

Jamaica's Flag to Officially Fly at Penn Relays - Forever

The national flag of Jamaica will officially fly at the Penn Relay Carnival every year beginning in 2013, into perpetuity, in recognition of the Caribbean nation's 50th anniversary of independence and the contribution made to the relays over the last 40 years by its athletes.

Director of the relays, David Johnson, made the disclosure at a special ceremony held on the final day of the 118th annual edition of the event at the Franklin Field, University of Pennsylvania, in Philadelphia on Saturday, April 28, 2012. Prime Minister, the Most Hon. Portia Simpson Miller, who was present at the 2012 Penn Relay Carnival in her capacity as Minister of Sports, presented the President of the University of Pennsylvania, Dr. Amy Guttmann, with the national flag of Jamaica which will be flown at all future Penn Relay Carnivals. Mr. Johnson told the more than 49,000 spectators on hand for Saturday's closing day that Jamaica would be the only country to be so honoured because of the outstanding contribution made to the games by its athletes, in addition to the tremendous presence and support given to the games by Jamaicans from all over the United States. This announcement was received with a thunderous applause and a standing ovation from spectators. In presenting the flag, the Prime Minister said her country was honoured to be chosen by the organisers as the only country to have its flag flown at the Penn Relay Carnival. She welcomed and acknowledged the gesture as "a great tribute to the country, our athletes and Jamaicans the world over." Prime Minister Simpson Miller saluted the relay organizers who, she said, have given our athletes the opportunity to compete and excel in track and field. She pointed out that many of our premier, world-class athletes who have excelled in track and field were first exposed to international competition at the Penn Relay Carnival. "Our athletes who have been participating at these games for the last forty years continue to do so at a very high level of competition," Prime Minister Simpson Miller said and further lauded Jamaica's athletes and coaches whom she hailed as "true ambassadors of Jamaica." In presenting a citation, a commemorative baton and flag to Prime Minister Simpson Miller, Dr. Gutmann, said the proclamation was being given in celebration of Jamaica's 50th year of independence as well as to acknowledge the leadership of the Prime Minister. Dr. Gutmann recognized the visibility and impact that all past, present and future athletes of Jamaica have had on the high caliber of this athletic meet. "Jamaica's participation in the games has greatly influenced the yearly attendance. This is evidenced today by the great turnout and vast number of black, green and gold colors all throughout the stands," Dr. Gutmann said. In a salute to Jamaica, four athletes made an exhibition lap around the 400m track, carrying the Jamaican flag. The Prime Minister was accompanied at the games by Jamaica's newly-appointed Consul General in New York, Mr. Herman G. Lamont; Minister of Tourism, Dr Wykeham McNeill; Jamaica's Honorary Consul for Pennsylvania, Dr Alston Meade; and Special Advisor to the Prime Minister, Delano Franklin. Contact: Communications Unit-OPM Tel: 926-0244 Fax: 920-4684 Email: opm.news@