

Track And Field Set For WIAC Championships

Posted: Thursday, April 30, 2009

EAU CLAIRE, Wis. - The UW-Eau Claire men's and women's track and field teams are set to compete in the 2009 Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Outdoor Championships, scheduled for Friday and Saturday at J.J. Keller Field at Titan Stadium in Oshkosh.

The Blugold women will look to have a strong presence at this year's championship. A season ago Eau Claire finished second with 158.5 points while La Crosse won its second straight title with 192 points. The second place finish for the Blugolds was the best finish they have ever achieved in program history.

Two Blugold women will look to defend their conference crowns.

A season ago **Liz Kooistra** (*Sr.-Lakeville, Minn.*) won the 400-meter dash with a time of 57.11. Already this year she has the nation's fastest time in the event as she won at the Kansas Relays with a time of 55.12, almost a second faster than anyone in the rest of Division III and more than two seconds faster than anyone in the WIAC. She has already qualified for the NCAA Division III Championships.

Hannah Humbach (*Jr.-Madison, Wis./Abundant Life*) will also look to defend her title in the 3,000-meter steeplechase. Last year she won with a time of 11:03.16. This year she holds the conference's best time in the event 10:47.46, which is a national meet provisional qualifying time and the eighth best time in the nation this season.

The Blugold men will also try to improve from a year ago. The last three years the team finished sixth at the conference meet.

While no one on this year's team will be defending any conference titles, a few will be in the hunt for titles this year.

Sam Johnson (*Sr.-Deer Park, Wis./Amery*), who won a national title in the weight throw at this year's indoor championship, has the conference's best toss in the hammer throw at 185-4, which is second best in the nation this season. He achieved the distance at the Oshkosh Invitational on April 4 and is provisionally qualified for the NCAA Championships. He also has the conference's fifth best throw in the shot put this season.

In the track events, **Chris Kupfer** (*Sr.-Germantown, Wis.*) may be a contender in the 400-meter dash as he has the fifth fastest time in the conference this season. Last year Kupfer finished fifth in the 400-meter dash at the conference championships. In the 3,000-meter steeplechase, **Chris Wirtz** (*Jr.-Weston, Wis./D.C. Everest*) currently holds the fourth best time in the conference this year.

Events will begin at noon Friday while Saturday's competition is set to begin at 10 a.m.

WIAC Championship Website

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