

# Men's Basketball To Host Ranked WIAC Foe

*Posted: Thursday, February 8, 2007*

EAU CLAIRE - The UW-Eau Claire men's basketball team will face eighth-ranked UW-Oshkosh this Saturday as it looks to end its four-game skid versus Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC) teams.

Eau Claire is 10-12 overall but 3-10 in the WIAC, which puts the team eighth in the conference standings. UW-River Falls and UW-Stout sit within reach at 5-9 in WIAC games. Both have two conference games to play while Eau Claire has three. If Eau Claire did not move up in the standings it would have to face WIAC-leading UW-Stevens Point, ranked second in the nation. Oshkosh is 10-3 in conference play and 18-4 overall as it sits second in the conference.

Earlier this season the Blugolds lost 80-55 to the Titans. The all-time series is 69-39 in Eau Claire's favor. The Blugolds have lost 11 of the last 12 to the Titans, however.

Eau Claire is averaging 64.0 points per game while shooting 44.4%. Opponents average 65.7 points and shoot 45.8%. The team is up 2.6 in rebounding margin and down 2.0 in turnovers. Eau Claire's 11.91 offensive rebounds per game tie for second in the conference with UW-Whitewater. The team's three-point defense is tops in the WIAC, holding opponents to 33.1%. The Blugolds shoot 36.1% on threes and 61.4% on free throws. Opponents have made 70.8% of their free throws.

**Jared Bardon** (*Jr.-DeForest*) leads the Blugolds in scoring with 13.6 points per game, though **Dan Beyer** (*Jr.-Waukesha/Catholic Memorial*) is just behind him with 13.4. That puts Bardon 13th in the WIAC for scoring and Beyer 14th. Bardon's 44.3% mark from long range is also good for fifth in the WIAC while **Luke Meier** (*Jr.-Cross Plains/Middleton*) has shot 50.0% for threes and ranks third. Beyer's 6.8 boards per game are best for the Blugolds and seventh in the conference. His 2.64 offensive boards per contest rank second among WIAC competitors. **Zack Ryan** (*Jr.-Lake Elmo, MN/Tartan*) has 68 assists to lead the team while he, Beyer, and Bardon all have 18 steals. Ryan's 3.09 assists per game are fifth in the WIAC.

Oshkosh has averaged 75.4 points per game compared to 61.9 for opponents. The shooting percentage stacks up 50.2% to 41.2% in Oshkosh's favor. The team is up 8.5 in rebounding margin and up 0.59 in turnovers. The Titans rank first in the WIAC in shooting percentage, rebounding margin, rebounding offense (36.5), and defensive rebounds per game (25.59). They are also second in scoring defense, scoring margin (+13.5), free throw percentage (76.1%), and rebounding defense (28.0).

Eau Claire will be facing the WIAC's most accurate shooter along with other offensive threats. Jim Capelle's 16.5 points per game lead the Titan attack while Kerry Gibson is second with 14.2. Capelle ranks third in the conference for scoring while Gibson is seventh. Gibson has shot 61.3% on the year, the best in the conference. He has also gone a conference-best 84.3% from the line. Capelle's 2.05 threes per game tie for fourth. His 2.14 assist-to-turnover ratio is third and Chad Doedens' 2.04 mark is fourth.

Gibson is the rebound leader with 7.9 per game, which also puts him in fifth for the WIAC. Capelle is eighth (6.2) and Jordan Johnson is 14th (4.7). Gibson has 3.82 blocks per game to lead the WIAC and 5.73 defensive rebounds per game to rank third. Johnson has 25 steals to lead the team in that category.

The tip-off is set for 3 p.m. in Zorn Arena this Saturday. The Alumni Game will also be that day.