

Cross Country Teams Open Season Saturday

By: Kevin Meinholz, Sports Information Director

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EAU CLAIRE, Wis. (UWECBlugolds.com) - The UW-Eau Claire men's and women's cross country teams will open the season Saturday.

The Blugold women, ranked No. 1 in the nation, will look to defend their national title this season. The Blugolds return a strong team, which will include eight letterwinners from last year.

Included in those letterwinners is five of the seven squad members who competed at nationals a season ago. The members are **Alyssa Sybilrud** (Jr.-Savage, Minn./Burnsville), **Kacey Rindy** (Jr.-Fennimore, Wis.), **Elly Prunty** (Sr.-Antigo, Wis.), **Margaret Ho** (Sr.-Wisconsin Rapids, Wis./Lincoln) and **Beth Easker** (Sr.-Wittenberg, Wis./Wittenberg-Birnamwood). Sybilrud and Ho were the Blugolds top two finishers at nationals last year and both finished with All-American honors.

The Blugold women will also be going for their fourth consecutive Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference title.

On the men's side, nine letterwinners are back from a team that finished 16th at nationals in 2009. Of those who competed at nationals last year, three are back on this year's team. The returners are **Josh Wieland** (Sr.-Menomonie, Wis.), **Max Renner** (Sr.-Green Bay, Wis./East) and **Tom Breitbach** (Sr.-Muskego, Wis.).

The Blugold men also finished strong in the WIAC and at regionals, finishing fifth at both meets, and will try to improve over last year's finishes in both events.