Swimming & Diving Kicks off Season Friday

By: Kevin Meinholz, Sports Information Director
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EAU CLAIRE, Wis. (UWECBlugolds.com) - The UW-Eau Claire men's and women's swimming and diving teams will open the 2010-11 season Friday at Minnesota-State Mankato.

Both Blugold teams return a number of key members of last year's squad. In all, 12 men's letterwinners are back from last season while 17 return for the women. There are 25 student-athletes on this year's men's team along with 32 on the women's team.

Nicole Dorvinen *(Jr.-Green Bay, Wis./Bay Port)* returns and was last year's most valuable swimmer. Competing in five events at the NCAA Division III Championship, Dorvinen's best finish came in the 400-yard individual medley as she earned honorable mention All-American status with a 14th place finish. She also was part of four WIAC titles this season.

Another strong returner for the women is 2008-09's team MVP **Angie Bakula** *(Jr.-Appleton, Wis./West)*. She anchored the women's team in 2008-09 with two All-American finishes at the NCAA Division III Championships, taking 12th in the 1,650-yard freestyle and 14th place in the 500-yard freestyle while setting school records in both events.

On the men's side, last year's team most valuable swimmer **Nick Mehring** *(Sr.-Eagan, Minn./Eastview)* returns. Mehring's best finishes at the 2010 WIAC Championship came in the 500-yard freestyle as he took third while he was also third in the 1,650-yard freestyle.

Diving, the Blugold men return last year's most valuable diver, **Nick Badilla** *(So.-Appleton, Wis./North)*. He competed at the NCAA Division III Championship last year and finished with honorable mention All-American honors after taking 12th place out of 22 divers in the three-meter event. He also finished 21st in the one-meter. For the women, divers **Katrina Fitzgerald** *(So.-Farmington, Minn.)* and **Becca Moos** *(So.-White Bear Lake, Minn./St. Agnes)* are back.

The Blugolds will compete mainly on the road this season. The men and women will be at home on November 13 and 19 for dual meets against conference opponents, while just the women will compete at home October 23 against Northern Michigan. The rest of the meets will be conducted away from McPhee.