2010 WIAC Menâ€™s Cross Country Championship Preview

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MADISON, Wis. (UWECBlugolds.com) - University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire will serve as host of the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC) Men's Cross Country Championship at Whitetail Golf Course in Colfax, Wis., Oct. 30. This year's meet will represent the 50th assembling of league adversaries.

UW-La Crosse is the defending champion of the event and has captured a conference-best 30 first-place trophies. The Eagles secured last year's title with 26 points to surpass UW-Platteville and UW-Stevens Point's second-place total of 64 points. UW-Whitewater placed fourth with 97, UW-Eau Claire fifth with 135, UW-River Falls sixth with 192, UW-Oshkosh seventh with 196, UW-Stout eighth with 208 and UW-Superior ninth with 241.

Six teams are ranked among the finest in the NCAA Division III based on the Oct. 25 rankings distributed by the United States Track and Field and Cross Country Coaches Association. UW-Platteville ranks eighth to lead all WIAC mentions, while UW-Stevens Point is 10th, UW-Whitewater 12th, UW-Oshkosh 17th, UW-La Crosse 19th and UW-Eau Claire 31st.

With six squads appearing in the national rankings, expect this year's conference race to be one of the most competitive in history.UW-La Crosse sophomore Zach Wilhelmy claimed the individual crown a season ago, while UW-Platteville senior Jason Garvens claimed the inaugural WIAC Athlete of the Year trophy.

Additional runners expected to compete for All-WIAC honors in this year's 8,000-meter race are: UW-Eau Claire senior **Tom Breitbach** *(Sr.-Muskego, Wis.)*; UW-La Crosse sophomore David Stilin; UW-Oshkosh sophomore John Dewitt and junior Nate Stymiest; UW-Platteville senior Patrick Klein; UW-River Falls senior Scott Bowman; UW-Stevens Point seniors Joel Heroux and Tim Thornburg; UW-Stout senior Peter Johnston; UW-Superior sophomore Scott Behling and UW-Whitewater junior Aron Kehoe and senior Mathias Werve.

The top seven runners in the race will receive All-WIAC first team recognition, while runners placing eight through 14 earn All-WIAC second team accolades. Individuals finishing 15 through 20 claim honorable mention laurels.

All nine WIAC teams will return to action Nov. 13, and participate in the NCAA Division III Midwest Regional in Rock Island, Ill. The regional event will be hosted by Augustana College. The NCAA Division III Championship is scheduled for Nov. 20, in Waverly, Iowa, and will be hosted by Wartburg College.