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BVI Long Jumper Becomes First in Territory's History to Reach Olympic Finals

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BVI Long Jumper Chantel Malone By. CHANTEL MALONE/INSTAGRAM

The British Virgin Islands has great cause for celebration after its long jump star, Chantel Malone, during competition on Saturday bested many opponents in the 2021 Olympics with a jump distance of 6.82 meters, securing her spot in the finals set for Monday at 9:50 p.m. local time.

Ms. Malone needed 6.75 meters to qualify for the finals, according to [the BVI Olympic Committee](#). She achieved the 6.82 feat on the third attempt.

This year's Olympics, being held in Tokyo, Japan, is Ms. Malone's first. She qualified for the games with her season and personal best distance of 7.08 meters, which she achieved in March, according to the BVIOC.

Following the victory, she said, "I'm excited, I'm happy to be going into the finals. As you know, I've been struggling with being 100 percent healthy... So to be able to go out there and hit 6.82 was the reassurance that I needed. And, honestly, I feel like it's a testament to the growth as an athlete just because the old me would have folded after I had two bad jumps."

She added, "I already am so proud of myself because I had a pretty hellish year leading up to this and I know it's a miracle that I'm here."

Ms. Malone further stated, "I may be the first athlete to make it to the finals but honestly, that's always been the goal and to actually be on that podium. The goal is to execute and hopefully we will be good but it's a tough field out there with a lot of automatic qualifiers, so I just have to bring my A-Game and stay focused."

BVIOC President Ephraim Penn, who was watching the competition along with BVIOC Secretary General Lloyd Black, said, "We were so excited when Chantel not only qualified for the finals, but that she managed to hit a distance beyond the automatic qualifying mark of 6.75.

"The BVIOC and family of National Federations congratulate Chantel and her coach, Dwight Phillips on this achievement and we are looking forward to Tuesday's event and to cheering her on in support of the goal for a podium finish."

On Instagram, the star [quoted her father](#) as inspiration, "Remember freedom is of the mind. Free your mind and fly."

Sources: BVIOC, Chantel Malone Instagram, BVI News, BVI Platinum News.