WIAC Women's Golf Championship Preview

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MADISON, Wis. (UWECBlugolds.com) - University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire will aim for a second consecutive crown at the 2010 Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC) Women's Golf Championship. The 15th gathering of league adversaries will be conducted over 54 holes at Bull's Eye Country Club in Wisconsin Rapids, Wis., Oct. 8-10.

The Blugolds have secured a conference-high six championship trophies and won last year's title with 963 strokes. UW-Whitewater was second with 1005 strokes, UW-Stevens Point third with 1039, UW-Stout fourth with 1059, UW-Platteville fifth with 1077, UW-Oshkosh sixth with 1128 and UW-River Falls seventh with 1135.

UW-Eau Claire is ranked No. 2 nationally in the latest Golf World/National Golf Coaches Association (NGCA) NCAA Division III poll. The Blugolds are led by junior **Emily Swift** *(Jr.-Onalaska, Wis.)*, who owns a league-best 79.1 stroke average. She claimed All-WIAC first team honors a year ago after claiming second team status in 2008.

Also producing consistent scoring in the Blugold lineup are juniors **Sara Mattes** *(Jr.-La Crosse, Wis./Central)* (80.8 avg.), **Katie Maurer** *(Jr.-Forest Lake, Minn./Convent of the Visitation)* (81.8), **Lauren Gault** *(Jr.-Shorewood, Wis.)* (82.9) and **Jamie Hauser** *(Jr.-Hartland, Wis./Arrowhead)* (84.5), along with sophomore **Catherine Wagner** *(So.-Austin, Minn.)* (81.6). Maurer is the two-time defending WIAC individual champion and could become the first three-time winner in league history. She captured All-WIAC first team laurels the past two seasons.

Mattes and Hauser were All-WIAC second team honorees a year ago. Gault claimed second team accolades in 2008 and Wagner was a first team pick in 2009.

UW-Whitewater is ranked No. 18 in the Golf World/NGCA NCAA Division III listings and should provide UW-Eau Claire's strongest competition at this year's championship. Sophomore Mary Donohue boasts a team-best 82.4 stroke average.

The Warhawks have received solid showings from sophomore Melissa Ellis (84.6), freshman Alexa Campanile (86.1), senior Melanie Helgeson (86.2) and freshman Gianna Tenuta (86.7). Ellis claimed medalist honors at the UW-Whitewater Fall Fling and UW-Stevens Point Mad Dawg Invitational.

UW-Stevens Point junior Danelle Olson owns a team-best 81.9 stroke average and captured medalist honors at the UW-Oshkosh Invitational. She has claimed All-WIAC second team status the past two seasons. Freshman Mary Welch was the top finisher at the UW-Platteville Invitational and carries an 84.4 stroke average into this year's championship. Freshman McKenna Prestigiacomo has an 85.6 stroke average.

Additional individuals averaging rounds below 90 strokes this season include: UW-Oshkosh junior Kim Sippl (87.6), UW-Platteville senior Tricia Pawelski (87.3) and sophomore Kellsey Welter (88.6), UW-River Falls junior Mackenzie Casey (89.9) and UW-Stout sophomore Becca Eggers (84.3), junior Kristine Connell (87.8) and freshman Monta Sokolovska (89.0).