

# Volleyball Falls To Whitewater In WIAC Tournament Final

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EAU CLAIRE - The fifth-ranked UW-Eau Claire volleyball team fell behind early against No. 10 UW-Whitewater tonight and ended up losing in four games as the Warhawks claimed their seventh Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC) Tournament title in the last 10 years.

The Warhawks won by scores of 31-29, 30-24, 9-30, 30-28. The loss drops the Blugolds to an overall record of 28-3, while Whitewater improves to 32-6.

It was Whitewater's 11th conference tournament title since the tournament began in 1988 and their first since the 2002 season. The Blugolds, who have never won a WIAC Tournament championship, have now lost in the finals the last two years.

The top-seeded Blugolds jumped out to a 22-13 lead in game one, but the Warhawks rallied to take a 28-27 lead. With score tied 29-29, Whitewater scored the last two points to take the game 31-29. Whitewater had 20 kills, while the Blugolds had just 12 in game one.

The Warhawks kept it going in the second game, jumping out to a 12-3 lead. Whitewater kept that lead and won the second game 30-24. The Blugolds had a .049 attack percentage their worst of the match.

The third game was all Blugolds, going up 15-4 and winning 30-9. The nine points was lowest Whitewater has scored in a game all year. The Blugolds followed up their worst game of the match with their best won with a .524 attack percentage.

Eau Claire jumped out to a 7-3 lead early in game four. However, Whitewater would come back and the rest of the game went both ways. Whitewater pulled it out in the end, winning game four 30-28.

The Blugolds ended with 50 kills and were led by **Jodi Dunbar** (Sr.-Platteville, WI) with 14. **Abby Freiborg** (So.-Sacred Heart, MN/Renville County West) had 13 kills and **Jessica Groh** (Sr.-Eau Claire, WI/North) added 10 kills for the Blugolds. Whitewater finished with 59 kills and was led by Kelly Sorensen, who had 14 kills.

Eau Claire's **Carly Freiborg** (Sr.-Sacred Heart, MN/Renville County West) had 41 assists and **Shanna Berger** (Sr.-Baldwin/Baldwin-Woodville) had 22 digs in the loss.

With the win, the Warhawks receive the automatic bid for the Division III NCAA Women's Volleyball Tournament where they will look to repeat as national champions.

Tomorrow the NCAA will decide the field of 60 for the Division III NCAA Tournament. Even with the loss tonight, the Blugolds will still be apart of the field and they are expected to host one regional starting Thursday night. There are eight regions and the winner from each regional will move on to Salem, VA for the Elite Eight.

Eau Claire-Whitewater Box Score

Tournament web site

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