

sports

Trevor Bassitt running from the shadows

Move over Myles!

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“Finish what you start.” This quintessential message is something everyone has heard repeatedly throughout life. Although simple, it effectively encourages people to keep moving forward and never give up.

“I was taught that everything I do, I need to do 100% to my best ability, give it my all so I won’t have any regrets,” AU sophomore Trevor Bassitt said.

Bassitt, a sprinter/hurdler for the track and field team, began his athletic career in the seventh grade. However, he most likely would not have become the powerhouse runner he is now if not for his parents ingraining this message in his head at a young age.

“I started playing basketball and running track in seventh grade. I was a garbage sprinter at first and I was going to quit before high school,” Bassitt said. “My parents raised me to finish what you start though. They told me to try it for one year at the high school level and see how I liked it. Well, I liked it and eventually I started seeing some growth.”

Fast forward a few years from middle school, and that fateful decision to stick with what he started would lead Bassitt to become an All-American collegiate athlete and win the 4x400 event at the NCAA Division II Outdoor Nationals as a freshman.

Bassitt’s athletic career and story is a prime example of how being humble, hard working, and persevering is necessary in achieving one’s goals.

Now a sophomore, Bassitt continues to grow stronger as both an athlete and as a person.

“I’d consider him just an all around very mentally and emotionally tough human being,” AU associate head coach Ernie Clark said. “Like any of us, he’s had his ups and downs in his career, and he does a good job of fighting through them and making it look easy by the end. A lot of athletes are doubtful of their abilities and second guess themselves, he’s good at getting through all that. He never feels sorry for himself.”

Clark is in his fourth season at Ashland University, and his first

as associate head coach. Clark specializes in sprints and hurdles which has given him the ability to work closely with Bassitt.

In the 2017-2018 season Clark led Bassitt, along with fellow sprinters Channing Phillips, T.J. Elliot, and Myles Pringle to win the 4x400 at the NCAA Division II Outdoor Nationals.

“His work ethic is incredible. I put him on his own weight program over the summer that was much more difficult than other people’s. In practices he perfects drills, speed work, conditioning and he does all that without any complaints,” said Clark. “That’s the best way to get better, do everything you gotta do with a positive attitude.”

Bassitt has been alternating from both No. 1 and No. 2 times in the nation in the 200-meter dash for about half the season. As of right now, Bassitt stands at a personal record time of 21.20 seconds in the event.

Despite Bassitt’s remarkable achievements as only a sophomore, he is quick to say that his athleticism did not come easy.

“I was a late bloomer and it took me a long time to get to the place I am right now. But I think the most important thing is to just stay confident. I struggled with that last year but I’m getting a lot better now,” Bassitt said..

Bassitt explained that in his first year, he learned a lot from various role models including University of Florida sprinter Grant Holloway. However Bassitt found his most meaningful instructor in AU senior Myles Pringle.

Pringle specializes in sprints and high jump and has fourteen All-American honors. He also has won four national championship events in the 400-meter dash and one in the 4x400 relay along with Bassitt.

“Myles was already an established national champion when I came in and I tried to keep up with him to the best of my ability,” Bassitt said.

Bassitt and Pringle compete together in sprint events such as the 200-meter dash and 400-meter dash with similar competitive times.

“Trevor has to be one of the most hard working people I know,” Pringle said. “He’s someone you

would want as a friend and someone who will always have your back. He’ll help push you to be the best because he knows that you can be the best.”

Pringle went on to explain how him and Bassitt are very similar and how they guide off of each other for workouts and reps.

“Trevor’s doing what I had to do when I was a sophomore. He’s realizing that he’s one of the best in the nation, he’s realizing that he doesn’t need to compete every weekend in order to run good times or stay in shape,” Pringle said. “He’s listening to his body and learning when to run off or pull back.”

This season, Bassitt is working harder than ever to better himself as an athlete and has won two GLIAC Men’s Running Athlete of the Week awards, earning three in his career as an Eagle.

Recently, Bassitt had big success in a meet at Grand Valley State University, where he won both the men’s 200-meter dash and men’s 60 hurdles. He crossed the finish line in 21.20 seconds and 7.94 seconds, respectively. Bassitt is currently ranked second in the nation in both events.

Outside of Track and Field, Bassitt participates in Fellowship of Christian Athletes and the sport business club. He is a double major in Finance and Business Management and finds time to balance schoolwork, clubs and sports.

Recently, Bassitt was unable to compete at the 2019 GLIAC Championships on Feb. 23 due to an injury, however he was still named the men’s indoor track athlete of the year at the post-meet awards.

Bassitt is continuing to train and prepare for the 2019 NCAA Division II Indoor Championships at Pittsburg State University on Mar. 8 and is looking to secure another national championship win. He qualified to compete in the 60-meter hurdles, 200-meter dash, 400-meter dash and the 4x400 relay.

Clark too is preparing for positive results at the upcoming meet.

“For Trevor, improvement is pretty much limitless. I think he’s the type of person who can be a multiple time national champion.”

Men’s tennis carving out identity

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The Ashland University men’s tennis team is beginning to carve out an identity for themselves after winning their four straight matches in a row, defeating Walsh, Oberlin, Findlay and Ohio Wesleyan.

Assistant tennis coach Christian Hamilton said that the player’s fighting spirit has been what has really drove the team towards victory as of late.

“Every single player on our team has a fighting spirit and I think that’s what’s been giving us an edge,” Hamilton said.

While the team is currently at an all-time high, the season didn’t exactly start out the way they wanted it to.

The program was reinstated just last year after the program had been in limbo for nearly 25 years with a match not being played since 1995.

For Hamilton, the reinstatement of the program really was a complement to the women’s tennis team already in place, he said.

“The team has been great with being a complement to the women’s program,” Hamilton said.

“The women have kind of set the tone for expectations so the guys can see that too.”

Lexi Bolesky, the director of tennis operations, has really helped to kick start the program back up, he said.

“We have a brilliant leader here

in coach Lexi,” Hamilton said. “Her leadership has trickled down to me which has trickled down to the players. There’s an expectation.”

Besides the leadership, the arrival of a certain freshman trio has also helped to kick the program back

into gear. That trio consists of freshmen Stuart Brdicka, Colton Clark and Jordan Phelps.

These three had already shared a very close bond before joining the AU men’s tennis team since they all grew up near each other and played together at the Racquet

Club of Columbus.

“We were excited heading into this season because we were able to get a core group of talented freshman,” Hamilton said. “We had leaders who have already played from the get go. They are hungry and fighters so we were excited to get them.”

Even though they had all grown up and played tennis together, chances were originally slim that they would all end up back together again, Brdicka said.

“I honestly didn’t think that we’d all end up at the same university,” he said. “When we did, it was really exciting for all of us.”

Each player of the trio had his own set of strengths that helped to bolster an already talented roster, Hamilton said.

“Stu has a strong baseline game with great volleys and is always a weapon,” he said. “Colton has some of the best hands I’ve seen in a player and is very scrappy. Jordan is a tall guy so he has the ability to stretch the court.”



ZACH READ

AU men's tennis coach Christian Hamilton and his team watch the final game in a match against Findlay in February.

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