Men's Cross Country Takes 16th at NCAA Nationals

By: Kevin Meinholz, Sports Information Director
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HIGHLAND HILLS, Ohio (UWECBlugolds.com) - The UW-Eau Claire men's cross country team took 16th place out of 32 teams at the NCAA Division III Championship at Highland Park Golf Course today.

The Blugolds, who competed as a team at the national meet for the first time since 1999 today, finished with 439 points. North Central College (Ill.) won its 13th national title in program history as the team finished with 50 points. Williams was second with 181 and Allegheny took third with 195.

Ricky Flynn of Lynchburg led the field of 276 runners today with a time of 25:09.8, more than 22 seconds ahead of the rest of the field.

Leading the Blugolds was **Brent Kann** *(Sr.-Rice Lake, Wis.)*, who took 41st overall with a time of 26:17.3. **Chris Wirtz** *(Sr.-Weston, Wis./D.C. Everest)* was the Blugolds' second finisher, taking 99th with a time of 26:44.1. A season ago he took 166th place as he competed as an individual at nationals.

Tom Breitbach *(Jr.-Muskego, Wis.)* took 119th overall with a time of 26:51.1 and **Josh Wieland** *(Jr.-Menomonie, Wis.)* had a time of 26:59.2 to take 137th. In 178th place was **Mark Sanders** *(Sr.-Hammond, Wis./St. Croix Central)* with a time of 27:22.3 while **Ben Pearson** *(Sr.-Clinton, Wis.)* was 188th with a time of 27:25.7 and **Max Renner** *(Jr.-Green Bay, Wis./East)* took 193rd in 27:29.8.

Prior to this year's national meet, the Blugolds took 13th in 1999 and 11th in 1998 at the NCAA National Championship. The Blugolds' best finishes at nationals came when they were part of the NAIA in 1985 and 1989 as they took fourth place overall.