

# Cross Country Teams Head To NCAA Regionals

*Posted: Wednesday, November 7, 2007*

EAU CLAIRE, Wis. - The UW-Eau Claire men's and women's cross country teams head to the NCAA Midwest Regional, hosted by UW-Oshkosh.

On both the men's and women's side, the top two teams automatically are qualified for the NCAA National Meet. The next three placing schools are eligible for an at-large bid. In addition, 56 individuals, the first seven athletes from each region who are not a part of a qualifying team, were selected to participate in each NCAA championship.

The women's cross country team has a legitimate chance at placing in the top five at Regionals. They will hopefully continue running strong after winning the WIAC Championship on October 27. **Mary Palmer** (*Jr.-Anoka, MN*) was the top Blugold finisher at the WIAC Championships. Palmer finished in fourth overall. **Molly Warner** (*Sr.-Mosinee, WI*) came in behind Palmer in fifth. **Beth Lutz** (*Jr.-Eau Claire, WI/Memorial*) came in ninth overall, and **Hannah Humbach** (*So.-Madison, WI/Abundant Life Christian*) finished in 12th place. **Amber Hertz** (*Sr.-Baraboo, WI*) was the fifth Blugold to cross the finish line in 14th place. Tough women's teams at the Regional who will be competing with the Blugolds for the top two spots are Washington University, who is currently ranked third in the nation. UW-Platteville and UW-La Crosse both have reasonable chances at running well at the Regional. The Blugolds are currently ranked ninth.

Last year the Blugold women's team placed fourth in a field of 38. They received an at-large bid for the NCAA National Meet. At Regionals, they finished behind Washington University, North Central, and UW-La Crosse. Three individuals who placed at last year's regional are eligible to run in this year's regional. Molly Warner led the Blugolds last year finishing in 10th place. Beth Lutz finished in 20th place, and **Ellie Lutz** (*Jr.-Eau Claire, WI/Memorial*) finished in 44th place.

The Blugold men's cross country team is looking to place well at the NCAA Midwest Regional. The men's team placed sixth this year at the WIAC Championships. Runners are looking to grab spots for the National meet. **Chris Wirtz** (*So.-Weston, WI/DC Everest*) finished first for the Blugolds at the WIAC Championships and 29th overall. **Kevin Hall** (*Jr.-Green Bay, WI/Preble*) came in 35th place. **Tony Carr** (*Jr.-Menomonie, WI*) finished in 44th place, and **Max Renner** (*So.-Green Bay, WI/East*) came in 54th overall. **Mark Sanders** (*Jr.-Hammond, WI/St. Croix Central*) finished in 58th place. Tough teams this year on the men's side include UW-La Crosse, UW-Stevens Point, UW-Platteville, and Wheaton College.

Last year at the NCAA Regional, the Blugold men placed 13th out of 37 teams. UW-La Crosse won the Regional, and was followed by North Central, UW-Platteville, and UW-Oshkosh. Two of the top runners last year will be competing this year at the Regional. Chris Wirtz came in 112th last year and Kevin Hall finished in 55th place.

The WIAC conference is traditionally a strong conference at the Regional meet. Last year three WIAC schools placed on the men's side and two WIAC schools placed on the women's side.

The NCAA Midwest Regional Meet is hosted by UW-Oshkosh, who also hosted the WIAC Championships. The event will be held at Winneconne's Lake Breeze Golf Course on Saturday, November 10. The women's race begins at 11 a.m. and the men's race starts at noon.

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