
Raidel Acea: From Montreal 76 to Veracruz 2014. Just got to believe!

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He is not Christ the Redeemer, but he opened his hands when finishing the race as if he had arrived at Heaven's doors. To Raidel Acea, it meant to reign the 400m in the Xalapa's Heriberto Herrera Stadium with a personal best of 45.36s. He also qualified for IAAF World Championship Beijing 2015 with such a result.

He said: "Thanks for everything" after I congratulated him via Facebook, as if I had advised him how to get used to Mexico's altitude and pressed the turbo button in the last 100m.

The goodbye brought the figure of Alberto Juantorena at the Olympic Games Montreal 1976. "The professor gave me one piece of advice: You just got to believe". Just like that, my self-confidence was very high. I started running and attacked after the first 200m. The fuel was enough to finish the race and I felt myself in other galaxy. That is why my arms were open."

"I think another Juantorena emerged", he said smiling. Physically speaking, they are very similar. Acea is tall. His long steps are noticeable...I remember Juantorena when I saw Acea competing, differences aside.

What few people know is that Acea was an 800m runner. And he only ran 400m in some relays.

Why you changed?

I was always good in some stretches. I decided to try and you see the result. It seems I have some skills. I knew that aerobic ability could benefit me in every sense in the altitude.

Relay, tomorrow?

Yes. Our goal is to sweep. We show our potential in the Relay World Cup this year. Our relay is strong: William Collazo, Omar Cisneros or Osmaidel Peillicier, Yoandys Lescay (silver medal 45.56s), and me. I will run the second

400m as if the finishing line would be at heaven again. If we win, I will open my arms and hug my fellows.

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