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## **USVI swim team wins three medals at CARIFTA games**

**Daily News Staff**

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The Virgin Islands national swim team returned from Aruba this week after a successful stint at the annual CARIFTA Championships in which they won three medals - one silver and two bronze.

Jemille Vialet won a silver in the 100 meter backstroke and a bronze in the 200 backstroke at Roly Bisslik Olympic Pool in Aruba; and Bryson Mays won a bronze medal in the 400 individual medley.

Seven of the 10 V.I. swimmers who competed scored points. The team consisted of Jake Barnwell, age 13, Jordan Bates, 13, Lauren Lewis, 15, Bryson Mays, 13, Brigitte Rasmussen, 13, Sam Shogren, 16, Devontai Stevens, 14, Jemille Vialet, 16, Evan Warehime, 11, and Caylee Watson, 13.

The team was coached by Kevin Tyrrell, who also serves as head coach of the St. Croix Dolphins swim team. All of the swimmers are members of the Dolphins team.

Coach Tyrrell said that 88 percent of the V.I. swimmers registered personal bests in Aruba. "Swimming is great in that success is easy to measure," he said. "Either you went faster than your best time or you didn't."

He added that the team was younger than many of the other teams and that as a group they represented the territory well.

"Our swimmers were young and for the most part, inexperienced. To have as many best times as we did showed that our team possesses a measure of maturity and composure that is unusual," Tyrrell said. "None of the swimmers will graduate this year, which means that as long as they continue to work hard and attend practice on schedule they will have more and more success in the pool over the next several years .... This was a step in the right direction."

Tyrrell also said that Stevens, Vialet, Mays, Shogren and Rasmussen all qualified for the CISC championships in Jamaica in July based on performances that were all at least three seconds better than their previous best. The CISC is a notch above Carifta in terms of prestige.

The Virgin Islands 13-14 year-old boys group fielded relays in the 200 freestyle, 400 medley, and 400 freestyle. Tyrrell praised the relay team of Barnwell, Bates, Mays and Stevens.

"These swimmers work hard in practice and enjoy swimming for the Virgin Islands," he said. "They are our future and have tremendous talent and drive. Together they can achieve a great deal especially since swimming in relays is so much fun".

In other local swimming news, the Virgin Islands Swimming Federation is scheduled to hold its National Long Course championships at the Dolphins pool at Country Day School on May 10. Swimmers from St. Thomas and St. Croix will compete in the event. The public is invited.

The federation invites people who have children who want to learn to swim - or to compete - to contact them at one of their member clubs: the St. Thomas Swimming Association at 779-7872 or the St. Croix Dolphins (located on the campus of Country Day School) at 719-7946.