

# American Women Run Away with Gold in the 4x100-Meters. American Men Settle for Silver.



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In another men's relay hindered by a butchered handoff exchange, the U.S. settled for a silver medal in Saturday's 4x100-meter relay. They finished in 37.55 seconds.

Canada won gold in 37.48 seconds, and Britain finished in third place with a time of 37.83 seconds.

The home crowd at Hayward Field seemed to be holding their breath as the U.S. team of Christian Coleman, Noah Lyles, Elijah Hall and Marvin Bracy passed the baton, seemingly in fear of mistakes that have become notorious for American men's relay teams.

The race was progressing smoothly for the U.S. until the final handoff. Hall struggled to get the baton to anchor leg Bracy, and Hall fell over after making the pass, costing the team valuable time that Canada capitalized on to win the gold. Andre De Grasse of Canada held off Bracy, and sprinted through the finish line with his hands raised.



Elijah Hall struggled to get the baton to anchor leg Marvin Bracy, and Hall fell over after making the pass. Aleksandra Szmigiel/Reuters

Hall said he would need to “look at the film” to decipher exactly what went wrong in the handoff.

“It’s bittersweet,” Bracy said. “When you sweep the 100 and the 200, you expect to come out here and perform better.”

The U.S. relay, which has been highly maligned in recent years for errors at the top levels, was running without 100-meter world champion Fred Kerley, who suffered an injury in the 200-meter preliminary heats. But the relay still featured four of the ten fastest men in the world this year, and they were expected to take the gold.

The second-place finish was particularly disappointing because it came just moments after the U.S. women's 4x100 relay sent the crowd into a frenzy. The team of Melissa Jefferson, Abby Steiner, Jenna Prandini, and Twanisha Terry got the baton around the track without any hiccups in 41.14 seconds, for the third fastest time ever.

The win was a surprise, as Jamaica, who swept the women's 100-meters and won Olympic gold last summer, was expected to run away with this event. But a poor first handoff set the Jamaicans back, and Shericka Jackson wasn't able to track down Terry before the finish line.

"You could have the four fastest women, but if you don't have chemistry and the baton doesn't move through the exchange zone, then what are you doing?" Terry said.

While the women were not favored in the 4x100, they have thrived at global championships. Saturday night's win was the U.S. women's second 4x100 world title in the last three championship years, and the team has won gold in the event at two of the last three Olympic Games. The U.S. team finished in second place behind Jamaica at the Tokyo Olympics.



Terry, the anchor leg, celebrates the U.S. upset in the 4x100-meter relay. Jim Watson/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images

The U.S. men, on the other hand, have not won Olympic gold in the event since 2000. In the five world championships between 2007 and 2019, the U.S. was disqualified twice, didn't make it to the finish line in 2011 after Darvis Patton collided with Britain's anchor leg, and won two silver medals.

At last summer's Olympics, the relay team had one of its most embarrassing performances in recent memory when the men failed to make it out of the preliminary heats. There was no dropped baton or illegal handoff, they simply did not get the baton around the track quickly enough.

Trayvon Bromell, who went into the Olympics with the fastest 100-meter time in the world, got the relay off to a slow start. Then a handoff miscue between Olympic silver medalist Fred Kerley and Ronnie Baker cost the relay seconds from the second to the third leg. Anchor leg Cravon Gillespie sped to third place, which would have automatically qualified the team for the finals, but he couldn't keep pace. The men finished sixth in the preliminary heat.

The disappointing finish drew criticisms from many, including Carl Lewis, one of the most decorated American track and field athletes in history.

"The USA team did everything wrong in the men's relay," Lewis tweeted after the Olympic race.