ALIA TURNS UP THE HEAT IN DUBAI TO WIN GOLD



Alia Atkinson

Photo by Mike Lewis

As it was in Doha so it would be in Dubai as Jamaica's Alia Atkinson continued to dominate in the women's breaststroke sprint events at the FINA/MASTBANK Swimming World Cup 2014.

Today on Day 1 Atkinson cruised through qualifying to post the fastest time of the 100 metre breaststroke heats of 1:04.09. In the finals there would be no holding back as she exploded from the blocks with a reaction time of 0.65 seconds and by the first five strokes the race was over as a competition between Alia and the seven other competitors. At the halfway mark with over a two body length lead she was flirting with World record pace. She split the race at 29.66 a mere 0.10 seconds off the pace that Ruta Meilutyte (Lithuania) set on her way to the World Record of 1:02.36. Atkinson, the most successful breaststroke swimmer ever for Jamaica continued to turn up the heat on in the last 50 metres clocking 33.60. She won the Gold medal in a season best of 1:03.26. Left behind in her wake was the American duo of Silver medalist Breeja Larson

1:04.85 and Bronze medallist Laura Sogar **1:06.93**. Atkinson increased her margin of victory from **1.27** seconds in Doha to **1.59** seconds here in Dubai ,United Arab Emirates.

Atkinson also completed a difficult treble today. She made two other finals against World Class competing in events which are not breaststroke. She swam all three swum within 45 minutes. She placed 4th in the 50 metre backstroke in **27.52** barely off her personal and Jamaica best of **27.51**. That event was won by Hungarian Iron Lady Katinka Hosszu who won in **26.10**. She then splashed to a season best of **2:11.54** in the 200 metre individual medley for 6th. The event was won by Hosszu in a new World Record **2:02.13**



George Bovell (www.HEADswimming.com)

In the 100 metre individual medley Trinidad and Tobago's George Bovell III was buoyed on by a small but very vocal contingent of fans draped in the black, red and white of the twin island republic. Bovell lead qualification with a time of **53.36**. In the final Bovell was challenged early by American Tom Shields. Shields held the advantage at the 50 metre mark **23.37** to Bovell's **23.83**. Then George made his move powering his way through the last two legs of breaststroke and freestyle to get the win in **51.79**. That victory triggered screams of joy from his fans. That

time was also a season best by over a second. Shields won the silver in **52.14** and fellow American Cody Miller the bronze in **52.46**.

Earlier Bovell missed qualifying for the 50 metre breaststroke final when he clocked 27.61 for 10^{th} overall.

Contributed by

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