

THE MISSISSAUGA NEWS**Hurdler Charles Allen glad to be on track after injury****Declan Finucane**

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Hurdler Charles Allen was just happy to be on the track at last weekend's Canadian Track and Field Championships in Winnipeg.

After racing to a silver medal in the 110-metre hurdles, he was ecstatic.

Only three weeks earlier, Allen, 28, a member of the Mississauga Track and Field Club (MTFC) and defending Canadian gold medalist in the 110-metre hurdles, was in so much pain from a leg injury sustained earlier this year he thought he'd have to hang up his racing shoes for the season.

"I was happy to finish the (Winnipeg) race in one piece," said Allen, who has been suffering from a hyperextended knee, a particularly painful injury for a hurdler.

At a June 26 meet in Prague, Allen said he was running in tremendous pain.

"I was running injured, feeling pain with every single hurdle," he said. "I thought my season was done."

Not quite. Allen not only ran in Winnipeg, his second-place showing helped secure a spot on the Canadian team that will compete at the World Track and Field Championships Aug. 5-15 in Helsinki, Finland.

Fellow MTFC members Toyin Olupona, Anson Henry and Pierre Browne, all sprinters, will join Allen at the worlds.

"I was hoping to repeat as Canadian champion, but second place was good...the Nationals were a big boost for me heading to the worlds," said Allen, who was sixth at last year's Olympic Games in Athens.

"(The injury) was a reminder to me that no matter how fast or how good you are as an athlete, everybody (is susceptible to injury)."

MTFC head coach Marc Christie was impressed with his hurdler's resolve.

"He's been hurt most of the year and has had only six weeks of training, so to do what he did in Winnipeg and make the national team, that's very impressive," said Christie.

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