

Mitchell Places Fourth in Heat, Eleventh Overall

Written by Bryan Powell
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A day after running a personal all-time best 20.47, former WCU track & field sprinter Manteo Mitchell competed in the semifinals of the 200-meter dash tonight at the 2012 United States Olympic Trials held at Hayward Field in Eugene, Oregon. Needing to finish in the top two in his heat or run one of the next two fastest times overall, Mitchell placed

fourth in the first heat, which was good enough for the eleventh fastest time overall with his time of 20.84. Recent Florida State University runner - the recent NCAA 200-meter champion - ran the fastest time of the day at 20.43. Isiah Young of Ole Miss ran a 20.45 while the 2004 Olympic Gold Medalist and the 2008 Olympic Silver Medalist Shawn Crawford ran the third fastest time in 20.48.

Even though Mitchell did not qualify in the 200m, Mitchell will go to London with the opportunity to represent the United States in the 4x400-meter relay. The 2012 Olympic Games begin in London with competition starting on Friday, August 3. The men's 400-meter dash begins on Day 2 with round one starting at 10:35 am. The first round of the 4x400-meter relay takes place on Day 7, August 9, at 11:35 am. The finals will be on the second to last day of the Olympics, August 10, on Friday evening at 9:20 pm.

Mitchell became Western Carolina track & field's first athlete to don the Red, White and Blue of the USA when he was a member of the world champion indoor 4x400-meter relay team. Only three other Catamounts have participated in Olympic trials including All-Americans Von Ross (women's long jump) and Tony McKinney (men's 400-meter hurdles), as well as Richard Rowe, who qualified to represent Jamaica in 1988 in the 800-meter run. However, the country then decided to only bring sprinters to the 1988 Olympics in Seoul, South Korea. If Mitchell does indeed run in the 4x400m relay, he will be the first Catamount to compete in the Olympic Games.

Photo Courtesy: Manteo Mitchell, WCU Athletics