

BURNETT - INSPIRED BY BOLT



After a fine US College season, Davonte Burnett is here in the land of his father's birth to compete at this week's National Senior Championships. The incomparable Usain Bolt is Burnett's inspiration and he will be racing to follow in the great man's footsteps.

Running for the University of Southern California, the 21 year-old Boston native has run 10.05 seconds for the 100 metres and 20.29 seconds for the 200 metres, collecting Pac-12 and NCAA West Regional victories along the way in the shorter event. At the NCAA Outdoor Championships in Eugene, Oregon earlier this month, he reached both the 100 and 200 finals. Speaking at training in Kingston on June 19, he said he had recovered from his college endeavours. "I actually rested so today is like my first day practicing in the blocks and everything. I should be fine. At NCs, I was kind of loaded, where I was a bit fatigued and just tired so I just ran kinda bad. You know, just got to bounce back", he reported.

Last year, while at Barton County Community College, he sprinted to victory in the 60 metres at the National Junior College Indoor Championships.

Born to a Jamaican father and a Haitian mother, the self-professed Bolt fan is delighted to be here. "I had offers to run for team USA, Haiti and of course, I picked Jamaica because it's just like he's my inspiration", he revealed after training on Saturday. In a flashback to his days watching the 6-time individual Olympic champion, he reflected, "when I grow up, I just wanted to be like him so I had to pick Jamaica, following in his footsteps."

Burnett is no stranger to Jamaica having lived here for two years when he was much younger but this is no tourist trip. Asked how he felt about racing the likes of 2011 World Champion Yohan Blake and sub-10/sub-20 sprinter Julian Forte, he replied, "Honestly, I'm never nervous. I just go into the meet to just to execute and just perform. I trust my training. When I go there, I just perform and whatever happens, happens."

Burnett and Blake share second place on the 2021 Jamaican 100 metres performance list at 10.05 with Nigel Ellis leading with a mark of 10.04 seconds and with Forte not far off at 10.07. In addition, he leads the 200 metres list with Karayme Bartley, the former Garvey Maceo and Kingston College 400 metres runner, next with 20.42 seconds.

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