



Track & Field News

Cougars Win Eighth-Straight Indoor Championship

by Jordan Christiansen, BYU Athletic Communications



Phillip Bettis took All-MWC in the 60-meter hurdles after claiming the pentathlon crown on Friday (BYU Photo/Mark Philbrick)

ALBUQUERQUE, New Mexico (Feb. 27, 2010) – The BYU men’s track and field team left the MWC Indoor Championships the same way it arrived—conference champions.

The Cougars defended their conference title for the eighth-straight season, winning for the 10th time in 11 all-time MWC indoor championships on Saturday, defeating TCU by 24.5 points and totaling 159.5 overall.

“The level of competition was far superior than what it has been in the past,” said BYU head coach Mark Robison. “I didn’t sleep quite as well as I did last year. But no, I was very pleased. We had some phenomenal performances. We didn’t have a lot of champs, but we had four of them.”

BYU had clutch performances down the stretch of Saturday’s competition after gaining an early one-two finish in the shot put from Leif Arrhenius and Danny Lawson.

One day removed from taking the weight throw championship, Arrhenius won the shot put for the second-consecutive year with a toss of 18.23 meters while Lawson also took All-Conference with a throw of 17.90 meters, the third-straight time the senior has finished as runner-up in the event.

The three throwers, including Oliver Whaley and his third place in the weight throw on Friday, scored a combined 34 points for BYU.

Sophomore Rhyan Atrice crushed his personal record in the 400 meters, running a 47.21 for All-Conference honors at second place.

Seniors Bryan Payne and Kevin Biesinger also earned points for BYU in the 400, finishing sixth and seventh, respectively.

In the 800 meters, three Cougar athletes finished in the top five spots, giving BYU 18 points in the event alone. Junior Brian Weirich placed second with a time of 1:51.28 with senior James Heiner in third place and sophomore Justin Hedin taking fifth.

Chris Little improved on a fourth place finish in the pole vault in last year's indoor meet, earning six points for the Cougars with a third-place finish at 5.20 meters. TJ Emrich also scored points, taking sixth in the event at 5.10 meters.

"It felt good going into the day," Little said. "Pole vault is a hit-and-miss sport and you never know the outcome. But we earned our team some good points that contributed to the win."

Junior Aaron Powell led BYU in the triple jump, taking fifth. He was immediately followed by Kyle Mills, who set a new personal record, and Anse Myller DeAraujo.

Competing in the 60-meter hurdles, Phillip Bettis placed third racing on an injured foot incurred while winning the pentathlon over the previous two days. Payne also finished in sixth.

Sophomore Josh Adams and senior Robert Harrison snuck in at seventh and eighth in the mile run to gain a few more points, with senior Brandon Babiracki finishing eleventh.

A few athletes will go on to various last chance meets around the country next week before heading to the NCAA Championships in two weeks.