

Men's Basketball Outlasted By UW-Stevens Point

Posted: Wednesday, February 1, 2006

EAU CLAIRE - The UW-Eau Claire men's basketball team fell in a close one tonight to Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC) opponent UW-Stevens Point by a score of 79-76.

The loss drops the Blugolds to 10-10 overall and 3-8 in conference play. The victory gives the Pointers a 13-7 record overall and an 8-3 WIAC record. The Blugolds have now lost five-straight to the Pointers.

This one was close throughout. There were four ties in the first seven minutes of the game. The Blugolds would then take the lead on a **Jared Bardon** (*So.-DeForest, WI*) free throw with 13 minutes to go and they wouldn't relinquish that lead the rest of the half. The Blugolds biggest lead of the half was only seven and that was the halftime score as UWEC led 31-24 at the break.

The Blugolds shot 50% in the first half, while the Pointers shot just 40%. The Blugolds had 10 points off Pointer turnovers in the half compared to 0 for Stevens Point.

The second half was a different story. The Pointers came out and scored the first eight points of the half to regain the lead 32-31 with 17 minutes to go. The Blugolds first field goal would come at 16:17 with a jumper by **Zack Ryan** (*So.-Lake Elmo, MN/Tartan*). The Blugolds would regain the lead on lay-up by Jared Bardon to make the score 37-36.

The Blugolds would extend that lead up to six, until the Pointers went on an 11-0 run to put themselves up by five with 10:27 to go. The Pointers would stay in front until five minutes to go, and that's when Jared Bardon connected on a three-pointer to put the Blugolds back in front. However, the Pointers would regain the lead and keep it the rest of the way.

But it wasn't easy. **Luke Meier** (*So.-Cross Plains, WI/Middleton*) would hit a three-pointer to cut the Pointers six-point lead down to three with 32 seconds left. The Blugolds would then have a chance to tie following a Pointer-turnover, but the Blugolds would give it right back to them. After two Pointer free throws, Zack Ryan would hit another three to cut the lead to two with 11 seconds left.

Then following two more free throws, **Matt Riley** (*Jr.-Cadott, WI*) connected on a three to cut it to one with three seconds left. Stevens Point would hit two more free throws with a second left to put them up three. The Blugolds desperation attempt was deflected and the Pointers went on to win 79-76.

Both teams finished shooting over 55% for the game. The Blugolds shot 56% in the loss, while the Pointers shot 55.3%.

Both teams had four players score in double-figures. Jared Bardon led all scorers with a career-high 26 points for the Blugolds. Zack Ryan added 17 points. Matt Riley had a double-double with 14 points and a career-high 11 rebounds.

Up next the Blugolds will travel to face Finlandia University Saturday afternoon. This will be the third meeting between the two schools this season. The tip-off is scheduled to begin at 1 p.m.

Eau Claire-Stevens Point Box Score

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