

## Five Post Region Qualifying Marks in Day Three at Robison Invitational

by Kyle Chilton, BYU Athletic Communications



Nachelle Stewart registered a NCAA regional-qualifying time of 54.46 in the women's 400 meters. BYU Photo/Mark Philbrick

PROVO, Utah (April 24, 2009) – Day three of the 2009 BYU Robison Invitational yielded several excellent results for BYU as five athletes achieved regional qualifying marks on Friday.

Four members of the men's team had NCAA regional qualifying times.

"We had a great day today," BYU men's track coach Mark Robison said. "There were several fabulous events and terrific qualifying marks. There have been a lot of improvements and we're looking forward to tomorrow."

Bryan Payne registered the second-best time of the day in the 400 meter hurdles (51.71) and he was followed by Lance Walker (51.95), Rob Skidmore (52.07) and Nate Page (53.51). Walker and Skidmore both qualified for NCAA regionals with their times. All four will compete in the final on Saturday.

The men dominated the 800 meter final as the Cougars claimed the top four spots. Leading the way with a regional-qualifying performance was Brian Weirich, who finished with a time of 1:49.95. Ketih Jensen — whose time also met regional qualifying standards — followed in second (1:50.28) and

Justin Hedin (1:50.50) and Drew Foster (1:51.11) took third and fourth, respectively.

BYU had one of its most dominant efforts of the afternoon come in the men's 1 mile with Jacob Gustafsson claiming first place (4:08.94) and Jason Witt taking second (4:09.57). Witt's time qualifies him for NCAA regional competition while Gustafsson qualified earlier in this season. Robert Harrison (4:11.58) and Travis Fuller (4:11.60) came in fifth and sixth, respectively to give the Cougars four runners in the top six.

Five Cougars qualified for the men's 400 meter final to be run on Saturday. Rhyan Atrice had the third-best time overall (47.76) while Kevin Biesinger (48.07) was fourth, Kevin Ahlstrom (48.34) was fifth, McKade Brady (48.67) was sixth and Rob Skidmore took eighth (48.69).

Daniel Lawson turned in an event-winning performance in the discus with a throw that measured 52.49 meters (172 feet 2.5 inches). The Cougars had the top-two finishers in the pole vault with Tanner Emrich and Brad Ellerston tying for first with vaults of 15 feet 7 inches. Aaron Powell took second in the long jump with a leap of 7.15 meters (23 feet 5.5 inches).

The women had one regional qualifier and several event champions.

"The weather was great and we are excited with today's results to say the least," BYU women's track coach Craig Poole said. "We qualified a number of people today. Over the next two weeks we will be competing even better. The athletes did great."

Nachelle Stewart registered a NCAA regional-qualifying time and the best mark of the day at 54.46 in the women's 400 meters to qualify for Saturday's final. Samantha Tayne also qualified for Saturday's final with a time of 57.52 in the 400 meters.

Cecily Lemmon won the 5000 meter race with a time of 17:08.39, 37.51 seconds ahead of the second-place finisher. Sarah Yingling turned in a strong performance in the women's 800 meter final, taking third with a time of 2:11.31.

BYU claimed another event title as Shrissa Thayer won the women's shot put. Her throw of 14.23 meters (46 feet 8.25 inches) just beat Spela Hus of Utah State (14.22 meters). Three Cougars followed — Cassandra Woodall, Tianna Illi and Tamra Keys — to claim third, fourth and fifth places.

Piret Kuresson maintained BYU's dominance in the field events with a javelin throw of 48.08 meters (157 feet 9 inches) — a personal-best mark.

In the women's 100 meter hurdles four Cougars advanced to the final as Diane Stewart posted the second-best time (14.21) and Mindy Robins (14.28), Fatima Makakala (14.36) and Alyssa Christensen (14.44) finished fourth, fifth and sixth, respectively. Stewart added a time of 1:01.33 in the 400 meter hurdles — the third-best mark of the day — to advance to the finals.

Mindy Neeley was the top finisher in the women's 200 meter heats with a time of 24.28 to advance to final on Saturday.

The Robison Invitational will conclude on Saturday at Clarence F. Robison Track.