



Azle Malinao-Alvarez Emerald
With help from assistant coach Tony Veney, sprinter and long jumper Howard Moore is focused on achieving faster times.

Moore

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"It stopped my training for about a month. With my injuries, doctors didn't want me to exert too much energy."

According to sprinting coach Tony Veney, Moore's training program was delayed by five weeks. But despite the time off the track, Veney said Moore is exactly where he needs to be.

"His PR is within reach," Veney said. "Running in the 46-second range puts him in the top eight of the Pacific-10 Conference. Once he gets into the final, it's anybody's race."

Moore's personal best came in the first outdoor meet of his sophomore season, when he captivated Traktown, U.S.A., with a time of 46.83 seconds in the 400-meter dash.

Back then, Moore was content running for then-head-coach Bill Dellinger. But Dellinger, who'd planned on leaving his position after Moore's senior season, announced his retirement from coaching due to health reasons.

The new coach was Martin Smith — and assistant coach Veney.

"It was kind of a shock," Moore said. "I was entering my junior year. It was like the halfway point, and I'd just started getting in my groove, and then a new coach comes. A new coach is like a new program."

Partly because of the coaching change, Moore said his junior outdoor season was his toughest yet.

He was hampered by injuries and didn't have a strong showing in the 400 until the opening round of the Pac-10 Championships.

Since then, Moore has adjusted to his new coach, and his confidence has returned.

"I'm starting to get into my groove with Veney, and I'm starting to come around," Moore said. "Coach Veney knows me better than coach Dellinger knew me."

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UO sprinter

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Eyes on the prize

Moore credits his father, Thomas, for giving him the motivation to keep his head up and compete, despite his struggles with injuries. The talent seems to run in the family — his father sprinted for Kentucky and had a PR of 9.5 seconds in the 100-yard dash.

"My dad always stands 100 percent behind me, and he's always trying to get me to push myself to the absolute edge," Moore said. "I don't worry about the little things, I just keep my eyes on the ultimate goals. I want to get back in my groove faster because

of my dad."

Teammate Nat Johnson, who runs with Moore on the 4x400 relay team, believes that Moore has the heart to do so.

Johnson and Moore have a friendly rivalry going. After he and Moore complete a workout, Johnson said they often talk about how they did. One will usually say it was tough. The other usually agrees, but adds, "Yeah, but I was only going at 75 percent."

"Our joking is a positive way for us to work harder," Johnson said. "It's my way of saying 'good job,' but it's also my way of letting him know that he can go faster and I can go faster."

Moore "has great confidence," Veney said. "That's an important quality, especially in track and field where you're the only one out there, and you've got nowhere to hide."

"He doesn't run scared."

Moore is convinced that he'll break his personal best before the end of the season. In doing so, he'd move up from No. 8 on the list of Oregon's all-time fastest runners.

But with just two meets remaining before the Pac-10 Championships, Moore's going to have to fire up all cylinders to better his sophomore-season time.

No fear.

"I have a lot more confidence with my health," Moore said. "I have confidence in all the training I've done. Now it's just a matter of getting into some good races and smashing some times."

"I've been eighth for two years now — that's going to change soon."

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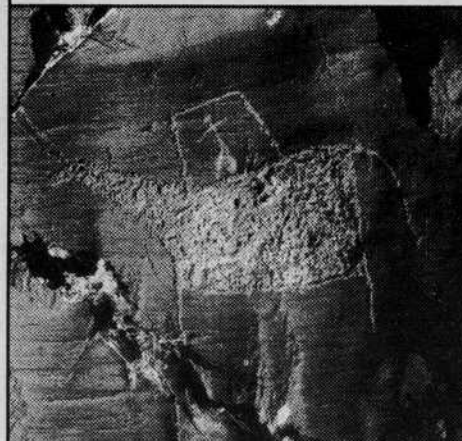
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