

Ottey has sights set on World Champs

She may have slowed down, but Jamaican sprint legend Merlene Ottey has no intention of stopping, as she targets the World Championships in Daegu this summer, and shockingly perhaps, even an eighth Olympic Games in London next year.

The sprinter, who turned 51 last month, may be far from the days when she produced a blistering 10.74 seconds for a personal best in Milan 15 years ago, a mark only recently bettered as the national record by Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce's 10.73 posted at the World Championships in Berlin two years ago, but still enjoys a spot on her adopted country Slovenia's 4x100m relay team. Many expected, as they often have, that Ottey's appearance at the European Athletics Championships in Barcelona last year, where she struggled while anchoring the Slovenia relay team, would have been her last major meet. However, some 30-plus years since she first appeared at the Moscow Olympic Games, the sprinter is hoping the team can secure a spot in Daegu, later this year and the next Olympics. Faulty changeover The relay team was recently disqualified at the First League division of the European Team Championships at Izmir in Turkey two weeks ago, due to a faulty changeover. The age-defiant sprinter, who was honoured at the RJR Sports Foundation's Sportsman and Sportswoman of the year award ceremony earlier this year, still hopes the team will get things together in time to qualify for the World Championships. Ottey has the most women's World Championships medals with 14. "If we qualify, I would be happy to be part of the Slovenian relay team in Daegu [at the World Championships in South Korea in August] and in London [at the 2012 Olympics]" Ottey was quoted as saying on Uk-based website The Independent (www.independent.co.uk). The athlete has also targeted a fourth world record for the over-50s category, despite suffering injuries in the last few years, vowing to reduce her current best of 11.67 seconds to somewhere in the region of 11.5.