

Nero, Perreira lead

UWI marathon charge

RACHAEL KING

Yeisy Yeyei Alvarez of Venezuela returns to defend her title while a new champion will be crowned among the men at today's running of the 2017 edition of the University of the West Indies Sport and Physical Education Centre (UWI SPEC) International Half-Marathon, starting at 5.30 am.

The 13.1 miles route remains unchanged with the race continuing along the traffic-free Priority Bus Route (PBR) to the La Resource junction in D'Abadie, before doubling back to the UWI SPEC.

Last year's men's champion Hillary Kiptanui Too of Kenya will not defend his title, leaving the way open for the previous race second place finisher Cuban Richer Perez to capture the top spot and the US\$2,000 winner's prize.

The women's champion collects the same amount and in this edition T&T's Tonya Nero, who is in great form this season, is back at the 14th staging of the event, to make a run for the top prize.

Nero will be hoping to turn the tables on Alvarez, who she followed to the line last year.

The Venezuelan then had won in one hour, 17 minutes and 59 seconds. Nero clocked 1:18.41 and placed 12th overall. T&T's Lindsay Mies finished a distant third in 1:36.53.

Nero will be joined by a number of T&T's best women distance runners including Samantha Shukla, T&T Triathlon and Duathlon champion Jenna Ross who has qualified for the 2018 World Ironman Championships, Boston Marathon-bound Sjaelan Evans, Salina Pouchet and Christine Regis.

Of the local men that will be in action are Richard Jones, Collin Perreira and veteran Curtis Cox in



T&T long distance runner Tonya Nero. PICTURE QUAD-CITY TIMES BIX 7



Collin Perreira...TTARP 5K men's winner.

a course that will be complete with markers and water stops at every mile for the running convenience of the athletes from around the world including the Caribbean, USA, Latin America and Europe.

Among the overseas contin-

gent facing the starter are Kenyan Mercy Chebwogen, the 2014 IAAF World Junior Championships gold medallist in the 3,000m, Laritza Milacatl of Mexico, who is the wife of Perez and Katerina Cabello of Venezuela.

The 1,300 local and international athletes will compete for over TT\$150,000 in cash prizes and hampers, including specific categories for the 15-19 age group to 80 and over. Prizes are distributed in men's and women's categories ranging from TT\$500 to TT\$1,000. Categories are also available for differently abled athletes and physically challenged athletes.

Same as last year, the race will be electronically timed and any records broken in this AIMS certified, and International Amateur Athletics Federation (IAAF) accredited race will be recognised worldwide.