



HOME STAR FORUM CLASSIFIED C



Sport

E-mail this story

Search form with radio buttons for Jamaica Star and Web, and a Search button.

STAR NEWS



PRODIGAL, WIFE IN COURT

STAR SPORTS



Champs Jamaica dominate T&T

STAR ENTERTAINMENT



Chi Ching says no wedding bling

STAR COMMENTS



Inauguration day hypocrites

STAR TELL ME PASTOR



I THINK HE IS USING ME

STAR FEATURE



Clarendon College overcomes STETHS

# Sprinter takes it slow - Omar Brown coming back from injury layoff

GORDON WILLIAMS, STAR Writer



Omar Brown - File

WINTER GARDENS, Florida

**Some days are good. Others better. A few, though, are bad enough to test even his toughest resolve.**

Unpredictable days dot the road to recovery for Jamaican sprinter Omar Brown. An ankle injury a couple years ago carved out a vital chunk of his track career. It knocked the Trelawny native from the path of promise, earned by a 2006 Commonwealth Games gold medal in the 200 meters, into a pool of questions about his future.

Surgery last September corrected the problem. A [bone](#) spur, which made the sprain worse, was removed. But the scar tissue left behind still causes [pain](#). Now progress towards Brown's return to competition, and his goal of making it to this summer's IAAF World Championships in Athletics in [Berlin](#), Germany, is sometimes plagued by ups and downs. Those around him share his frustration.

"Omar will do a good [workout](#) today and tomorrow he's really sore and can hardly do anything," explained wife Veronica Campbell-Brown, a world and two-time Olympic [sprint](#) champion. " ... The cut is fully healed, but because of the scar tissue he is

## STAR HEALTH



His ex-wife died from AIDS, now I'm devastated

not getting all his flexibility back.

" ... It's just a matter of luck," she added. "He'll feel better today and his foot feels good and he can do a really good workout. Or it could be banged up. A next day, it could be good to go. Sometimes you have to sit down for a day or two days because you never can tell ... "

Sit down, but not out. Brown isn't close to giving up. Yet, even in a sport that is all about speed, the 26-year-old is forced to take things slow. This year is pivotal. He wants to be fully ready for Jamaica's trials in June. The World Championships comes in August. The lucrative European [circuit](#) awaits. So, he endures the regular massages that break up the scar tissue. Slow-maintenance running and strength exercises are preparing him to take on more strenuous workouts.

Yet, if Brown is ahead in one area, it's his anxiety to get back into action, especially after witnessing Jamaica's exciting sprinting display at the Beijing Olympics. He feels the need to make up lost ground.

"Everybody performed well last year and I didn't perform, so I'm hungry and eager to go out there and compete and run," he said.

### Faulty technique

His last race was at the 2008 trials, where he hurt a hamstring. That injury stemmed from faulty technique traced back to the old one. In the rush to come back, he had made matters worse.

"Because of my ankle I was putting a lot of pressure on my hamstring and I was putting pressure on different parts of my body," Brown explained. "So I was just getting hurt."

It shut down Brown's season. But according to his coach Lance Brauman, Brown has to make up to rebound. "He's a fierce competitor," Brauman said.

Brown plans to return to the track in both the 200 and 400 metres this season. His support system, which includes his wife, coach, friends and management team, has been strong enough to help him erase doubts about his injury. Brown said his mind is clear so the rest of his task should be simple.

"Getting back to running is not really hard," he said. "(The injury) doesn't affect me mentally because I've had a lot of people around me to share with."

Achieving the results he would need to call his 2009 comeback a success could prove more difficult. Brown counts an ideal season as making Jamaica's team to Berlin and reaching the final of his event. His fastest time in the 200 metres, clocked in May 2006, is 20.33 seconds, more than a full second slower than countryman Usain Bolt's world record run of 19.30 in [Beijing](#).

Yet Bolt's incomparable performance aside, Brown's best would have been good enough to earn fifth place in the 2008 Olympic final, following the disqualification of Churandy Martina and Wallace Spearmon.

### **Deliberate grind**

These days, Brown's road back is more a deliberate grind than a sprint. The former University of Arkansas star, now residing with his wife in Florida, accepts there is no quicker route. He won't run indoors and there is no definite date for his first competitive race. There are still some questions about when he will be fully ready, but his coach is satisfied he is on the right track.

"Everything is going well at this point," said Brauman. "We'll know more as time goes on ... First and foremost we need to get him back to form in the 200 and, as time goes on, you know maybe, if he's ever going to be in a situation to do some doubling, probably look at more two/four (200 and 400 metres) at this point, with 200 being his focus event."

Brown is content with the small steps. No need to dash now.

"This year I'm just focusing on getting healthy," he said, "getting my ankle right, getting my body right and start to compete again."