

Women's Track & Field Ready For WIAC Indoor Championships

Posted: Thursday, February 28, 2008

EAU CLAIRE, Wis. - The UW-Eau Claire women's track and field team has seen constant improvement over the last couple years and will look to improve on a third place finish from last year's Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC) Indoor Championships this Friday and Saturday in Superior.

The last two seasons the Blugolds have taken home third place finishes at the indoor championships but scored more points last year than two years ago. Last season Eau Claire was less than 12 points away from second place, while two years ago they were 54 points away.

Oshkosh and La Crosse have been the conference leaders the last two years, with La Crosse taking the top spot a year ago, while Oshkosh took second. Two years ago Oshkosh won the championships and La Crosse took second.

This year the Blugolds have done very well and are ranked 11th in the latest U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association national poll, while La Crosse is first and Oshkosh is second. The Blugolds have seen two first place finishes this season, at the UW-Whitewater Invite (17 teams) and Eastbay Invite (12 teams), a second place finish of 11 teams at the UW-Stevens Point Invite and a fourth place finish out of eight teams at the Blugold Open. Three other events the Blugolds competed in were non-scoring meets.

Liz Kooistra (*Jr.-Lakeville, Minn.*) should have a strong showing for the Blugolds in the 200, 400 and 800-meter races. Kooistra finished in third place a year ago in the 200 and 400, but has improved her times to this point in the season. She holds the WIAC's fastest time and the NCAA Division III's third fastest run with a provisional qualifying time of 56.96. She also has the WIAC's third fastest finish in the 800-meter run with an NCAA Division III provisional qualifying time of 2:16.35. Kooistra also holds the conference's fourth fastest time in the 200-meter run this year.

The Blugold distance runners have also had a good season and will look to do well at this year's WIAC Championships. **Mary Palmer** (*Jr.-Anoka, Minn.*) has the conference's sixth fastest time in the mile (5:14.61) and fourth in the 3,000-meter (10:25.91) races this season. **Hannah Humbach** (*So.-Madison, Wis./Abundant Life*) has the eighth fastest time in the mile (5:15.69) and third in the 3,000-meter races (10:25.72). **Molly Warner** (*Sr.-Mosinee, Wis.*) also has the third fastest time (18:08.70) in the WIAC this season in the 5,000-meter run.

The Blugolds should also have strong finishes in the field events this season. In the high jump, **Jessica Owens** (*Jr.-Elm Grove, Wis./Brookfield East*) has the second best jump in the WIAC this season (5-2 1/2) and finished in third place at last year's championships. **Amy Morse** (*Jr.-Kaukauna, Wis.*) should also fare well in the weight throw, as she has the conference's third longest throw and the NCAA Division III's 11th longest throw (52-7 1/4) this season.

The championships will begin at noon on Friday and will conclude on Saturday with a start time of 9 a.m.

WIAC Championship Website

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