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NEWS RELEASE

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Fifteen Head to the Championships

PROVO, Utah (March 9, 2004) – The BYU men’s track and field teams are set to compete this weekend at the 2004 NCAA Indoor Championships Friday and Saturday in Fayetteville, Ark.

The men’s team is sending seven athletes to represent the Cougars, their largest group of qualifiers in years, consisting of juniors Bryan Lindsay, Nathan Robison, freshman Nic Arrhenius, senior Curtis Pugsley, Robison Pratt, Trent Powell and Rodrigo Mendes.

“We really are excited that this is the biggest group we have had since I have been head coach here at BYU,” men’s head coach Mark Robison said. “I expect us to remain in the top ten this weekend in the nation and plan on having most of our men perform well enough to earn All-American status.”

Heading to Arkansas for the women’s team is Jennifer Rockwell, Kassi Andersen, Michaela Mannova, Laura Turner, Lindsey Metcalf, Kristy Barrus, Kamila Rywelska and in her first performance of the season, Julie Cameron.

“We have the qualifiers and the position to do well in all our events,” women’s head coach Craig Poole said. “I don’t have anything really to compare our team with and do not make predictions about how we should do but we are going into this meet with the confidence that we can do well right now.”

Friday’s competition will begin for the Cougars with the men’s Heptathlon 60-meters at 9:00 a.m. and end at 9:10 p.m. with the women’s distance medley relay. Competition will continue Saturday at 11:30 a.m. with the men’s 60m-hurdles for the heptathlon and conclude that night with an awards banquet at 8:30 p.m.

Last years men's team placed 27th indoors and the women placed 13th among the tough competition.

The championship meet will be hosted by the University of Arkansas at the Randal Tyson Track Center for the fifth consecutive year. A schedule of events can be found at <http://www.uark.edu/depts/wathinfo/championship/index.html>

CHAMPIONSHIPS LINE-UP

WOMEN'S 3000-METER

Senior **Michaela Mannova** has the best chance of any BYU athlete at taking a title at this years Championships. Trackshark has named the one to offer the best challenge to Kim Smith for the title in the 3000-meter. She enters the challenge with her clocking of 9:04.06. A long time veteran of nation competition, Mannova placed fifth last year in this event with a time of 9:11.61. She has long competed on the DMR team and like last year hopes to help this years No. 2 team take the title. She is a six time track All-American and NCAA Champion in the 3,000m-Steeplechase in 2002. This year she took the title at the MWC Championships and was named the MWC Women Athlete of the Year and Mountain Women Regional Athlete of the Year.

Junior **Kassi Andersen** will compete with Mannova for the 3,000-meter title. She currently is ranked No. 11 in this event with a time of 9:17.62. Andersen is a two-time All-American after winning the 3,000m-Steeplechase in 2003. In addition, she looks to add talent to this years DMR team.

Competition: Kim Smith of Providence will attempt the 3,000 and 5,000 meter double. Smith enters the meet with a best time of 8:55.08 set on the flat, tight 200 meter track at Syracuse. Big East foes Molly Huddle of Notre Dame and Megan Metcalfe of West Virginia will do battle once again. In fact, the Big East Conference alone could turn in some major points here along with the help of Mary Cullen of Providence. Stanford will offer Sara Bei and Alicia Craig, as the Cardinals are always strong in the distance events.

Women's 5000-meter

All-American **Laura Turner** will look to place in this event with her time of 16:04.89 which ranks her No. 7 in the nation. In 1999 and 2000 Turner competed in the NCAA Indoor Championships to earn her All-American status.

Competiton: It could be the Kim Smith show once again unless anyone else steps up. Nearly 37 seconds ahead of the next fastest recording in the country, Smith's time of 15:18.54 is the second fastest time ever run by a collegian. In addition to Turner, Molly Huddle of Notre Dame, Alicia Craig of Stanford, Jamie Krzyminski of Michigan State and Melissa Gulli of

Texan A&M will look to make it not so easy for the Providence star.

Women's DMR

In a line-up change for the Cougars Jennifer Rockwell, Kassi Andersen, Michaela Mannova and Julie Cameron will run the DMR. This team despite never having run in a race together looks to compete for the title with the Cougars No. 2 time of 11: 06.91. The Cougars will face tough competition from all the top distance schools in the nation.

