

## Cougars Finish Sixth at NCAA Regional Meet

by Zack Warren, BYU Athletic Communications



Lacey Cramer was crowned as the West Regional 800-meter champion.  
(BYU Photo/Jaren Wilkey)

EUGENE, Ore. (May 30, 2009) – The final day of the NCAA West Regional meet was a success for the BYU women’s track team, who finished sixth and earned six NCAA automatic qualifying marks on Saturday.

The No. 21 nationally ranked Cougars finished sixth (49 points) out of 27 teams competing at the regional meet. Taking the top five spots were No. 6 Arizona State (95 points), No. 1 Oregon (80.50 points), No. 5 USC (68 points), No. 15 UCLA (64.50 points) and No. 12 Stanford (54 points).

“I’m very happy with how we performed,” said BYU women’s track and field head coach Craig Poole. “BYU was well represented by our entire team throughout the season. You always like to see more advance to nationals, but I think we have very strong and capable athletes going this year.”

Highlighting the Cougar success was All-American Lacey Cramer. Cramer added to her national dominance in the 800-meter event. Cramer, the Indoor 800-meter national champion, secured the

Western Region championship in a time of 2:05.63.

“Lacey had a great race,” said BYU women’s distance coach Patrick Shane. “To win a regional title at Hayward Field in front of this crowd is a wonderful experience. I’m very happy for her.”

Cramer’s first-place finish gave BYU ten points and automatically qualified the freshman for the NCAA Championships.

Another freshman who will make her first appearance at the NCAA Outdoor Championships in Fayetteville, Ark., beginning June 10th is Ada Robinson. Robinson placed fourth in the high jump event with a jump of 5-10.00.

BYU Olympian Ilze Gribule also earned a ticket to nationals with a fourth-place finish in the javelin throw (161-03).

Katie Palmer nearly qualified for the NCAA Championships, taking sixth in the 1,500-meter event with a time of 4:24.66. While the top five finishers automatically qualify for nationals, Palmer can still receive an at-large bid because of an earlier season time of 4:16.44, which ranks 12th in the nation.

“Katie is a great competitor and we expect to see her get an at-large bid to nationals,” Poole said.

For the second time of the day, Palmer found herself on the cusp of automatically qualifying as a member of the 4x400-meter relay team. Palmer, Cramer, Nachele Stewart and Natalie Stewart took fourth in the event with a time of 3:38.38.

The 4x400-meter relay time ranks second on the BYU all-time records list. The school’s top time came from this same team earlier this season.

Natalie Stewart appeared again in the 400-meter event where she took eighth with a time of 54.78.

Also taking eighth for the Cougars in the 200-meter event was All-American Mindy Neeley-McClurkin. Neeley-McClurkin earned an automatic qualifying mark on Friday in the long jump event and recorded a 24.18 time on Saturday in the 200-meters.

“Now we just have to prepare our athletes for nationals,” Shane said. “I’m looking forward to what we can accomplish at the final meet.”

Six automatic qualifiers on the women’s team will represent the Cougars at the NCAA National Championships, while Palmer and heptathlete All-American Amy Menlove wait until Tuesday for the announcing of the at-large bids.

For results of the NCAA West Regional meet 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).