

# Track and field finds success

By John Howard  
Associate Sports Editor

When Head Track and Field Coach Keoni McHone steps across the concrete and onto the rubbery track on which many of his athletes train, he isn't in unfamiliar territory.

McHone is entering his fifth season as head coach at Clackamas Community College after several years as an assistant coach and having been a track and field athlete since high school. Because of his experience, McHone understands what it takes to succeed in a sport such as his, one where talent and natural ability don't always hold sway.

"Getting rid of the psychological barrier and believing in the possibility I think is the biggest key," said McHone. "The physical training, if you come out and work hard, will help, but you've got to believe that you can go above and beyond."

This unbelievably determined mindset is seen in the eyes of many of the runners, jumpers and throwers that spend their afternoons hard at work all across the track and infield. There is a noticeable difference between these athletes and those of any other sport.

Jumpers and throwers will spend hours in the weight room only to gain an inch of success, and runners routinely push their bodies so close to the breaking point that they can get sick or collapse from exhaustion.

The reason for all of this grueling work is that track and field really is a competition against yourself, not against other athletes. Because of this, progress isn't measured in wins and losses, but in an athlete's personal records, or PRs. A runner's goal is to PR every race and to have their PR be better by the end of the season than at the beginning. That, however, isn't always easy.

Success is dependent on training, which in turn is dependent on weather. Cold weather means cold athletes and therefore more opportunities for injuries, something that has been a major setback for CCC this season. It seemed that every runner, thrower and

jumper mentioned an injury either to themselves or to one of their teammates.

"I've just been trying to come back from injury," said freshman Mariah Villa, who competes in a combination of seven different events called a heptathlon. Villa admitted that not being able to train for health reasons was her biggest stumbling block and that working to return to competition required a lot of time and effort.

Despite multiple injuries and the miserable weather, which was noticeably bad even for the month of March, the team has done well at their recent meets.

"If you listen to the loudspeakers, you hear a lot of first place finishes for Clackamas," said Ryan Rau, a freshman sprinter from Oregon City High School.

Rau also mentioned that health was a problem for the team, but said that they had overcome it fairly well in a lot of different events, something that McHone echoed.

"We've been placing really well.... We had somewhere around eight event winners at our last meet out of the 40 events," said McHone, who usually tries for a well-rounded team, something that is apparent this year when he begins to mention the team's many standouts.

McHone spent several minutes highlighting different pieces of his team, including the women's sprint crew and distance runners Mary Botsford and All-American Laura Copenhagen, as well as decathlete Dominik Walker and hurdler James Ratliff, who threatens to break the school record in both the 100- and 400-meter hurdles.

"We've been pretty successful, and I've seen a lot of personal records," said McHone. "The weather hasn't really cooperated in order to get the training in and so we're a little bit behind schedule, but we're going in a positive direction."

The next home meet is scheduled for Saturday, April 23 and will be held at the Oregon City High School Stadium. Both track and field events will begin at 11 a.m. and events will continue until just after 3:30 p.m.

## Track and Field

April 16-Lewis and Clark Invitational @ Lewis and Clark College

## Baseball

April 16  
@ SW Oregon 1 pm  
April 19  
vs.Chemeketa 1 pm

## Softball

April 16  
vs. S Puget Sound 9 am  
vs.Walla Walla 11am  
April 17  
vs.Skagit Valley 10 am  
vs.Wentachee Valley  
12 pm  
April 20  
@ Mt.Hood 3 pm



## Welcome to the world, LeLand!

LeLand Erik Morrison was born on March 28. He weighed eight pounds, eight ounces and measured 21.5 inches long.

He's the son of *The Print's* sports editor Robby Morrison and his girlfriend, Kylee Montgomery.

Good luck, you guys!



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Mariah Villa practices her hurdles on April 7 on the Clackamas track. She competes in a combination of events as she tries to return from her injuries.