Women's High Jump

Junior **Lindsey Metcalf** returns to the competition after finishing sixth in the 2002 Indoor Championships, seventh in the 2002 Outdoor Championships and fifth at the 2003 Outdoor Championships. She looks to add her third consecutive All-American title with this year's performance. Metcalf is currently ranked No. 8 in the nation.

Competition: In the women's high jump, Chaunte Howard from Georgia Tech has the best mark of the year at 1.90m. Kaylene Wagner of Caloly-SLO is only one centimeter behind. However, the top eight competitors are within six centimeters, so it's anyone's ballgame (including Metcalf).

Women's Triple Jump

Freshman **Kamila Rywelska** enters the national competition for the first time in her life after just transferring to BYU from Pastek, Poland. She currently is ranked eighth in the nation and looks to place high for the team.

Competition: The women's triple jump welcomes back a former champion in Nicole Toney, who won in 2002, currently however she is ranked fifth in the Nation. Nebraska's Ineta Radevica finished fifth in last year's meet and holds the year's best mark at 13.72m. Chaytan Hill of Kansas State, Tabia Charles of Miami, and Shelly-Ann Gallimore of Auburn round out the top five.

Men's 1 Mile

No. 7 junior **Nathan Robison** heads back to nationals this year after finishing tenth at last years Indoor Championship competition. Robison earlier this season broke the four-minute barrier in the mile. He looks to go even farther this weekend to add another All-American title to his name. His coach, Ed Eyestone, said that Robison has a nice strong kick and that his race is all a matter of position.

Teammate **Bryan Lindsay** is right behind Lindsey ranked No. 12 in the nation with his time of 4:01.04. He looks to use this weekend as a chance to go sub-four-minute. Although Lindsay has competed in two NCAA Outdoor Championships, this will be his first Indoor Championship run. Hi coach, Ed Eyestone, said that Lindsay is going into the competition a little under the weather but has been resting since conference and looks to perform well.

Competition: Chris Mulvaney of Arkansas who will look to repeat his performance from last year when he won the title. Jordan Desilets of Eastern Michigan has turned in a sub 4:00 performance at Notre Dame this season and could be in the running. Teammate Gavin Thompson will look to help the Eagles score some big points in this event as well. Sean Jefferson of Indiana, Scott McGowan of Montana will all hope to step up and not make it easy for Willis.

Men's Pole Vault

Sophomore **Robison Pratt** ranked No. 6 currently heads to the NCAA Indoor Championships this weekend for the first time in his collegiate career. However, despite this he has lots of national competition experience as a finalist in the 2000 Sydney Olympics.

Junior **Trent Powell** heads back to Arkansas planning to improve on his third place performance last year at Indoor Nationals and second place finish at Outdoor Nationals. He is a two-time NCAA All-American who hopes to add a third to his name.

Men's Triple Jump

Rodrigo Mendes in his first NCAA appearance looks to stay strong this competition after his mid-season injury, which has hampered his past meets. However, No. 6 Mendes is now strong and healthy, ready for this weekends competition.

Men's Shot Put

Freshman **Niklas Arrhenius** ranks No. 3 in the nation currently but has a strong lead on other competitors. Despite his freshman status he has competed in world events and is used to the tough competition that comes at meets like these.

Competitors: Nebraska's Carl Myerscough has the longest mark going into the shot put championship at 20.91m. Ohio State's Dan Taylor will try to double up in the shot and the weight. His longest put is 20.45m. Other contenders include Nedzad Mulabegovic from Purdue. SMU's Hannes Hopley will try to claim another title from the Mustangs, who are competing at their last indoor championships before their program is discontinued.

Men's Heptathlon

Senior **Curtis Pugsley** in his last indoor NCAA competition looks to take advantage of a tight field to place high for the Cougar men's team. He competes in a narrow field with only about 100 points separating the field. He currently ranks No. 8 in the nation with his score of 5552 points.

Competition: Freshman Donovan Kilmartin heads to Fayetteville with the best mark in the heptathlon at 5856 points. On his heels are more than a handful of seniors bent on making it difficult for the young Longhorn. Murice Smith, Mustafa Abdur-Rahim, Will Thomas, and a few others are all within striking distance of Kilmartin.