

Men's Basketball Ends Season With Loss To Whitewater

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WHITEWATER - The UW-Eau Claire men's basketball team's season came to an end tonight after an 88-47 loss to top-seeded UW-Whitewater in the first round of the eighth annual Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC) tournament.

The Blugolds will finish with a 12-14 overall record with a 3-8 road record this season. This is the third straight year that the Blugolds will not reach the tournament semifinals.

The Blugolds could not hang with the Warhawks like they did just three days ago when they lost in double overtime, as Whitewater jumped on the Blugolds early. The Warhawks started the game outscoring the Blugolds 26-9 the first 13 minutes of the game. Whitewater would lead by as much as 25 in the half and went into halftime with a 44-21 lead.

The Warhawks shot 61% from the field in the first half, while the Blugolds shot just 27%. Whitewater dominated the paint area outscoring the Blugolds 24-8 underneath.

It didn't get much better for the Blugolds in the second half as the Warhawks extended their lead to 59-29 with just under 15 minutes to go in the game. The Warhawks would gradually build their lead and go on to win 88-47.

The 41-point victory by the Warhawks ties the WIAC tournament record for largest margin of victory. Whitewater was on the receiving end of that score when they lost to UW-Stout in 2001, 90-49. The 47 points by the Blugolds is also the third lowest point total in WIAC tournament history.

The Warhawks ended the game shooting 56% from the field, while the Blugolds finished at 30%. The Warhawks shot 15 more free throws and made 16 more than the Blugolds in the game.

Jared Bardon (So.-DeForest, WI) led the Blugolds in scoring with 15 points and **Dan Beyer** (So.-Waukesha, WI/Catholic Memorial) was the only other Blugold in double-figures with 13 points. **Matt Riley** (Jr.-Cadott, WI) led the team in rebounds with eight.

The lone senior on the team **Tyler Birkel** (Sr.-Spring Valley, WI) ends his Blugold career with a team-high 28 blocks this season.

Andy Freund led all scorers for the Warhawks with 18 points

The Warhawks will now host UW-La Crosse in the semifinals on Thursday night.

Eau Claire-Whitewater Box Score

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