

## SPORTS

# Broad national track/field development imperative

Within the track and field family in The Bahamas, the concentration on the upcoming November 24, elections of executive officers and council members is quite heavy.

The top conversation piece for sure, is the battle being waged by incumbent President Rosamunde Carey and rival Drumeco Archer. However, there are sub-interest elements, one of which is the plight of the coaches of the Family Islands, who have received, over the recent years, very little assistance from the parent national body, the Bahamas Association of Athletic Associations (BAAA).

Also, of the utmost importance, regarding the general national development process, is for all of the associations and clubs to become more proactive. In many communities in the islands, the track and field groups are seriously challenged, functioning with limited expertise and little or no equipment.

There is though, for instance, Grand Bahama, where the track and field community is afforded much more than those of sister islands. Yet, the Grand Bahama Amateur Athletic Association (GBAAA), under President Iram Lewis has not been doing a whole lot, these past few years, in my view.

Regarding the uphill struggles island coaches are confronted with, I refer for example to the veteran track and field coaching stalwart, Vogal Williams, of Abaco. He perseveres despite an inadequate training environment and the tough task of staging events to give young boys and girls of the Marsh Harbour District competitive opportunities.

Last year, against great odds, Williams' Green Arrows Club staged a cross country event. The course was ideal, just outside of Marsh Harbour on the way to Sandy Point and the competitive level was high. A good field turned up for the event and parents were on hand as well, demonstrating the deep interest in track and field, inspired by Coach Williams and others.

While the BAAA endorsed the event, otherwise, Coach Williams had to "do it all." One



## Sports Scope

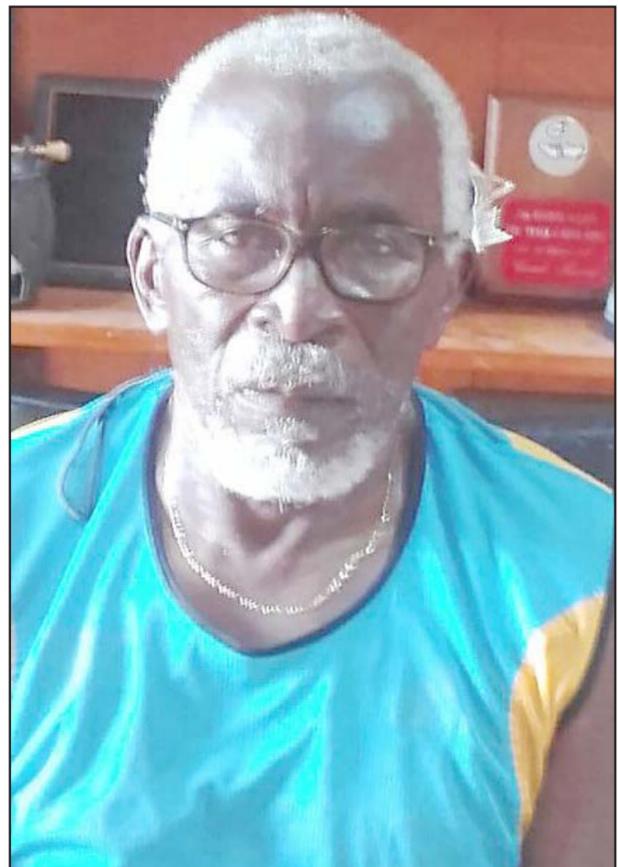
by Fred Sturup

"Indeed, the GBAAA could do much more. Lewis came to office three years ago with a lot of promises, in particular, taking a renewed development program into the wider northern region. Well, that didn't happen and the GBAAA has not been, under Lewis, the architect of the positive development changes, he had indicated."

## GBAAA UNDERACHIEVING UNDER IRAM LEWIS



IRAM LEWIS, GBAAA PRESIDENT



COACH VOGAL WILLIAMS

could imagine the frustration of Coach Williams' peers, throughout the Family Islands who have to face, on an ongoing basis, the same situation.

Indeed, in recent decades, the BAAA's outreach beyond the capital Island of New Providence has been deplorable. Not only has the BAAA been delinquent in connecting in a substantive way with island coaches, training conditions have seemingly been ignored.

Staying with Coach Williams to make the point, I spoke to him just yesterday to confirm the condition of the one suitable 400 meters track and field facility on the island. It is located at the Patrick Bethel High (For-

mer Central High). The track itself is overgrown in parts by weeds; and the field events areas are derelict. Young boys or girls with talent and the desire to maximize what they have been blessed with, are unable to grow in the sport of athletics.

The main training and competition venue is virtually unusable.

Those who are aspiring to lead the BAAA going forward, should therefore be minded of the scenario in the Family Islands.

As for Grand Bahama, the leading light of athletics outside of New Providence, Lewis has not come close to maximizing the potential of the island in athlet-

ics. The Grand Bahama Extreme event has been his priority while individual clubs and schools have produced national junior and senior team members. Other than the "extreme" event, Lewis does no function with a full GBAAA schedule.

Indeed, the GBAAA could do much more. Lewis came to office three years ago with a lot of promises, in particular, taking a renewed development program into the wider northern region. Well, that didn't happen and the GBAAA has not been, under Lewis, the architect of the positive development changes, he had indicated.

Could it be that his national political demands (Member of

Parliament for Central Grand Bahama and Ministry of Works Parliamentary Secretary) hamper him greatly in fully performing in his role of GBAAA President?

He is best able to honestly address that issue.

So, advancing track and field in the entire country will be demanding for the incoming executive body.

I submit that beyond the hype of the campaign, sober thoughts should be given to an under-achieving national track and field program.

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# Junior golfers get into the swing with first fall event

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Junior golfers in the Swing Dynamics golf program got a taste of their first competition for the fall season.

The Swing Dynamics Fall Classic was contested over the course of two weekends - October 20 and 27 - at the Fortune Hills Golf and Country Club.

The Classic was split between two divisions - juniors (11 and Under) and seniors (14-15).

The juniors took to the course on October 20 where they competed among each other in a skills competition. As for the seniors, that group played off in an 18-hole contest the following weekend.

Winning first place among the seniors was Matthew Deveaux. Second place went to Adrian Stan-Busuic. Brenton Kemp finished in third place for the senior boys. As for the senior girls Nae Smith took top place in that division, while second place went to Destiny Duhaney.

Swing Dynamics instructor Emalcus Hield said it was good to get the junior golfers competing, to which the players said they enjoyed. For the girls, it was their first time competing against each other. Overall, Hield expressed that the sky is the limit for each of the golfers that competed.

"The competition was very keen...The girls played their first

(Continued on Page 11)



ALL IN COMPETITION - Pictured left to right are the top place finishers among the senior division at the Swing Dynamics Fall Classic held on October 27. Boys: First place - Matthew Deveaux, second place - Adrian Stan-Busuic, third place - Brenton Kemp. Girls: First place - Nae Smith, second place - Destiny Duhaney.

(PHOTOS COURTESY OF SWING DYNAMICS)

SHOW YOUR SKILLS - Swing Dynamics instructor Emalcus Hield stands left of the junior golfers that competed in the 11 and Under skills competition held on October 20.

