Women's Hockey Looks To Hold Its Position In NCHA Standings

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EAU CLAIRE - The UW-Eau Claire women's hockey team hopes to gain some breathing room from ninth-ranked UW-Stevens Point in the conference standings this weekend as the two teams go head-to-head in a home-and-away series.

Eau Claire is currently tied for third in the Northern Collegiate Hockey Association (NCHA) with 10 points due to a 4-5-2 conference mark. Lake Forest (IL) also has 10, going 3-2-4 in NCHA play. Eau Claire holds the tiebreaker due to more NCHA wins. Lake Forest has four more NCHA games to pick up the conference wins, two against NCHA-leading UW-River Falls and two against Stevens Point. The Pointers are fifth in the conference with nine points. They are 4-4-1 in conference play, so if the Pointers sweep the weekend they move ahead. If the games are split, Eau Claire keeps the same edge. If the Pointers win a game and the other is a tie, then the Pointers would hold a one-point edge. Stevens Point only has the games against Eau Claire and Lake Forest left, so there would be a lot of Forester fans in Eau Claire if the Pointers moved past the Blugolds. After the Stevens Point series, the Blugolds finish up the NCHA schedule with two more games against Finlandia University (MI), last and winless in the NCHA. Only the top four NCHA teams make the postseason.

Earlier this season the Blugolds won 4-3 over Stevens Point thanks to a short-handed **Karen Hebert** *(Sr.-Lakeville, MN/Holy Angels)* goal with a minute left in the third period. The all-time series stands 2-21-1 in Stevens Point's favor.

The Blugolds average 2.7 scores per game while opponents average 2.3 goals. Eau Claire converts power-plays 14.8% of the time and opponents convert on 13.2% of opportunities. The Blugolds have been penalty-free, averaging a conference-low 10.30 minutes in the box per game. The team's five short-handed goals tie for second in the NCHA.

Laura Suppes *(Sr.-Roseville, MN)* has 17 points off of eight goals and nine assists, all team-highs. Hebert also has eight goals and **Allie Campbell** *(Sr.-Plymouth, MN/Wayzata)* also has nine assists. **Martina Korinek** *(Sr.-White Bear Lake, MN)* and **Michelle Stohr** *(Fr.-South St. Paul, MN)* tie for second in points with both of them collecting seven goals and seven assists.

Mikaela Jobman *(Fr.-St. Paul, MN/Cretin Derham Hall)* has gone 5-3-0 in goal while **Bri Lutz** *(Fr.-Burnsville, MN)* has gone 5-5-2. Jobman posts an 88.1% save percentage and a 2.29 goals allowed average. Lutz has an 87.2% save percentage and a 2.30 goals allowed average.

The Pointers on average double-up their opponents, scoring 4.1 goals per game to 2.0. Their conversion rate is 20.3% while opponents hold a 19.8% mark. Stevens Point leads the NCHA in goals per game while ranking second in goals allowed (36), points (159), power-play goals (24), power-play conversion, and penalty minutes per game (12.56). They are also tied for second in short-handed goals (5) and assists (85).

Nicole Grossmann has 18 points off 11 goals and seven assists to lead for points and goals. Michelle Sosnowski's 16 points are from nine goals and seven assists. The assists leader is Sarah Phillips with nine.

Amy Statz has been the go-to goalkeeper, with an 11-4-1 record. She has stopped 90.7% of the shots she has seen while allowing 2.04 goals per contest.

Friday's game is in Hobbs Ice Center at 7 p.m. while Saturday's game starts at 7:30 p.m. in Stevens Point.