

sports

Myles Pringle: Lunging towards the finish line



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The crowd is on their feet, teammates are screaming, the building is shaking ... the entire indoor season has led up to this moment.

It all comes down to one race. In the final event of the 2019 NCAA Division II Indoor Championships on March 9 at Pittsburg State (Kan.), the Eagles’ men’s 4x400-meter relay team crossed the finish line in 3:10.80. This fifth place finish by one one-hundredth of a second allowed AU to acquire their first ever NCAA Division II indoor team national championship, by one point.

“This is our first one, but the men have been national runner ups four times and the women two times. This program is phenomenal and this national championship is just another part of our team’s journey. It’s all earned and deserved,” AU associate head coach Ernie Clark said.

AU senior Myles Pringle ran the third leg in the 4x400-meter relay team.

With six national titles, 17 D-II All-American awards, a myriad of USTFCCCA (U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association) awards, and a D-II event record, nobody represents the AU

track and field mantra of “earned and deserved” better than Pringle.

Growing up in Cincinnati, Pringle became interested in sports at a very young age.

“Soccer was the first team sport I participated in and that came way before track,” Pringle said “I was probably around eight and I continued to do that through my senior year of high school.”

Aside from soccer, Pringle also dabbled in baseball, golf, cross country and even figure skating.

“My mom actually went to a figure skating practice just to check it out and got me interested in it. I eventually did that competitively and enjoyed it a lot,” Pringle said. “She was a huge motivation for me and is one of the main reasons I am where I am today.”

“When I was young I just kind of raced around with friends when I was a kid and that was about it. I always liked running around in general and that led to soccer. As I got older though, my mom started to take me on runs around the block and 5k’s just for fun. I used to struggle to keep up with her at first so she was the first person I had to keep pace with,” Pringle said.

Many years after those runs around the block, Pringle ran track for Northwest high school and running turned into a passion.

Surprisingly, Pringle started as a distance runner and not a sprinter. He focused on distance his first two years at the high school level.

At the end of his sophomore year, Pringle transitioned into doing more sprint-focused events as well as high jump. By the end of his senior year of high school he had a 400-meter time of 47.30 seconds, the second best Division I time in the 400-meter.

Pringle continued to achieve throughout his collegiate athletic career including breaking the AU high jump record multiple times with a personal record jump of 2.19-meters. Most recently, he made another 400-meter accomplishment: the fastest time in Division II history (45.67 seconds).

This time by Pringle is currently the seventh fastest time in the U.S. and the 11th fastest time in the world in the 2018-2019 season.

“The thing about Myles is that he always finds a way to be successful,” Clark said. “He has a great amount of confidence, but he also understands that other athletes are gonna perform well. He doesn’t just walk in and say ‘I got this easy’.”

Although Pringle attributes a lot of his success to what he calls his “support system” of teammates, family, and especially coaches, he admits that him and Clark did not

start out on good terms.

“At first I didn’t really know how I felt about him. He got on my nerves a little in the beginning but he’s the kind of coach you gotta grow to like and appreciate,” Pringle said. “By the end of the year we got into the same sort of mindset and way

ciation of Athletic Federations), the qualifying time for the 400-meter dash is 44.90 seconds. This means that Pringle is about half-a-second away from qualifying for the trials.

“About ten years ago I stood in front of a group of people and I said ‘one day I’m going to coach



AU ATHLETICS

Myles Pringle posing with his little brother Anthony for a picture together after winning the team national championship.



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY MYLES PRINGLE

Myles Pringle high jumping at Northwest High School.

of thinking and like a ‘coach to athlete’ relationship.”

Clark began coaching at AU with a focus on sprints and hurdles the same year that Pringle began running as a freshman. Due of this, Pringle and Clark worked closely on technique and form.

“I honestly just feel honored to be his coach,” Clark said.

AU head track and field coach Jud Logan had similar words of praise for Pringle.

“Myles was multi talented from the get go in so many areas that we knew he had special talent,” Logan said. “No one could have predicted at that time that he would become the greatest 400-meter runner in D-II history.”

Logan, a four-time Olympic athlete, believes that Pringle will be able to make it to the games.

“It’s my opinion that Myles will go on to be a member of many U.S. track and field teams and will ultimately wear the colors in the Olympic Games,” he said.

Qualifying standards for the 2020 Tokyo Olympic trials were released on March 10, 2019 and according to the IAAF (International Asso-

someone to the Olympic trials.’ I know that Myles is someone who definitely has the potential to make it,” Clark said.

Pringle is excited to start his final outdoor season which starts on Mar. 22 with the Winthrop Adidas Invitational in South Carolina. Pringle has had multiple agents contact him and is planning on running professionally after graduation.

“I was always told by my mother and trainers to ‘do what you love and don’t let anything stop you’. No matter how hard it is, no matter how much doubt you have, push through and don’t let the haters stop you from doing what you love,” Pringle said “Everything happens for a reason and I try to live by that in everything I do.”