

Men's Basketball Ready For First WIAC Contest

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EAU CLAIRE - The UW-Eau Claire men's basketball team will face its first conference opponent this Wednesday when it plays UW-Stout at 7:00 p.m. in Menomonie.

The Blugolds are 2-1 with a 69-61 victory over Alma College (MI) and a 78-65 triumph at St. Mary's (MN). The loss came to Manchester College (IN) by a 68-59 tally.

The leading point-gainer for the team has been **Jared Bardon** (*Jr.-DeForest*) with 43. **Matt Riley** (*Sr.-Cadott*) and **Dan Beyer** (*Jr.-Waukesha/Catholic Memorial*) are close behind with 40 and 38, respectively. **Geoff Probst** (*Fr.-Moose Lake, MN/U. of North Dakota*) leads the Blugolds in points per game with the 19 he scored off the bench in the St. Mary's game. Bardon has a mark of 14.3 while Riley's and Beyer's are 13.3 and 12.7.

Beyer's 19 boards rank one ahead of Riley's total. Beyer stands at 6.3 rebounds per game, ahead of Riley's 6.0 average.

Eau Claire is shooting 46.6% while holding opponents to 42.1%. The Blugolds are 17-of-40 from long range for 42.5%. Opposing squads have shot more threes and made less, going 16-for-60 or 26.7%. From the line Eau Claire is 69.9% compared to 81.5% for opponents. The Blugolds are +8.3 in rebounding margin and -0.7 in the close turnover margin.

The Blue Devils are 2-0 after a 67-49 win over Bemidji State (MN) and a 78-51 romp over Northland College. They also lost 82-33 to UW-Madison in an exhibition. The team returns only five players with one starter, that being all-region and first team all-conference selection Jacob Nonemacher. Beyond that, the squad is relatively inexperienced. The team has three seniors and 14 newcomers.

Jerrel Enerson-Matthews is the team leader in points with 40, ahead of Nonemacher's 32. The two hold marks of 20.0 and 16.0 points per game. Enerson-Matthews has gone 7-for-13 from behind the arc. Nonemacher's 28 rebounds lead the team by far.

As a team Stout is shooting 55.6% over their opponents' 28.2%. They have also gone 13-for-31 on threes for 41.9% while holding opponents to 25.0% on 13-for-52. Stout has shot 61.1% for free throws compared to 70.0% for opponents. The Blue Devils have an impressive +16.0 rebounding margin but are -5.5 in turnovers.

Eau Claire holds the all-time record between these two schools 108-60-1 but has lost the last five to the Blue Devils. The last win was a 62-58 home victory in January of 2003. The last win in Menomonie was a year before.

This year's rivalry between the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC) foes gets underway at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday.