

Nelson Claims MWC Co-Athlete of the Week

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Richard Nelson earned his first MWC Athlete of the Week honor after his NCAA-best performance last week. (BYU Photo/Mark Philbrick)

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. - BYU senior Richard Nelson and Air Force junior Justin Tyner have been selected as the Mountain West Conference men's outdoor track & field co-athletes of the week, while San Diego State redshirt junior Stephanie James has been named MWC women's outdoor track & field athlete of the week.

A product of Spokane, Wash., Nelson recorded the fastest 3,000-meter steeplechase time in the NCAA this season at the Stanford Invitational in Palo Alto, California on Friday, clocking a time of 8:46.91 to finish first overall among collegiate competitors in the event. That mark is Nelson's second-best time of his career, ranks tops in the nation by almost six seconds and ranks first in the MWC by almost 12 seconds in the event.

The honor is the second MWC Athlete of the Week award for a member of the Cougars after Sean Richardson took the same honor last week for his performance in the javelin.

The last time BYU athletes earned back-to-back player of the week awards was in in April 2008.

Tyner, from Baxter, Minn., won the 1500-meter run and 5000-meter run at the Military Track and Field Championships last weekend in Lexington, Va., setting meet records and personal-best marks in both events in the process. Tyner started his weekend by earning first-place honors in the 1500-meter run by clocking a time of

3:47.32, which currently leads the Mountain West Conference and is ranked 10th in the nation. He returned to the track that evening to win the 5000-meter run with a time of 14:09.44, which is the eighth-fastest mark in Academy history and ranks 30th in the country overall this season.

Hailing from Granite Bay, Calif., James won the pole vault to lead the Aztecs to a second-place tie at the Cal-Nevada Championships last weekend in Los Angeles, Calif. James cleared a height of 14'-03.25" (4.35m) to win the 25-person event, a mark that ranks first in both the NCAA and MWC this season. It is also the second-best mark in the United States and the fourth-best mark in the world in the event. James' vault of 14'-03.25" was just inch shy of her school record of 14'-03.50" which was set during San Diego State's 2008 campaign.