILLIAMS



SHAUNAE MILLER-UIBO

Two decades ago, Australia made a genuine offer to a Bahamian elite athlete. Mostly, because of a patriotic spirit, the athlete in question declined the offer, even though the prospect of being set financially for life, was tempting.

Bahamian athletes have been able to do so much better with financial rewards from other countries, compared to what our government affords them. The simple reason, is that successive governments have failed to place sports high on the national budget allocation agenda.

I recall, the late Danny Smith, a world class hurdler, world record holder and international medal winner for The Bahamas, could not continue his training after completing college, because the Ministry of Tourism did not retain his service. Pauline Davis-Thompson had troubling employment issues with the Ministry of Tourism.

The truth be told, our top athletes who have proven over and over to be awesome ambassadors for the country, have not been treated in comparable fashion. This has been the case for decades and is indeed so,

today.

As a result, here we are at this place in time with Bahamian athletes as conversation pieces throughout the world, because of stellar performances, and as a nation, nothing is being done to raise the financial quota for sports development and to compensate the stars who are responsible for the brightness of the Bahamian image, worldwide.

When Jonquel Jones dominated basketball competition in South Korea, China and became at the same time, a Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) solidified star, The Bahamas got mileage because of her achievements.

Noted Bahamian heavyweight boxing champion Sherman Tank Williams is a big hit in sparring gyms in Europe, particularly, Denmark. He is known for dressing up his training venues with signage of The Bahamas. In Europe boxing circles, Williams is synonymous with The Bahamas.

Indeed, The Bahamas has benefited handsomely.

Such was the case over the weekend, when Donald Thomas and Shaunae Miller-Uibo, won International Association of

Athletic Federations (IAAF) Continental Cup gold medals in the high jump and 200 meters respectively.

When announced and on other occasions when announcers referred to them during the two-day international climax of the IAAF season, it was the following:

"High jumper Donald Thomas of The Bahamas."

"Sensational Shaunae Miller-Uibo of The Bahamas."

The world observed.

Accordingly, I have been told that Bosnia, a Balkan country in southeastern Europe has come calling on the 6-6 standout center/forward Jones. She would get offers because of being so exceptionally gifted. Europe is keen about the western market of athletes. Some of our very own, are prime elements of the west sports market.

It figures then, that the Government of The Bahamas should come to grips with this reality and begin paying the due attention to our athletes. If not, we will begin losing them to Europe.

•To respond to this column, kindly contact Fred Sturup at sturup1504@gmail.com or on WhatsApp at 727-6363).

Bradley holds off Rose in play-off to win at Aronimink

DAN GELSTON
AP Sports Writer

NEWTOWN SQUARE, Pa. (AP) — Keegan Bradley held off Justin Rose in a sudden-death play-off to win the rain-plagued BMW Championship on Monday for his first PGA Tour victory in six years.

Though Rose was runner-up at the FedEx Cup play-off event at Aronimink, he didn't come up short in the world ranking. Rose hit No. 1 in the world and became the 22nd player to reach the top spot since the ranking began in 1986.

Bradley, who shot a final round 6-under 64 to finish at 20-under par, thrust his arms toward the gray sky and drizzle in celebration and waved his family onto the 18th hole. He tossed into the air his young son, Logan, who hadn't even been born in 2012, the last time Bradley won on the tour.

"A lot has happened to me over these six years," Bradley said. "I kind of fell off the radar there for a little while. It's tough to go from being on Ryder Cup teams, being on Presidents Cup teams to being outside the top 100 in the world."

Bradley finished with his fourth career victory and first since the 2012 WGC-Bridgestone Invitational. He gets a trip to Maui to start next year for the winners-only Sentry Tournament of Champions.

Rose could have won in regulation but lipped out on the last hole to force the play-off.

He fell short again in the play-off, missing a 5-foot par putt that would have kept him alive. The 38-year-old Rose had grown to love the suburban Philadelphia golf courses. He won the 2010 AT&T National at Aronimink and the 2013 U.S. Open at Merion.

He didn't get a trophy on this trip. But a No. 1 ranking will do. Rose, who overtook Dustin Johnson, joins Nick Faldo, Lee Westwood and Luke Donald as the only Englishmen to reach No. 1.

"I'm delighted to be world No. 1," Rose said. "Boyhood dreams, you know what I mean?"

Rose trails Bryson DeChambeau, who won the first two play-off events, in the FedEx Cup standings.

It was amazing play even finished Monday after rain soaked the course overnight and pushed up tee times. But it rained only lightly and the players had few

complaints about the condition of the course, even if the walking paths became a muddy, soggy mess for the gallery.

As usual, it crowded around Tiger Woods.

Woods caused some more noise — he's been doing that a lot in recent months before the largest galleries at every course — and got within one shot of the lead when he made birdie on No. 9 to go out in 31.

But he missed the green on the 10th and made bogey. He found a bunker on the par-3 14th for another bogey. And this was the kind of day when more than one mistake was going to be costly. Woods wound up with a 65.

Such was the scoring at Aronimink that Woods had a 72-hole score of 263 for the sixth time of his career. The other five times he won; this one got him a tie for sixth.

"I thought I needed to shoot something around 62 today to have a chance," Woods said. "And I don't think that would have been good enough."

Woods took away any suspense of getting back to the Tour Championship for the first time since 2013. That was about the time he was just starting to cope with back pain. He had his

fourth back surgery last April, and at this time last year he had just been cleared to chip and putt.

"To say that I made it back to the Tour Championship after what I've been through is a pretty good accomplishment," Woods said.

Jordan Spieth will not be joining him. Spieth started at 27th in the FedEx Cup standings and took a step backward, finishing with a 73 to tie for 55th. He fell out of the top 30 and will miss the Tour Championship for the first time.

That means he will have played only 24 tournaments this year, which includes the Ryder Cup. Because he didn't add to his schedule a tournament he had not played in the last four years, he is in violation of the PGA Tour's scheduling policy.

Still to be determined is the penalty. Spieth is the first player to violate the policy, which began last year.

"I obviously accept whatever fine it is and move on and try and add one every year, but it's kind of tough," Spieth said.

Later Monday, U.S. captain Jim Furyk will announce one more selection for the Ryder Cup.



Keegan Bradley celebrates winning the BMW Championship golf tournament at the Aronimink Golf Club, Monday, Sept. 10, 2018, in Newtown Square, Pa. Bradley held off Justin Rose in a sudden-death play-off to win the rain-plagued BMW Championship for his first PGA Tour victory in six years.

(AP PHOTO/CHRIS SZAGOLA)