

# MSU picked to host NCAA indoor championship

## Mavericks also hosted track and field nationals in 2008

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**MANKATO** — With one exception, the NCAA Division II Indoor Track and Field Championships have been held in a big city since 1995.

That exception was 2008 when it came to Mankato and was hosted by Minnesota State University.

In other years, the championships were held in Indianapolis, Boston, Houston and Albuquerque, N.M.

“It’s a big deal in a smaller community,” Mavericks women’s coach Jen Blue said. On Tuesday, MSU announced that the national meet is returning to the Myers Field House 2012.

According to athletic director Kevin Buisman, the university put in bids for three national events that will take place in March of 2012: Wrestling, women’s basketball and indoor track.

“ We wanted to have our bases covered,” Buisman said. “ We had a pretty good feeling about track and field because of our previous experience.”

Please see NATIONALS, Page **D3**



John Cross

Minnesota State women’s track and field coach Jen Blue ( left), athletic director Kevin Buisman ( center) and men’s track coach Mark Schuck address a press conference announcing that MSU has been awarded the 2012 NCAA Division II Track and Field Championships.

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[See NATIONALS on Page D03](#)

## NATIONALS: Expected to bring in 500 participants

Continued from Page D1

Even though the Mankato area is only about a tenth of the size of Albuquerque, the next largest community to host the event, that didn’t seem to deter the NCAA from picking it again.

“For the coaches and athletes, it was very enjoyable,” MSU men’s coach Mark Schuck said. “I haven’t heard one negative comment about coming to Minnesota.”

The last time Minnesota State hosted the event, it had only eight months to prepare for the meet. This time, it has nearly 21 months, but officials said they don’t foresee having to make too many changes.

Both Blue and Schuck said they continue to receive positive feedback from the ’08 meet.

“We lucked out the last time with the weather, and we had great help from the community,” Schuck said.

“We had a lot of local flavor, and I think people really enjoyed that. We had a lot of volunteers— a track meet needs a lot of workers with 19 events — and we got great support last time.”

The meet is expected to bring in 500 participants, including athletes, coaches and administrators from around the country. Larissa Mrozek of the Greater Mankato Visitor & Convention Bureau said the last championships had an estimated economic impact of \$300,000.

“It was a vote of confidence to bring the championships back to Mankato,” Buisman said. “We felt like this was something we owed to the community. We felt like this was our chance to give back to the community.” For Blue and Schuck, they also hope the meet will be a chance for their athletes to collect some hardware.

Both the women’s and men’s teams had athletes competing on their home track the last time the championships were in Mankato, and pole vaulter Katelin Rains won her second of three national indoor titles here.

Besides hosting the national indoors in 2008, Minnesota State has hosted four other national- championship events, including wrestling in 1966, 1968 and 2004, and men’s gymnastics in 1970.

The meet will be held March 9-10, 2012.