

## Regionals Closes Up Day One

by Melissa Soderberg, BYU Athletic Communications



Blaine Baker placed seventh in the javelin throw Friday at the NCAA West Regional meet. BYU Photo/Jaren Wilkey

EUGENE, Ore., (May 29, 2009) – In the last meet of the season before Nationals, thirty-three Cougars went to represent the No. 22 BYU men’s track and field team at the first day of the NCAA Track and Field West Regionals in Eugene, Ore., Friday.

“We had a few really good performances,” said BYU men’s track and field head coach Mark Robison. “Unfortunately we did not do as well overall as we hoped, but there were still some great marks. Tomorrow we have some very good opportunities to really step up and accomplish more of what we can do, so I’m looking forward to that.”

Kicking off the day, two Cougars opened things up for BYU in the javelin throw. Finishing in the top-10, Mountain West Conference champion sophomore Blaine Baker landed the No. 7 spot in the javelin throw with a best distance of 62.55m (205 feet 2 inches).

Following close behind was sophomore Sean Richardson in ninth, topping off the day with a top throw of 62.23m (204 feet 2 inches).

Beginning the running events, four athletes competed in the preliminary race for the 1500 meters.

Barely missing the final qualifying group by one place, senior Jacob Gustafsson finished 13th overall and first for the Cougars with a time of 3:48.42.

Freshman Travis Fuller stepped up finishing second in 3:50.06, while junior Brandon Babiracki topped off third finishing in 3:53.98.

Inching his way into the finals for the sprints was freshman standout Rhyan Atrice. Earning his ticket with a fifth-place finish, Atrice advanced in the 400 meter dash with a time of 47.43. Junior All-American Kevin Biesinger finished ninth with 48.01.

In a close competition in the 800 meter run, four Cougars ran strong in their individual heats. Placing first for the Cougars and 11th overall, freshman Justin Hedin landed the top-mark for BYU in 1:49.80. Closing in directly behind in 12th was sophomore Brian Weirich in 1:50.37.

Finishing the field events for BYU, junior Daniel Lawson battled through the shot put placing 10th with a distance of 16.92 meters (55 feet 6.25 inches).

In the final sprint race of the day, junior Bryan Payne earned the top performance for BYU and 13th overall. Payne closed in with 52.21 while junior Lance Walker slipped into 15th with a final time of 52.43.

Wrapping up day one with the 5000 meter run, two Cougars landed strong performances for BYU finishing in the top-10. Coming in eighth, senior Stephan Shay had a final time of 14:12.28. Sophomore Brandon Hebbert followed directly behind in ninth in 14:13.56.

“We were very pleased in terms of the numbers of representation,” said BYU distance coach Ed Eyestone. “Of the 33 athletes here, 18 were distance athletes. There were several very nice performances where athletes stepped up and put themselves in great positions. Tomorrow is another big day for our team and we are looking forward to representing well and finishing how we know we can.”

The Couga

rs enter day two of the West Regionals tied for 14th place with three points.

Events resume Saturday at noon PT beginning with the men’s discus. For full results of day one go to [http://www.goducks.com/fls/500/track/0809/regional/index.htm?&SPSID=4364&SPID=243&DB\\_OEM\\_ID=500](http://www.goducks.com/fls/500/track/0809/regional/index.htm?&SPSID=4364&SPID=243&DB_OEM_ID=500).