

WIAC Championships Next For Women's Track

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EAU CLAIRE - The UW-Eau Claire women's track team will head to the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC) Outdoor Championships in Oshkosh this weekend where it looks to build off of last year's outdoor fourth place finish and this year's indoor third place finish.

Eau Claire posted 97 points last year while UW-La Crosse won with 177. As for this year's indoor championships, the Blugolds were in second after day one but fell to third place with 113 points as UW-Oshkosh won it all at 179.50. Oshkosh is currently ranked first in the nation while Eau Claire comes in at second.

Stephanie Barnes (*Jr.-Sauk City/Sauk Prairie*) has won the WIAC Indoor Championship, the NCAA Division III Indoor Championship and NCAA Division III Outdoor Championship in the pole vault. She has yet to win it in the WIAC Outdoor Championships. Last year she took second with a 3.85 meter (12'7 1/2") performance. She has the highest vault this season for the WIAC at 3.94 meters (12'11"). The next closest is 3.78 meters (12'4 3/4"). Barnes' mark from her indoor crown-defending performance this year was 3.86 meters (12'8").

Another Blugold who ranks near the top this year in the conference is **Erin Kokta** (*Sr.-Brookfield/East*). Her 5.68 meters (18'7 3/4") for the long jump is tops for the WIAC. Kokta has a second-best triple jump effort with 11.53 meters (37'10"). She is also fourth in the high jump at 1.60 meters (5'3").

Paula Crossfield (*Jr.-Madison/East*) has had great accomplishments both at last year's outdoor championships and throughout this year's season. She placed seventh in the discus on a 39.59 meter (129'10") throw and eighth in the shot put on a 12 meter (39'4 1/2") heave. She stands third in the discus for the WIAC this year at 43.30 meters (142'1"). She is also placed sixth in the hammer throw on a 43.24 meter (141'10") effort.

Brooke Schmidt (*Sr.-Rice Lake/Stanley-Boyd*) sits second at 43.66 meters (143'3") in the discus and fifth in the shot put at 12.14 meters (39'10").

Liz Faller (*Jr.-Marinette*) found success at last year's outdoor championships, where she took fifth in the 100-meter hurdles in 15.16. Her 14.56 100-meter hurdle time for this year ranks first in the conference.

Liz Kooistra (*Fr.-Lakeville, MN*) has been on top of the conference for the 400-meter dash. Her 56.71 time is second to none. In the 800-meter run she is third this season at 2:14.25.

Shalene Huth (*Jr.-Appleton/West*) has the fifth best 100-meter dash time in the conference with 12.66.

Eau Claire looks for success in the endurance events this year as well. **Jane-Marie Ovanin** (*Sr.-Amherst*) and **Molly Warner** (*So.-Mosinee*) are situated near the top of the WIAC for the 10,000-meter run. Warner's 38:56.22 is second while Ovanin's 39:01.20 is third. Ovanin took sixth in the event at last year's championships in 39:45.73. The pair is also ranked two-three in the 5000-meter run for the WIAC this season. Warner's time is 17:40.99 while Ovanin's is 18:15.05.

Friday's events begin at noon and Saturday's start at 9:00 a.m. for the WIAC Outdoor Championships, hosted by Oshkosh.