

Soccer Advances To WIAC Championship For 2nd Straight Year

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EAU CLAIRE - The top-seeded UW-Eau Claire soccer team is one step closer to an automatic bid to the NCAA tournament after defeating fourth-seeded UW-River Falls 2-0 today in the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC) Semifinal.

This is the second time in as many years the Blugolds have advanced to the WIAC Tournament Championship match where they will face UW-Oshkosh. Last year's team also defeated the Falcons 2-0 to advance to the championship, where it won 2-1 over Oshkosh. Already having defended the regular season crown, this season's squad could defend both the regular season and tournament titles with a win in tomorrow's championship.

The 18th ranked Blugolds are now 20-2-0 on the season. The shutout moves Eau Claire's season total to 15, breaking the previous school record set last year. River Falls ends its season 10-7-2.

The first half saw Eau Claire outshooting the Falcons 10-1 with one goal finding the net. It occurred at 34:30 when **Shannon Conlin** (*Fr.-Reedsburg*) got it past the goalie to put Eau Claire on top for the game.

The defense handled the rest, allowing only seven shots all match. The saves were even, with **Allie Rivard** (*So.-Plymouth, MN/Wayzata*) making three and **Liz Weirick** (*Jr.-Kenosha/Tremper*) stopping two. Emily Stieler for River Falls made five to match the tally.

Allison Muer (*So.-Minneapolis, MN/South*) added an insurance goal 66:03 into the contest to make for the final score. Both scores were unassisted.

In the end the Blugolds outshot the opponent 14-7 with Muer leading the way in shots at four. The Blugolds were nailed for 10 fouls with 11 for the Falcons. Eau Claire also had nine corner kicks compared to the Falcon two.

Tomorrow's second-seeded Titan opponent advanced after winning 1-0 over #3 seed UW-Stevens Point. Oshkosh made a 33:42 Amanda Matzke goal count as they held the Pointers to six shots. This is the third straight year Oshkosh has made it to the championship. The past two years it has lost by a goal both times.

In the only regular season matchup between tomorrow's competitors, Eau Claire won 4-2 over the Titans courtesy of two unanswered second half scores. **Maria Iaizzo** (*Sr.-White Bear Lake, MN*) scored two goals with one assist while **Jessica Millard** (*So.-Madison/La Follette*) also shined with two assists.

The Blugolds will host their second consecutive WIAC Championship match against the Titans tomorrow at 1:00 p.m. at Bollinger Fields. The winner automatically qualifies for the NCAA Tournament.

Eau Claire-River Falls WIAC Semifinal Box Score- PH -