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Michelle Smith Clinches Third Consecutive 400m Hurdles Victory at CARIFTA Games

The U.S. Virgin Islands' star secures another win in the 400m hurdles, setting her sights on the 800m final

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Michelle Smith following her victory on Sunday at the CARIFTA Games, held in Grenada
By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS TRACK & FIELD FEDERATION

At the Carifta Games held at the Kirani James Stadium in Grenada on Sunday, Michelle Smith from the U.S. Virgin Islands shone brightly in the U20 Girls 400m hurdles with an outstanding performance.

Smith blazed through the track to secure a commanding win with an impressive time of 56.28 seconds, capturing the attention of all present with her speed. Her victory was a highlight amidst a

day of intense competition, showcasing her as a standout athlete at the event.

The games also witnessed Jamaica's athletic prowess, particularly in the 400m hurdles, where the country's athletes claimed victory in three out of the four finals conducted on Sunday. Among the winners, Nastassia Fletcher of Jamaica triumphed in the U17 Girls 400m hurdles. Fletcher, with a time of 1:00.10, overcame stiff competition to earn her second gold medal of the games. Close on her heels were Darvinique Dean of the Bahamas, who secured second place with a time of 1:00.66, and Jenna-Marie Thomas of Trinidad and Tobago, who took home the bronze with a time of 1:01.03.

The male athletes also showcased remarkable talent. In the Under 17 Boys category, Robert Miller of Jamaica set a new championship record with an electrifying run, clocking in at 52.19 seconds. Miller's performance outpaced Akanye Samuel-Francis of St. Kitts and Nevis, who claimed the silver with a time of 52.88 seconds, and Fransico Williams of Jamaica, who won the bronze with a time of 53.19 seconds.

In the fiercely competitive Boys 400m Hurdles Under 20 category, Jamaican athletes dominated the podium once again. Shamer Blake emerged as the winner, recording a time of 51.21 seconds. Princewell Martin, also from Jamaica, was hot on his heels, finishing a close second with a time of 51.34 seconds. Dorian Charles from Trinidad and Tobago completed the podium, securing the bronze with a commendable performance of 52.70 seconds.

Meanwhile, in the U20 Girls 400m hurdles, aside from Smith's stunning victory, Kelly Ann Carr of Jamaica took the silver with a time of 57.02 seconds, and Aaliyah Mullings, another Jamaican athlete, rounded out the medal positions with a bronze, finishing in 59.80 seconds.

The Carifta Games thus highlighted the talents of emerging athletes in the region, with Michelle Smith's victory marking a significant achievement for the U.S. Virgin Islands amidst Jamaica's overall dominance in the 400m hurdles events. Over the last three years, Smith has amassed five gold medals, a testament to her relentless work ethic and dedication to her sport. This year's games were particularly significant for Smith as she aimed for her sixth gold medal, with her sights set on achieving a third consecutive victory in the 800-meter event. Her ambition was evident in her performance during the semifinals, where she placed second with a commendable time of 2 minutes, 15.85 seconds, ranking her fourth overall and showcasing her versatility and competitive spirit.