

Men's Basketball Goes Down As Pointer Offense Rolls

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STEVENS POINT - The third-ranked UW-Stevens Point squad rebounded from its lone Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC) loss of the year last Wednesday to fifth-ranked UW-Oshkosh as the Pointers soundly defeated the UW-Eau Claire men's basketball team 90-61 at Quandt Fieldhouse.

The Blugolds drop to 3-9 in WIAC play while falling to 9-11 overall. Stevens Point keeps its lead in the conference with a 10-1 WIAC record and a 17-2 overall mark. Eau Claire has gone 2-7 in its last nine games, all of which were against conference foes.

The Blugolds scored first with **Geoff Probst** (*Fr.-Moose Lake, MN/U. of North Dakota*) laying it in less than a minute into the game. Stevens Point then made 11 straight attempts as it cruised to a 25-13 lead at 12:58. The Blugolds kept in the game and brought the deficit down to eight at 7:36 after a **Zack Ryan** (*Jr.-Lake Elmo, MN/Tartan*) three. It was the last single-digit deficit of the night. The Pointers finished the half strong and brought the lead up to 21 at 57-36 when intermission came.

The Blugolds shot 53.3% in the half while going 3-of-10 from behind the arc and 1-of-5 from the line. However, Stevens Point shot an astounding 76.7% on the half while going 9-of-14 on threes.

The second half was no different as Stevens Point steadily increased its comfortable lead. The Pointers brought the lead to around 30 at the midpoint of the half, but increased it to the game-high deficit of 35 at 6:07 before Eau Claire cut into it as the game neared completion. With the 90-61 score, Stevens Point has now won five of its last eight games by 29 or more points.

Eau Claire ended up shooting 46.0% while going 3-of-15 for threes and 50% on free throws. The Pointers settled back down to 59.0% for shooting percentage, though it is the team's best this season, while hitting 39.3% of three pointers and 77.8% of free throws. It is the most points Eau Claire has given up this season and the highest field goal percentage allowed.

The team was outrebounded 35-to-27 and it lost the turnover battle 13-to-8. The Pointers capitalized on the turnovers, scoring 20 points off them to Eau Claire's nine.

Dan Beyer (*Jr.-Waukesha/Catholic Memorial*) had a season-high 27 points to lead both teams and collected 10 rebounds for a double-double. Probst also added 10 points.

Khalifa El-Amin had a career-high 11 assists, which is also the most this season in the WIAC. He also leads in assist-to-turnover ratio for the conference. The other Pointers also lived up to their WIAC scoring accolades. Pete Rortvedt, second in the conference in scoring, connected for 25 points. He was helped out by four other Pointers scoring in double figures. Jon Krull and Steve Hicklin both scored 14. Krull is third in the WIAC for scoring and Hicklin is 16th. El-Amin and Bryan Beamish both contributed 10. Beamish is second in the conference for shooting percentage.

This is the second and final time Eau Claire faces Stevens Point this season. The previous game went 77-43 in favor of the Pointers. The all-time series is 76-78 with Stevens Point having the edge. This is the 12th straight loss to the Pointers.

The Blugolds end their stretch of WIAC basketball Saturday when they face Finlandia University (MI) in Zorn Arena. Tip-off is at 5 p.m. and the evening is also Youth Night.

Eau Claire-Stevens Point Box Score

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