

2004-05 Eau Claire Women's Indoor Track & Field Preview

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Coming off a 2003-04 season that saw the UW-Eau Claire women's indoor track and field team take fourth place at the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Championships, the Blugolds will return 15 letterwinners in pursuit of an even better finish in 2005.

Eau Claire's 2004 indoor season was highlighted by a first place finish out of eight teams at the UW-Stout Open. One week prior to the meet in Menomonie, the Blugolds claimed second place out of seven teams when they hosted the Blugold Indoor Invitational. Eau Claire finished with the season with a 16th place finish out of 64 teams at the NCAA Division III Championships in Whitewater.

Heading the list of returning letterwinners from a year ago is **Jen Stafslie** (*Sr.-Onalaska/West Salem*), who was the top Blugold long-jumper, triple-jumper and hurdler from one season ago. Stafslie posted the best marks of the season in each of those three events for the Blugolds. Stafslie took second place at nationals in the 55-meter hurdles competition and third place in the long jump.

Joining Stafslie on the indoor team this season will be **Ashley Nelson** (*Sr.-Darwin, MN/Litchfield*), who was phenomenal one season ago on the outdoor squad. Nelson took first place last season at the WIAC Outdoor Championships in the long jump and second place in the triple jump and the 100-meter dash.

Nelson will join a group of established sprinters returning to the Blugolds in 2005. **Shalene Huth** (*So.-Appleton, WI/West*) posted the top Blugold time in the 200-meter dash last season while posting the second best time in the 50-meter dash. **Kristi Hansen** (*Sr.-Rosemount, MN*) also returns after posting the best Blugold time in the 600-meter dash last season.

The long distance events will likely be anchored by returning letterwinner **Sarah Kasabian-Larson** (*Sr.-East Peoria, IL/E.C.P.H.S.*) and newcomer **Molly Warner** (*Fr.-Mosinee*). Kasabian-Larson posted the best times among returning letterwinners in the 1500, 3000 and 5000-meter runs last season while Warner was a freshman standout on the Blugold women's cross country team last fall.

Returning to the pole vault in 2005 is **Betsy Kaminske** (*So.-Waupaca*), who made her debut season last year an impressive one. Kaminske posted a jump of 3.26 meters during her freshman season, good for third on the roster. She tied for sixth place in the event at the WIAC Indoor Championships.

Returning to the high jump competition in 2005 will be **Erin Kokta** (*Sr.-Brookfield/East*). Kokta finished last season with the best Blugold jump in the event, posting a mark of 1.56 meters, a full tenth of a meter better than the next finisher.

A crop of 20 freshmen join the returning letterwinners for the indoor season. The combination of youth and experience may be what the Blugolds and head coach Tracy Yengo need to reach the top of the WIAC.

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