Men's Cross Country Award Winners Announced

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EAU CLAIRE, Wis. - UW-Eau Claire men's cross country coach Dan Schwamberger announced the 2008 team award winners yesterday at the team's banquet.

For the second year in a row, the Most Valuable Runner award went to **Chris Wirtz** *(Jr.-Weston, Wis./DC Everest)*. Wirtz represented the Blugold men's team at nationals this season and finished 166th overall with a time of 26:00. His appearance at the NCAA Championship was the first time since 2001 a member of the Blugold men's team ran at nationals. Wirtz's best time of the season came at the WIAC Championships, where the Blugolds took fourth. At that meet he finished with a time of 25:10 for 11th place overall. He took first place at the UW-Whitewater Invite with a time of 27:42. Two years ago Wirtz's earned the team's Most Promising Newcomer award.

The Most Valuable Freshmen Award was presented to **Ryan Bailey** *(Fr.-Minnetonka, Minn.)*. Bailey competed in five races this season, finishing four of them in the top 63 runners overall. His highest finish came at the UW-Whitewater Invite, taking 13th place, while his best time came at the WIAC Championships, coming in 52nd place with a time of 26:19.

Josh Wieland *(So.-Menomonie, Wis.)* was this year's Most Improved Runner. Competing in six events, Wieland finished three of them 42nd or better and two others in the top 89 runners. His best finish came at the UW-Whitewater Invite, taking 37th place overall in 29:49, while his best time came at the WIAC Championships, finishing in 26:01.

The Blugold Award, presented annually to an all-around committed scholar-athlete and teammate, was given to **Kevin Hall** *(Sr.-Green Bay, Wis./Preble)*. Hall, who also earned the award last season and was the WIAC's Scholar-Athlete this season, was also presented with a four-year letter award, along with teammate **Adam Wolfe** *(Sr.-Marshfield, Wis.)*.

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