

# Canadian paralympic Dolfo pleased with T13 performance

BY GARY KINGSTON, POSTMEDIA NEWS SEPTEMBER 1, 2012



LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM: SEPTEMBER 1, 2012 - Canadian Paralympic athlete Braedon Dolfo crosses the finish line in the Men's 100M Final at the London 2012 Paralympic Games on September 1, 2012. The world's second largest sporting event takes place between August 29 and September 9, 2012.

**Photograph by:** Larry Wong , Postmedia News

LONDON – South African 'Blade Runner' Oscar Pistorius may get the majority of attention on the Paralympic track, but the fastest man in London for the 2012 Games is Ireland's Jason Smyth.

The visually-impaired 25-year-old broke his own world record for the T13 class by clocking a time of 10.46 seconds Saturday in winning the gold medal.

Cuban Luis Felipe Gutierrez took the silver in a season-best time of 11.02, while Jonathan Ntutu of South Africa was third in 11.03.

And in an encouraging note for Canada, 18-year-old Paralympic rookie Braedon Dolfo of Langley, B.C., was seventh in 11.27, just off his personal best and Canadian record 11.26 which he ran in Friday's heats.

“To finish seventh in the world is a blessing,” said Dolfo, who was born in St. Vincent and the Grenadines and has glaucoma and chronic uveitis.

“It's just amazing to get on the same track as [Smyth]. To be able to run with him and the other guys that came here, what a great stage to run on. Can't be any happier.”

While Usain Bolt once again owned the Olympic stage last month in the marquee 100 metres, the Paralympics serves up a dozen 100-metre champions given its wide range of disability classifications that everything from arm and leg amputees to the visually impaired to wheelchair racers.

Canadian Earle Connor, for instance, a single above the knee amputee who runs on a carbon fibre blade like the double amputee Pistorius uses, won 100-metre gold in Beijing in 2008 in the T42 class with a time of 12.32 seconds. Also a gold medalist in Sydney in 2000, Connor owns the world record in the distance with a time of 12.08 seconds.

Smyth, who trains in the U.S. with American sprint star Tyson Gay, has twice reached the semifinals of the able-bodied European championships and just failed to qualify for the London Olympics after finals after running 10.22 seconds.

That was not recognized as a T13 world record, however, because it came in an able-bodied competition.

Dolfo, who is headed to Trinity Western University when he returns home after the Paralympics, says he's encouraged by the fact he was easily the youngest guy in a field that included a 34-year-old Russian and a 31-year-old Brazilian.

“I do definitely,” he said. “Since I'm the youngest, by the time I get to my peak, half these guys [in the final] will have finished their prime. I'm just ready to take their place and see what I can do from there.

“Jason Smyth set a really high standard for everybody. He's like the Usain Bolt of the para.”

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