



MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

To the House of Assembly

by

The Hon. Owen K. Darrell, JP, MP

Minister of Tourism & Transport, Culture & Sport

Bermuda's 2026 CARIFTA Delegation

Friday 20th March 2026

Mr. Speaker,

I rise today to invite this Honourable House to join me in a moment of great national pride as we celebrate the exceptional young men and women selected to represent Bermuda at the upcoming **2026 53rd CARIFTA Games and 39th CARIFTA Aquatic Championships**. This year, our athletes carry a powerful mandate, guided by the inspiring CARIFTA Theme: **“Passion Drives Performance.”**

Mr. Speaker,

The **CARIFTA Games** remain the premier regional showcase for junior athletic talent in the Caribbean. This year, the **spirit of**

Bermudian excellence will be on full display across two jurisdictions. **Our Track and Field team** is set to travel to St. George's, Grenada, to compete at the Kirani James Athletic Stadium from April 4th to 6th. Simultaneously, our **Aquatics team** will head to Martinique from April 3rd to 8th, where they will compete at the Pierre Samot Community Aquatic Centre in Le Lamentin and along the beautiful Anses d'Arlet coastal area for the open water events.

Mr. Speaker,

While some of our athletes may have met the challenging qualifying standards early in the season, it is **the spirit, dedication, and collective achievement of the entire team** that we wish to celebrate and acknowledge today. **Every name** on this roster **represents hours of grueling discipline, early mornings, and a steadfast commitment** to personal and national excellence.

Mr. Speaker,

It is my distinct pleasure to announce the **Track and Field delegation** who will carry our flag:

In the Under-17 Girls category, we are represented by:

Amara Samuels – competing in the 100m and 200m;

Ajana Patton – competing in the Triple Jump;

Kelise Wade – competing in the 400m;
Riana Robinson – competing in the 1500m;
Brooklyn Myers – competing in the 3000m; and
Elena Bortoli – competing in the 1500m.

Our Under-17 Boys include:

Sanchez Smith – competing in the 3000m;
Zydon Lightbourne Furbert – competing in the 400m and 200m;
and
Nazir Johnson – competing in the 800m.

Representing our Under-20 Girls are:

Tatiana Sousa – competing in the Javelin; and
Arima Turner – competing in the 100m and 200m.

And rounding out the squad in the **Under-20 Boys category are:**

Miles Outerbridge – competing in the 100m and 200m; and
Gianluca Bortoli – competing in the 5000m.

Mr. Speaker,

The excitement continues in the pool, where our **Aquatics delegation** has seen remarkable growth. We are sending nineteen

(19) qualifying swimmers this year—a significant increase that underscores **the rising tide of talent** within our swimming community. This elite squad will compete in a staggering one hundred and ten (110) individual events and eight (8) team events, spanning six (6) core disciplines: Individual Medley, Backstroke, Freestyle, Breaststroke, Butterfly, and Relays.

Mr. Speaker,

The team selected to **represent Bermuda in Martinique** are as follows:

- In the age 11–12 Category: **Colette Durkin and Madison Fox;**
- In the age 13–14 Category: **Rory Shepherd, Scarlett Spurling, and Dominic Wright;** and
- In the age 15–17 Category: **Gaby Cechini, Elanna Fulton, Marleigh Howes, Maggie Mewett, Connor Hupman, Logan Jones, Joseph Lau, Teagan Mewett, Violet Smith, Katherine Wheddon, Gabriel Maranzana, Noah Maranzana, Jorgia White, and Axel Wernbo.**

Mr. Speaker,

I am cognizant that these athletes did not reach this stage on their own. Behind every qualifier is a dedicated network of coaches,

parents, and technical officers, who we would like to thank. The Department of Sport and Recreation also provides the essential framework and foundation for their success. This Government remains steadfastly committed to investing in one of our most valuable assets—our youth—ensuring they have the world-class facilities and support necessary to compete against the very best in the region.

Mr. Speaker,

As this delegation prepares to depart, I ask this Honourable House and the entire community to rally behind them. These **young ambassadors** are the **vanguard of resilience and sportsmanship**. We look forward to their performance and, more importantly, to the **immense pride** they will undoubtedly bring to Bermuda.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.