

Blugold Athlete To Be Featured On Cbs Highlight Show

Posted: Friday, April 15, 2005

UW-Eau Claire pole vaulter **Steph Barnes** (*Sauk City/Sauk Prairie*) will be one of the featured athletes on CBS' NCAA Division III winter sports highlight show which will be aired Saturday, April 23 at noon (CDT).

WKBT, Channel 8, La Crosse, will carry the one-hour show which has Barnes prominently featured according to CBS' Steve McKee in New York.

Barnes was filmed during the NCAA Division III indoor nationals at Illinois Wesleyan University in Bloomington, Illinois last month. The show will also include soundbytes of her father Duane and Blugold pole vault coach Doug Clary. Barnes earned All-American honors by placing third in the NCAA meet.

CBS became interested in Barnes because of the journey she took to her success this season. She is a two-sport athlete at UW-Eau Claire, competing in both gymnastics and track simultaneously. She is the second oldest of 10 children and overcame a lengthy series of injuries to compete this year.

As a freshman, she broke her back pole vaulting. However, it was a compression fracture in her upper back and she didn't know it was broken until the summer because of a breakdown in communication between her and the doctor, so she competed most of the indoor season and all of the outdoor season with that injury. That was the last in a long list of injuries which also included two stress fractures in her back, a stress fracture in each fibula, severely sprained ankles, a dislocated rib, fractured radius, chipped elbow, dislocated elbow, broken toes and a broken nose. She was forced to sit out all of last year to recover from her compression fracture and has been able to compete injury-free so far this season. Therefore, she is a sophomore eligibility-wise, this season.

Barnes won the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference indoor pole vault title this year with a school record effort of 12 feet. Last week, she broke the school outdoor record with a jump of 12 feet, 2 inches, which has her tied for first nationally in the NCAA Division III honor roll.

- TP -