

## Cougars Land Dominant Lead

by Melissa Soderberg, BYU Athletic Communications



Senior All-American Kyle Perry placed first in the 3,000-meter steeplechase, also setting a new record at Wyoming's Louis S. Madrid track.  
BYU Photo/Jaren Wilkey

LARAMIE, Wyo. (May 15, 2009) – Going into the final day of the Mountain West Conference Outdoor Championships, the BYU men's track and field team leads the meet in first place with a team score of 84 points.

The Cougars lead Wyoming (47), New Mexico (45), Air Force (44), Colorado State (33) and TCU (16).

"I'm very pleased; we performed very well today," said BYU men's track and field head coach Mark Robison. "We looked very solid today and most of our athletes advanced to the finals, so tomorrow should be great as well. Our team has great depth and that has helped us to do very well today."

Kicking things off for the Cougars in the track events, senior All-American Kyle Perry had an incredible first-place finish in the 3,000-meter steeplechase with a time of 9:17.46, setting a new record at Wyoming's Louis S. Madrid track. The previous record was 9:30.10.

Not only did Perry land the win, but he led the way for a top three sweep for the Cougars. Richard

Nelson came in second with a time of 9:18.72 while Regan Frey finished up third in 9:21.98. All broke the previous track record.

In the finals of the 10,000-meter run, an incredible first-place finish went to senior Stephan Shay, finishing with a final time of 32:31.64. While a majority of the runners kept to a close grouping, junior Nathan Ogden pushed strong at the end to land another high placement for BYU in third with a time of 32:36.16.

Setting a new personal record and season-best mark in the long jump, sophomore Aaron Powell extended his distance to 7.16 meters (23 feet 6 inches). Also setting a new seasonal best mark was Brett Birkeland with a distance of 6.81 meters (22 feet 4.25 inches).

In the discus throw, junior Daniel Lawson battled the winds, landing in second place with a regional-qualifying mark of 53.75 meters (176 feet 4 inches).

Adding to BYU's total in the field events, junior Trevor Heiner tallied a second-place height, clearing 2.05 meters (6 feet 8.75 inches). Teammate Wes Collett followed close behind in third place with 2.00 meters (6 feet 6.75 inches).

Advancing to the finals in the 400-meter dash for the Cougars, freshman Rhyan Atrice earned a second-place time of 47.65. All-American Kevin Biesinger followed suit with 48.58, while Kevin Ahlstrom was the final Cougar to advance with a qualifying time of 49.28. Biesinger also earned a spot in the final round of the 200-meter dash with a time of 21.72 and will be the only Cougar competing in that final race.

Also receiving final-qualifying rights in the 110-meter hurdles were juniors Bryan Payne, Lance Walker and senior Nate Page. Payne qualified with a time of 14.53, while Walker followed with 14.79 and Page wrapped it up in 15.08 for the Cougars.

Giving BYU another sweep in the preliminary rounds were four athletes from the 400-meter hurdles. Payne, Rob Skidmore, Walker and Ahlstrom placed first through fourth. Payne set a Wyoming track record while also earning a regional-qualifying mark with a time of 52.03. Skidmore also beat out the past track record with a time of 52.45. In third and fourth, Walker and Ahlstrom advanced with times of 52.64 and 52.70, respectively.

In the 800-meter run, three athletes will go on to represent BYU in the final round: junior Brian Weirich, senior All-American Keith Jensen and freshman Justin Hedin. Weirich finished first for the Cougars in 1:56.32, Jensen in 1:57.32 while Hedin topped it off in 1:57.37.

The Cougars will compete again in the final day of the MWC Championships on Saturday. Events begin with the men's javelin and 4x100-meter relay at noon MT.