

Renowned Blugold Marching Band to Perform at Game Saturday

By: Tim Petermann, Athletics Consultant

Posted: Thursday, September 3, 2009 at 9:58 PM

EAU CLAIRE, Wis. (UWECBlugolds.com) - The renowned Blugold Marching Band (BMB) will perform during the pregame and halftime of the UW-Eau Claire football season opener at Carson Park Saturday.

The Blugolds will face Bethel University of McKenzie, Tennessee in a non-conference clash beginning at 7 p.m.

Veteran band director Randy Dickerson reports that 270 musicians will be in uniform Saturday from more than 300 students from nine states that tried out for the BMB. This year, Dickerson says "we added 30 players to the horn line, expanded the dance line and updated the uniforms with new accessories for a more intense 'Blugold' appearance."

The BMB is one of the largest and most active college bands (all divisions) in the country, according to Dickerson. Dickerson, in his 10th season with the BMB, has seen the participation grow from 60 members in 2000 to its current size of 270.

The marching band members have been going through two a day workouts since August 17 in preparation for their fall schedule which will include the four Blugold home football games among other concerts throughout the Midwest.

The BMB's pregame Saturday will feature the "Blugold Fanfare," "On, Wisconsin," the "Blugold Fight Song" and a new arrangement of the Star Spangled Banner. The band will also form the traditional tunnel for the run-on by the football team.

The halftime show is entitled "Get Your Groove On; Music You Can Dance To" and will include "Love Rollercoaster," "Shout" from Animal House and a collection of songs from Kool & the Gang.

The head drum major this year is Mike Renneke, a senior from Eagan, Minn. while the assistant drum majors are Stefanie Berkopec, a junior from Rosemount, Minn., and Bret Van Nuland, a freshman from Hortonville.

Under Dickerson, the BMB has achieved much acclaim in recent years, performing at a number of Green Bay Packer games and also on New Year's Eve, 2008 for the Pope at the Vatican in Italy.