

# Women's Cross Country Heads To National Meet

*Posted: Friday, November 21, 2008*

EAU CLAIRE, Wis. - After winning the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference title on November 1 and following that with a victory at the NCAA Midwest Regional Meet last weekend, the UW-Eau Claire women's cross country team will now turn its attention to the NCAA Division III National Championship this Saturday.

Hanover College will host the 2008 NCAA Division III national cross country championships. The event will be held at the L.S. Ayres Athletic Complex. Both the men's and women's championship races will include 280 runners from colleges and universities across the U.S. The men's eight-kilometer race will begin at 11 a.m. The women's six-kilometer event will start at noon. This is the second time Hanover College has hosted the national championships, with the last time being in 2003.

Last season Eau Claire took eighth place at nationals out of 32 teams, the Blugolds' best finish since 1997 when they took second. With three runners who ran in last year's national meet, the Blugolds look to improve over last season. **Mary Palmer** (*Sr.-Anoka, Minn.*), [Beth Lutz (*Sr.-Eau Claire, Wis./Memorial*), and **Hannah Humbach** (*Jr.-Madison, Wis./Abundant Life Christian*) all ran on last year's team. Lutz led Eau Claire with a **29th place finish, while Palmer finished second for Eau Claire in 43rd place overall. Humbach took 76th overall and was the Blugolds' fourth finisher. Others at this year's meet are Beth Easker** (*So.-Wittenberg, Wis./Wittenberg-Birnamwood*), **Ellie Lutz** (*Sr.-Eau Claire, Wis./Memorial*), **Jenna Smith** (*So.-Robbinsdale, MN/Cooper*), **Alyssa Sybilrud** (*Fr.-Savage, Minn./Burnsville*) and **Molly Woodford** (*So.-Waukesha, Wis./South*). While Eau Claire has eight runners at the meet, only seven will run for the team.

The Blugold men will also be represented at the national championship this season for the first time since 1999. **Chris Wirtz** (*Jr.-Weston, Wis./DC Everest*) won the opportunity to run at the national meet with a 19th place finish at the regional last weekend.

NCAA National Championship Web site

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