

## Usain Bolt: Refused to be Educated Anywhere, Unless it was in His Homeland



Usain Bolt was born on August 21, 1986 in a small town in the parish of Trelawny, Jamaica, his parents Wellesley and Jennifer Bolt were owners of a small rural grocery store. He was born with scoliosis, a curvature of the lower spine. In an interview with ESPN Magazine in 2011 he said, “My spine is really curved bad. But if I keep my core and back strong, the scoliosis doesn’t really bother me.”

As a child, he enjoyed playing cricket. But they were so poor that he would play in the dirt road with an orange for the ball and a banana tree stump for the wicket. In high school, his cricket and track coaches

got together and convinced Usain to run track. His coach, Pablo McNeil a former Olympian helped Usain excel. When he was only 17, broke both the 200- and 400-meter records in the Jamaican High School Championships. At 18, he ran the 200-meter in under 20 seconds.

Several American colleges offered Usain full scholarships. He quickly turned them all down without hesitation. He was proud of his homeland and refused to be educated anywhere else. So, he attended the University of Technology in Jamaica, as his professional training ground. He said that the university’s primitive track and dated weight room had served him well in his amateur years and it will continue to do so.

He broke the world record for the 100-meters with a run of 9.72 seconds 3 months before the Summer Olympics where he won three gold medals in the 100 meters (9.69 seconds), 200 meters (19.30 seconds), and 4x100 meter relay (37.10 seconds), all world-record times.

Usain was criticized for how he finished the 100 meters: easing up to raise his arms and pound his chest in celebration even before he crossed the finish line. So, the next year, in Berlin, he ran the 100 meters in a stunning 9.58 for a new record, more than a tenth of a second faster than anyone else had ever run the race. In 2012 he again won Olympic gold in the 100 meters, the 200

meters and the 4x100 relay at the Summer Games in London. Four years later Bolt was back at the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, again winning gold in the 100-meter, 200-meter and 4x100 relay races. He thus became the first sprinter to win all three golds in three straight Olympics.

Usain Bolt retired from track and field in 2017 after finishing third in the 200 meters in the world championships. As impressive as his accomplishments were on the track, his foundation has built and provided supplies including computer equipment and refurbished playgrounds for rural schools in Jamaica. He has donated medical equipment to the maternity and emergency wards to hospitals in Jamaica, and he hosts an annual Christmas Treat for kids in his hometown area of Sherwood Content, Trelawny.

No matter how important the race, Usain never seemed to be stressed or off centered. He would always handle new issues one at a time. Most people don't know that since high school Usain's coaches always criticized him for not training as hard as he could. His response was, "If you take life too seriously, it will take you." #drnewt #blackhistory

