



Glen L. L. Mills

Degree of Doctor of Laws (LLD)

Chancellor,

If there was a moment of astonishment in the athletics phase of the 2012 London Olympics, it was not Usain Bolt's dazzling victories in the 100 and 200 Metres; not Shelly-Ann Fraser's reprise triumph in the shorter sprint; and not even the world record-shattering Men's 4x100 Metres performance. Rather, most Jamaicans, I am certain, would point to that remarkable 200 Metres race in which Bolt and Yohan Blake, not unexpectedly, romped home to the gold and silver, while a third yellow-clad sprinter, the young, unassuming Warren Weir, appeared, as it were, out of nowhere, to capture decisively, the Bronze.

One, two, three, Chancellor and each athlete can be justly proud of his accomplishment, as is the country and entire region; but only one man can lay claim to the total performance and he is with us tonight – Glen Mills, OD, CD, the most successful sprint coach on the planet.

Glen Mills is not new to the fine art of sprint coaching. Starting his distinguished career at Camperdown High School, he can claim among his protégés none other than that other sprint icon, Donald Quarrie, and the entire Camperdown team of the late seventies that performed remarkably at Boys' Champs, the Penn Relays (where he was later inducted into the Hall of Fame) and on the international stage.

During and following his long connection with Camperdown, Mills himself trained and attained certification with the International Athletics Association and the International Olympics Committee as a sprint trainer and from 1987 until 2009 served as national coach for Jamaica. In this capacity he can claim at the very least, partial responsibility for the maturing of the Jamaican Track and Field project, which has for a long time been hovering just below the pinnacle of success, but since Beijing has flowered in full glory.

There is little doubt, however, Chancellor, that while we can truly speak of a collective effort with brilliant contributions on both the women's and men's sides of the sport, the leading personality in the efflorescence of Jamaican athletics is Dr the Honourable Usain Bolt. The big man himself, perhaps understanding the special talents resident in Mills, decided to adopt him, following a disappointing performance at the 2004 Athens Olympics. The union was transformational. Bolt gave him his loyalty and Mills gave him that special touch which extended far beyond the physical dimension. The result was Bolt's total domination of world sprinting in Beijing, the World Championships in Berlin and most recently in London.

What then are these special qualities? What accounts, for instance, for the recent trip of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of New Zealand to Jamaica, to self-confessedly ferret out Jamaica's coaching secrets? Mills himself, in one of his rare moments of candour, offers a possible answer: "My attitude to coaching is not one-dimensional. It is also geared towards acquiring life skills. From that standpoint, whoever I've trained, I've tried to get them to understand the skills and values in life, so that they not only fulfil their potential as athletes but are also balanced people."

Undoubtedly there is more; and who would blame this magician for keeping some of his tricks to himself? What is, however, certain, is that his magic works, evident in the roll call of his Racers Track Club, located right here at the Mona Bowl, led by Bolt, Blake, Weir, Aileen Bailey, Rosemarie Whyte, a slew of Caribbean athletes, among them Kim Collins of St Kitts also Daniel Bailey of Antigua and new stars on the horizon, like the promising Kemar Bailey Cole.

Chancellor, before I make the unfortunate transition from citation sprints to middle distances, I call on you by the power vested in you by the Senate and Council of

The University of the West Indies, to confer upon Mr Glen Mills the degree of
Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*.

Mona Campus
November 2012