

logo not found or type unknown

Michelle Smith Breaks 29-Year-Old Record, Rises to World No. 2 in 400m Hurdles After Historic Run at Pepsi Florida Relays

Michelle Smith shattered a 29-year-old UGA school record and broke her own Virgin Islands national record with a 54.56 run in the 400m hurdles at the Pepsi Florida Relays, ranking her No. 2 in the world heading into the 2025 World Championships.

Sports / **Published On April 06, 2025 07:18 PM /**

Staff Consortium **April 06, 2025**

Image not found or type unknown



VI Track Star Michelle Smith. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS TRACK AND FIELD FEDERATION.

Virgin Islands Sports Ambassador Michelle Smith continues to make history on the track. The University of Georgia freshman stormed to victory in the 400m hurdles at the 2025 Pepsi Florida

Relays, clocking a blistering 54.56 seconds—earning her a world-leading time, breaking a nearly three-decade-old school record, and securing her place among the best hurdlers in the world.

Smith's performance shattered the University of Georgia's long-standing record of 54.93 seconds set in 1996 by Icelandic Olympian Gudrun Arnadottir. The time also obliterated Smith's own Virgin Islands national record of 55.96 seconds, underscoring her rapid rise as a global track contender. Her run at the Florida Relays, held in Gainesville on April 4-5, now qualifies her for the upcoming 2025 World Championships in Tokyo, Japan.

The invitational section of the 400m hurdles at the Florida Relays was packed with competition, including two professional athletes and a junior from the University of Miami who had previously beaten Smith. Placed in the middle of the lineup, Smith chased hard from the start, trailing Barbados Olympian Tia-Adana Belle over the first seven hurdles. With a powerful final push over the last 110 meters, Smith surged past her rivals, crossing the line with a time that briefly topped the global leaderboard.

Just two hours after her win, Olympic champion Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone narrowly edged Smith's mark at the Grand Slam meet in Jamaica, pushing Smith to the second-fastest time in the world this year. Nonetheless, the achievement remains monumental for the 18-year-old from the Virgin Islands.

Smith's 54.56 performance not only gives her the world No. 2 ranking as of April 5 but also places her first in the NCAA rankings for the 400m hurdles. It's a remarkable feat for the freshman athlete, whose breakout season is unfolding with stunning momentum. Smith's name now sits beside elite athletes in the record books, and she has firmly established herself as a force to be reckoned with on the international stage.

Next, Smith will represent the Virgin Islands at the 2025 CARIFTA Games in Trinidad and Tobago from April 18 to 22. Her participation comes with high expectations, following her recent string of accomplishments.

The Virgin Islands Track and Field Federation (VITFF) is encouraging all local athletes to follow in Smith's footsteps and register with the organization. Registration can be completed online at the federation's [official website](#).

To watch Smith's standout performance in the 400m hurdles, visit:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8so16m1Dmw0>.