

Men's Cross Country Headed to Nationals

By: Kevin Meinholz, Sports Information Director

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INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. (UWECBlugolds.com) - The UW-Eau Claire men's cross country team has been selected to the 2009 NCAA Division III Championship, NCAA officials announced today.

With the Blugolds finishing fifth at the NCAA Midwest Regional meet Saturday, they earned an at-large selection today. The top two teams from the eight regional contests Saturday automatically qualified while 16 other teams from around the nation, including the Blugolds, earned at-large bids.

Both the Blugold men and women will compete at the national meet as the women automatically qualified after winning the regional meet Saturday. A complete list of qualifiers can be found [here](#).

Baldwin-Wallace College will host the championships, November 21, at Highland Hills Golf Course in Highland Hills, Ohio. The women's race will begin at 11 a.m. Eastern time followed by the men's race at noon Eastern time.

This is the first time since 1999 the Blugold men will appear at the NCAA Division III national meet, and just the third time overall in program history. The Blugolds finished 13th in 1999 and 11th in 1998 at nationals. Eau Claire competed 15 times at the NAIA national meet prior to joining the NCAA.

Last season the Blugold men sent one individual to nationals. **Chris Wirtz** (*Sr.-Weston, Wis./D.C. Everest*), who led the Blugolds at the regional meet Saturday, placed 166th at nationals last year.