

## 2006 UW-Eau Claire Volleyball Season Preview

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The 2006 UW-Eau Claire volleyball team returns 13 letterwinners and six starters from last year's NCAA Tournament squad that went 30-5, reaching the 20-win mark for the seventh consecutive season.

In 2005, the Blugolds reached the Sweet 16 before being defeated by eventual National Champion UW-Whitewater in five games. The Blugolds led the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC) in hitting percentage (.276) and were in top three in the conference in assists, kills, blocks, and service aces.

The Blugolds lose a lot of firepower with the loss of seniors Molly Menard and Jenny Wolter. However, the Blugolds have a lot of experience coming back with seniors **Carly Freiborg** (Sr.-Sacred Heart, MN/Renville County West), **Jessica Groh** (Sr.-Eau Claire/North), and **Shanna Berger** (Sr.-Baldwin/Baldwin-Woodville) leading the charge.

Setter Carly Freiborg led the conference in assists per game (12.46) and was fourth in the conference in service aces (59) in 2005. She was an honorable mention All-WIAC selection.

Middle hitter Jessica Groh returns for her senior season after she led the WIAC in blocks per game (1.43) in 2005. Two-time All-WIAC Defensive Team selection Shanna Berger is back and will Captain the squad this season along with Carly Freiborg. Berger was fourth in the conference in digs per game (4.30) last season.

Seniors **Ashley Danielson** (Sr.-Cadott, WI) and **Jodi Dunbar** (Sr.-Platteville, WI) will add even more experience to this year's squad. Danielson was second on the team with 107 blocks in 2005. As an outside hitter Dunbar was third on the team last year with 349 kills.

Junior defensive specialist **Heather Harnell** (Jr.-Minnetonka, MN) enters her junior season with the Blugolds. Harnell played in all 35 matches last season and finished fifth on the team with 223 digs. Carly Freiborg's sister **Abby Freiborg** (So.-Sacred Heart, MN/Renville County West) enters her sophomore season with the Blugolds. Abby finished second on the team behind her sister with 43 assists in 2005 and she was also voted the team's Rookie of the Year.

Head coach Lisa Herb also brought in a pretty good recruiting class this season. **Cary Rasmussen** (Fr.-Sparta, WI) was a two-time first team All-Conference and All-Area selection in high school. **Lindsey Smith** (Fr.-Maple Lake, MN) was also a two-time first team All-Conference selection in high school.

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