

Bahamian Swimmers Competing at World University Games 2007 Thammaat University, Bangkok Thailand

The Bahamas Swimming Federation has sent three swimmers to represent the Bahamas at the 24th Summer Universiade Bangkok 2007. The 2007 Universiade is the biggest ever with over 10,000 competitors expected from 151 countries and by numbers alone this event is second only to the Olympics.

Nikia Deveaux, Alana Dillette, Vereance Burrows and Coach Shawn Neely arrived in Bangkok on August 4th after traveling 17 ½ hours from New York to Bangkok via the North Pole. The swimmers will compete in a total of eleven events at the Thammasat University Aquatic Center from August 9th through to August 14th. The swimming competition is a FINA sanctioned Olympic qualifying event for Beijing 2008.

The Universiade is an international multi-sport and cultural festival, organized for university students by the International University Sports Federation (FISU). The Universiade is often referred to in English as the World University Games or World Student Games.

The Universiade started in 1959 and is staged every two years in a different city and consists of 12 compulsory sports (athletics, basketball, fencing, football, gymnastics, judo, swimming, diving, water polo, table tennis and volleyball) and up to three optional sports chosen by the host country. This year's optional events are golf and badminton.

The Bahamian swimmers are looking forward to the competition which is anticipated to be a very fast meet with over 500 competitors from 60 countries and 600 including the USA, Australia, Canada, South Africa, Britain, Germany, Russia and China.

“We are all looking to swim personal best times and hope that the competition at this meet will push us all closer to the Olympic cuts. To have the opportunity to compete at these games is excellent and will it will definitely be a fast meet with most of the top swimming nations in attendance.”

The momentum is gathering pace here at the Athletes Village as more countries arrive every day. The 2007 Universiade motto is “All Become One” and with the participants youthfulness, energy and determination it is hoped all competitors and officials will all be able to leave these Games with a better understanding, appreciation and tolerance of differences between nations and their people.