

Second Half Lifts Women's Basketball To Home Opener Win

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EAU CLAIRE - The UW-Eau Claire women's basketball team out-scored St. Norbert College 43-30 in the second half to defeat the Green Knights 63-55 in the home opener tonight at Zorn Arena.

The Blugolds have now won two straight games and have a record of 2-1. The Green Knights have lost two straight games and fall to a record of 1-2. The Blugolds avenge last year's loss to St. Norbert, which snapped a 13-game winning streak against the Green Knights. The Blugolds have won 14 of the last 15 meetings.

In a very sloppy game, Eau Claire jumped out to a 7-2 lead five minutes into the contest after a **Rachel Mueggenborg** (*Jr.-West Salem, WI*) three-pointer. The Green Knights then went a 8-2 run to take their first lead of the game at 10-9 with 11:55 to play in the half.

After the lead went back-and-forth, the Knights hit three, three-pointers to extend their lead to seven with 3:50 to play in the first half. The Knights went into the half with a 25-20 advantage.

Both teams made nine field goals in the first half, but the Blugolds had eight more shots. There were 33 combined turnovers in the half. Eau Claire had 13 points off of turnovers, while the Knights had five points. St. Norbert out-rebounded the Blugolds 18-13.

Michelle Burns (*Jr.-Eau Claire, WI/North*) started the second half with a three-pointer to cut the St. Norbert lead to two. The Blugolds then crawled their way back in front on a **Brittanni Hakanson** (*So.-Wheeler, WI/Boyceville*) jumper to give Eau Claire a 31-30 lead with 15:39 to play.

After the Green Knights regained a three-point lead, the Blugolds went on an 11-2 run to take a six-point lead, their biggest of the game up to that point. St. Norbert answered with a 9-0 run of its own to take a 50-46 lead with 5:56 to play.

With the score 53-52 in favor of the Green Knights with 3:20 to play, Brittanni Hakanson made two free throws to put the Blugolds back in front. **Heidi Arciszewski** (*So.-Thorp, WI*) then had back-to-back layups, the second of which was a three-point play to put the Blugolds up 59-53. With the score 59-55, Michelle Burns would get a key offensive rebound, got fouled, and proceeded to hit two free throws to put Eau Claire up 61-55 with 41 seconds left. The Blugolds hit two more free throws on their way to winning 63-55.

The Blugolds were 15-for-15 from the free throw line in the second half and hit their last 16 free throws after missing their first four. There were nine second half lead changes and four ties. Both teams shot over 50% in the second half with the Blugolds hitting 52% and the Green Knights shooting 50%. Both teams had 28 rebounds and the Blugolds forced 32 St. Norbert turnovers.

Michelle Burns led all scorers with 21 points and she just missed a double-double with nine rebounds to lead the Blugolds. Heidi Arciszewski had 13 points, Brittanni Hakanson had 12 points, and Rachel Mueggenborg added 10 points. **Amanda Zenner** (*Jr.-Medford, WI*) had three steals to lead the team. Bianca White led St. Norbert with 10 points.

The Blugolds will host the annual four-team Thanksgiving Showcase on Friday and Saturday. The Blugolds opponent on Friday will be Otterbein College (OH). The other game will feature Viterbo University and Morningside College (IA). The Eau Claire and Otterbein game will begin at approximately 8 p.m. following the Viterbo and Morningside contest. All of the action will take place in Zorn Arena.

Eau Claire-St. Norbert Box Score

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