

SPORTS

Jamal Wilson comes of age, reminiscent of Steve Wray

Congratulations Jamal Wilson!
Welcome to the elite circle of Bahamian high jumpers! When Wilson came so close to the gold medal, before settling for silver at the Gold Coast (Australia) Commonwealth Games on Wednesday, it was special and catapulted him finally into the upper echelon group of Bahamian high jumpers who have won medals on the senior international stage.

Interestingly enough, I had a brief flashback to Steven Wray. Perhaps, it's good that I did, because he is often forgotten. Wray was a tremendously gifted high jumper with potential never fully maximized, but he owns a page in Bahamian sports history. It was he who broke ground for The Bahamas in the high jump event at the Commonwealth Games.

In Australia also, Wray achieved his greatest claim to fame. At the 1982 Commonwealth Games in Brisbane, Wray won the silver medal at the height of, a then games and national record, 2.31 meters. A little over a quarter of a century later, he went missing.

Wilson of course, with his silver medal, mirrors Wray more than any of the other leading era high bar jumpers, in my view. There have been some regional successes, certainly, but the Commonwealth Games hardware he captured, to date, is his highest honor as a competitor.

It has come in good time. Wilson will be 30 in September. Although he seems to be somewhat of a late bloomer, the window of prime performances, fig-



STEVE WRAY

ures to be closing. Unlike Wray who was 20 when he medaled in Brisbane, Wilson is at a ripe age for athletes and it must be particularly gratifying to him, to hit the milestone just before he reaches 30.

I say this much. After looking carefully at video clips of Wilson's series of jumps, I formed the view that a jump in the mid 2.30 meters is realistic. He should be extremely confident now that he has prevailed among some of the best jumpers in the world. Barring injuries he will



JAMAL WILSON

bear watching for sure, over the next several years, leading into the Tokyo Olympics of 2020.

Wilson has a ways to go to come close to matching his highly decorated teammate, the veteran Donald Thomas, (fourth on Wednesday) who will be 34 in July; and the national record (2.38 meters) holder Troy Kemp. Thomas has World Champ Championships, Commonwealth Games, Pan American Games, Central American and Caribbean Games gold medals in his pocket and his ca-

reer best of 2.37 meters makes him the second highest jumper in Bahamian history.

Record holder Kemp was a world champion in 1995.

The aforementioned should prove to be great motivation for Wilson. In winning the first medal for The Bahamas at the 2018 Commonwealth Games, Wilson shined brightly. Continued best wishes!

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

SPORTS SCOPE

BY FRED STURUP



MEN'S 400M HURDLES GOLD MEDALIST – Kyron McMaster of the British Virgin Islands stands with silver medalist Bahamas' Jeffery Gibson, on the podium at Carrara Stadium during the 2018 Commonwealth Games on the Gold Coast, Australia, Thursday, April 12, 2018. (AP PHOTO/MARK SCHIEFELBEIN)



WOMEN'S 200M GOLD MEDALIST – Former Olympic and world sprint champion Usain Bolt prepares to present women's 200m gold medalist Bahamas' Shaunae Miller-Uibo centre, with her medal at Carrara Stadium during the 2018 Commonwealth Games on the Gold Coast, Australia, Thursday, April 12, 2018. (AP PHOTO/MARK SCHIEFELBEIN)

Gibson, Miller haul away medals AT COMMONWEALTH GAMES

SHAYNE STUBBS
FN Sports Reporter
shayne@nasguard.com

Jeffery Gibson is back to form! The 400 meter hurdles specialist proved that with his recent stint at the 2018 Commonwealth Games this past Thursday.

The Grand Bahama native added the country's second silver medal in athletics during the men's 400m hurdles in the Gold Coast (Australia).

It took a season's best effort of 49.10 seconds and a dip at the finish line for Gibson to earn his

spot on the medal podium, running out of a difficult lane eight. Kyron McMaster was the eventual gold medal winner with a time of 48.25 seconds. Jamaica's Jaheel Hyde hauled away the bronze behind Gibson in a time of 49.16 seconds.

Gibson was quoted after the race by, *The Tribune*, "I couldn't be happier with myself. I think that sometimes we look at the statistics and not everyone comes back and medals in an event like this, with it being so early in the season to expect championship times and championship performances. So I'm

elated and grateful that I can come back and medal," he expressed.

In the Bishop Michael Eldon School product's last appearance at the Games four years ago, Gibson landed the bronze medal in the men's 400m hurdles.

Later, 400m Olympic gold medalist Shaunae Miller-Uibo added the country's third medal for the Games in the women's 200m finale.

Despite a stacked field of competitors, Miller-Uibo struck gold. Poetically, the recently minted gold medalist set a new

Commonwealth Games record of 22.09 seconds.

The previous record was set by Golden Girl, Debbie Ferguson back in 2002 in Manchester, England with a time of 22.20 seconds.

Jamaica's Shericka Jackson secured the silver medal in a personal best time of 22.18 seconds. A late dip by England's Dina Asher-Smith helped her quest to medal in the event. She rounded out the top three with a time of 22.29 seconds ahead of Jamaica's Elaine Thompson, who finished with a time of 22.30 seconds.

Bianca Stuart also competed in the women's long jump final, finishing eighth overall with a distance of 6.30m. Canadian Christabel Netley won the event with a jump of 6.84m, Australia's Brooke Stratton, won the silver with a leap of 6.78m, and England's Shara Proctor took bronze with a distance of 6.75m.

Latario Collie also competed earlier in the men's triple jump qualifier. Collie punched his ticket to the final, to be competed April 14. Collie finished the qualifying round with a distance of 15.98m. He will jump third when the finale takes place at

1:15 a.m local time.

The Bahamas will be represented in the men's 4x400m heat on Friday, April 13 at 10:05 p.m local time. The team will take the track in lane eight and compete in the second and final heat. There is no men's 4x100m team nor a women's 4x400m team.

The women's 4x100m final will go to a straight final and will take place Saturday, April 14 at 12:57 a.m local time. Should the men's 4x400m team qualify for the final, they will compete on Saturday as well, at 3:07 a.m local time.