

Representing Canada has always been a dream for me. As a kid I imagined wearing the maple leaf on my uniform and being the fastest sprinter ever. At 18, I sat with my mom on the couch and watched Usain Bolt break the world record at the 2008 Olympics. In her thick Ghanaian accent, she said, “Sammy, you can do it, that can be you!” I was inspired by the run, motivated by the Olympics and determined to make my mom proud.

As a second-year university student late into the sprinting game, I spent every waking moment in the weight room, training outside on the frozen soccer fields of Calgary, Alberta and visualizing myself competing with the best. Little did I realize I would be going on to represent Canada at 3 World Championships, 3 World University Games and the 2018 Commonwealth Games in Gold Coast, Australia. And to think that my first World Championship race ever was against Olympic Champion Usain Bolt!

I qualified for the 2010 Delhi Games and most recently attended The Commonwealth Games in the Gold coast 2018. These Games were instrumental in my development as an elite sprinter. I love these Games – the intense and high level of competition, all in a spirit of friendship and love of sport. Canadian sprint legends like Harry Jerome, Bruny Surin and Desai Williams all got their start there– and knowing that Canadian athletes may lose this opportunity, or may need to finance their own way to the games, is deeply saddening. Yes, with severe government funding cuts to its budget, Commonwealth Games Canada cannot afford to fund the team to the next Games, Birmingham 2022.

When I learned of this, I decided to take action and have started a fundraising page to raise monies to help fund the Canadian Team at Birmingham 2022. I am sharing my story to see if we can get many to support these amazing individuals in their quest. Athletes should not have to pay to represent Canada, period.

You can find the fundraising page at <https://commonwealthgames.crowdchange.co>. I am hoping to make as many people aware of this as possible.

The Commonwealth Games gave me the opportunity to be a part of something bigger than sprinting – and as active athlete council member I am determined to keep the games running for past, present and future Canadian athletes across the country.

I finished second in the 2019 “Amazing Race”, an unbelievable experience which was inspiring in my quest to be Canada’s fastest once again. Now we are involved in an “amazing race” of a different kind – one to help others represent Canada in their race to Birmingham 2022. I ask you today to consider helping me spread the word – help us ensure no athlete will have to pay out of their own pocket to represent Canada at the next Commonwealth Games, Birmingham 2022.

Sincerely,

Sam Effah  
2-Time Canadian 100m Champion  
Commonwealth Games Canada Council Member  
Amazing Race Canada 2019 Runner up  
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