



Track & Field News

Success at Home for Women's Track

by Zack Warren, BYU Athletic Communications



Millie Rapp took first in the 5,000-meter event at the BYU Cougar Invitational. BYU Photo/Mark Philbrick

PROVO, Utah (April 3, 2009) – Thirty-degree weather didn't slow down the women's track team who earned four NCAA Regional qualifying marks on Friday at home at the BYU Cougar Invitational.

In their first outdoor home meet of the season the BYU women's track team finished with ten first-place marks including two Mountain West Conference best performances.

"We accomplished a lot today," said BYU women's distance coach Patrick Shane. "This was great preparation for our upcoming meets. The weather wasn't great, but you still have to compete and work hard and I thought we did just that."

Setting the tone for the Cougars was the pole vault squad who took the top four spots in each of their respective events. Kari McAllister Clark jumped to a meet-best 12-07.50. Her jump is an NCAA Regional qualifying mark and a MWC best mark.

Continuing the Cougar dominance were the triple jumpers who secured the top three spots. Madara Dzalbe placed first with an NCAA Regional qualifying jump of 40-11.75. Dzalbe's performance is also a personal best and a MWC best mark.

Freshman standout Ada Robinson added another Regional qualifying mark to the Cougar lineup.

Robinson's personal best jump of 5-09.00 tops her previous jump which was also a MWC best.

"It was an all-around great meet," Shane said. "I think we are making significant progress towards the MWC Championships, Regionals and Nationals."

Possibly the meet's most impressive performance came from Latvian native Ilze Gribule, who competed for the first time in three years. Three shoulder surgeries has kept the former Olympian out for an extended period of time, but the senior looked healthy on Friday with a first-place throw of 141-02.51.

"Ilze is incredibly talented," said BYU throwing coach Dick Legas. "She is a great asset for our team and I'm excited to see how the rest of the season goes for her."

Gribule's second throw of the day was an NCAA Regional qualifying mark. She was pulled out of the competition after her qualifying throw for precautionary reasons and is expected to compete again next week.

Also competing at a high level for the Cougars were the sprinters and distance runners. Millie Rapp finished first in the 5,000-meter event with a time of 18:18.83 and Diane Stewart took first in the 400-meter hurdles (1:02.47).

Diane had another first-place finish in the 100-meter hurdles (14.56), an event BYU owned taking the top three spots.

Diane's sister Nachelle Stewart was equally impressive, taking first in the 400-meter (55.24) and 200-meter (24.91) events. BYU was significantly in control of the 400-meter race as well, as they took the top four spots.

The Cougars rapped up the home meet with a first- and second-place finish in the 400-meter relays. The BYU A team ran a time of 3:50.40, while the BYU B team trailed close behind with a time of 3:56.29.

For complete results of the BYU Cougar Invitational go to <http://results.runnercard.com:8081/Results/ViewResults.html?class=server&meetid=1724>

The Cougars are back on the road next week, splitting between the Weber State Invitational in Ogden, Utah and the Sun Angel Invitational in Tempe, Ariz.