

Payne not unhappy with finish

By Bill McGrotha
Democrat sports editor

LOS ANGELES - Marita Payne had wanted more.



Payne

"Anybody that comes this far hopes to touch a medal — yes!" said the Florida State senior after finishing fourth in the finals of the Olympic 400-meter race Monday in the Coliseum.

The race was won by America's Valerie Brisco-Hooks in the Olympic-record time of 48.83, and Jacksonville's Chandra Cheesborough won the silver in 49.05.

Payne ran the race in 49.91, her best time ever in the event and also a Canadian record, but .49 of a second behind bronze-medalist Kathryn Cook of Great Britain.

Born in Barbados, Payne has lived in Canada since age 9 and is running in these Olympics under the Canadian flag.

"I tried my hardest," said Payne. "I don't think I would change anything. Oh, maybe I would start my kick a little bit earlier."

"But I'm pretty happy with what I accomplished. I think right now those that finished ahead of me are stronger than I am, better than I am. But in a couple of years . . ."

A crowd of about 90,000 packed the Coliseum for the afternoon and evening track action.

"You hear that big roar from a crowd like that," said Payne, smiling, "and it just makes you want to go faster and faster."

She was happy with every phase of her preparation, Payne indicated. The Los Angeles climate, with its smog, seemed no problem.

"I trained in the heat and humidity of Tallahassee and that can be pretty rough," she said.

Out here, Gary Winckler, her FSU track coach, was on hand to further assist her. "That helped," said Payne, "He is just like a big brother to me."