



Four Cougars Make BYU History

by Melissa Soderberg, BYU Athletic Communications



BYU's 4x400 meter relay team earned a place in the BYU record books with a time of 3:06.60 at the NCAA National Outdoor Track and Field Championships. BYU Photos/Mark Philbrick

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark. (June 11, 2009) –It was another successful day for the BYU men's track and field team as four athletes made BYU history after day two of the NCAA Track and Field Outdoor Championships Thursday.

"We did some good things today," said BYU men's track and field head coach Mark Robison. "The relay team ran one of the fastest times in school history and Stephan [Shay] finished better than he was ranked, so I thought we did very well. I'm really looking forward to tomorrow's performances."

The 4x400 meter relay and the 10,000 meter run brought the Cougars to McDonnell Field Thursday representing the strength of BYU track and field.

In the first event of the day for BYU, four Cougars lined up for the 4x400 meter relay in hopes of advancing to the final round.

While the final time of 3:06.60 did not advance juniors Kevin Ahlstrom, All-American Kevin Biesinger, Rob Skidmore and freshman Rhyon Atrice to the final round, the four pulled their strength to make BYU history.

“Usually I would be nervous,” said Atrice, “but this time I had a different hunger to run well. I know we did not make finals, but we made school history. We’ve had a bumpy season and still made it this far, so next year we are going to rock.”

After working all season to improve its time, the team earned its automatic bid to nationals with a regional time of 3:08.49.

“It’s kind of surreal knowing we just made history,” said Skidmore. “We ran close to two seconds faster than we had before. We never doubted we could, it was just a matter of doing it. I know BYU has a long track history; it’s an honor to be a part of it now.”

Senior Stephan Shay gave BYU additional recognition of the night. Competing in the 10,000 meter run Shay finished 17th overall with a final time of 29:43.25.

“Stephan ran very well,” said Robison. “It was a tough top ten. He came into the competition ranked 25th and finished 17th, so he did a very nice job.”

The Cougars will resume competition tomorrow as senior Bob Low enters the final round of the pole vault beginning at 3:45 p.m. CT.

Following the pole vault, senior All-American Kyle Perry and junior regional champion Richard Nelson compete in the final round of the 3000 meter steeplechase. The steeplechase is scheduled to begin at 6:40 p.m. CT.

For complete results of the NCAA Outdoor Track and Field National Championships [click here.](#)

Cougars Competing at Nationals

Name	Event	Schedule/Results
Meelis Kosk	Decathlon	Pulled out due to injury
Bob Low	Pole Vault	Advanced to finals, Fri. at 3:45 p.m.
Blaine Baker	Javelin	Finished 18th
Kyle Perry	3000m Steeplechase	Advanced to finals, Fri. at 6:40 p.m.
Richard Nelson	3000m Steeplechase	Advanced to finals, Fri. at 6:40 p.m.
McKade Brady	4x400m relay	Did not advance (3:06.60)
Rhyan Atrice	4x400m relay	Did not advance (3:06.60)
Rob Skidmore	4x400m relay	Did not advance (3:06.60)
Kevin Biesinger	4x400m relay	Did not advance (3:06.60)
Stephan Shay	10000m	Finished 17th (29:43.25)

* All Times Central