

The Virgin Islands Consortium

USVI Swim Team Finish Strong On First Day of Competition

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The U.S. Virgin Islands (ISV) swim team had a strong finish after day one of competition at the 2018 Central American and Caribbean (CAC) Games on Friday, ending with several athletes advancing to medal rounds and a new U.S. Virgin Islands record, according a release issued Saturday.

Team ISV advanced to the men's 200m butterfly final, and automatically advanced to the men's 4x200m freestyle relay final. Carter Maltby, 15, also advanced to the women's 400m freestyle final. All three finals were completed the same day, the release says.

Though they did not medal in their finals appearances, Frank Odum, president of the USVI Swimming Federation, said he was very pleased with the team's overall performance, especially since most swimmers dropped seconds off their best times.

"We tell the kids all the time that they're racing themselves, so each one of them dropped time and made improvements," Odum said. "They just swam at the [Central American and Caribbean Amateur Swimming Confederation Championships] two weeks ago, so to drop time from just two weeks back—we're very pleased with that."

One of the men's 4x200m freestyle relay team members, Adriel Sanes, 19, said he felt comfortable going into today's competition. "It was a good start to the meet. I felt good in the water, so as the days go on I know it'll be even better," he said.

Matthew Mays, 19, made a lifetime best and broke his own Virgin Islands record in the men's 200m butterfly with a time of 2:05.48 in his first heat. He said the team is used to long meets such as this and warming up, rolling out, and keeping your body in racing condition is key.

Webster Bozzo, 18, was proud to drop a second off his best time in the men's 100m freestyle, with a time of 53.30, in his first ever CAC Games appearance, according to the release.

"This is a first time, big swim meet for me like this so it was kind of nerve wrecking at first, but when I got out there it was just amazing," he said. "It's kind of a once in a lifetime thing you get to do." Moving forward through the next few days of competition, Odum said Team ISV is ready and anxious to get in the pool.

"Just the fact that they meet the qualifications to come, they don't need any motivation. They train more than ten hours a week. They are there every day except Sunday training [at home]," he said. "It's easy. We don't have to motivate them, we don't have to coax them, they want to come."

On Friday overall, Team ISV competed in the mixed 4x100m medley relay, men's 4x200m freestyle relay, men's 200m butterfly, men's 100m freestyle, women's 50m backstroke, and women's 400m freestyle.

Individuals can follow the games and the status of Team ISV athletes competing at www.baranquilla2018.com.