Volleyball Opens Up WIAC Schedule Against Oshkosh

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EAU CLAIRE, Wis. - The UW-Eau Claire volleyball team will have its first conference match on Friday when it faces red-hot UW-Oshkosh.

The 8-4 Blugolds dropped from the latest CSTV/AVCA Division III Coaches Poll after being in 25th last time. They did receive 19 votes, however. The Titans are eighth in the poll and have a 14-1 record. Eau Claire is fourth in the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC) while Oshkosh leads the way.

The Blugolds have just competed in tournament play so far and have finished second in each of the three tourneys. They went 3-1 in the UWEC Labor Day and St. Benedict tournaments, but went 2-2 in the Augsburg Tourney.

Abby Freiborg *(Jr.-Sacred Heart, MN/Renville County West)* has made two all-tournament teams and leads the Blugolds in kills with 3.32 per game. She also has collected 34 aces to lead the team and the conference.

Lissa Martinez *(Sr.-Vadnais Heights, MN/White Bear Lake)*, who was on one all-tourney team, has 3.21 kills per game behind Freiborg. **Emily Haese** *(Jr.-Mishicot)* has been setting up all the Blugolds with a team-leading 11.41 assists per game.

Katie Fox *(Jr.-Chippewa Falls/Chi-Hi)* and **Heather Harnell** *(Sr.-Minnetonka, MN)* are the defensive leaders. Fox has 22.0 blocks on the year while Harnell has tallied 5.20 digs per game. Harnell's total is third in the WIAC.

As a team, the Blugolds rank eighth in the conference for hitting with a .165 mark, but sit high in aces on 2.80 per game, the second-best WIAC number.

Oshkosh, meanwhile, has gotten off to a fantastic start. The team lost its first match against Carthage College, but is now riding a 14-match winning streak. The team is first in the conference in hitting (.305), aces (3.14/game), and blocks (2.86/game), and is second in assists (14.43/game), and kills (15.52/game).

Leah Rosenbaum and Kim Vail have hit .440 and .398, respectively, which are first and second in the conference. Rosenbaum has smashed 3.89 kills per game and Vail has 3.55 for the dual threat. Rosenbaum's total is second in the WIAC and Vail's is ninth.

The match will see the top six servers in the conference, with Freiborg first (0.89 aces/game), Titan Christina Cahoon second (0.60), Titan Samantha Schmidt third (0.59), **Jenna Weber** *(Jr.-Antigo)* fourth (0.59), **Lindsey Smith** *(So.-Maple Lake, MN)* fifth (0.57), and Titan Leah Stumpf sixth (0.54).

Stumpf has set the offense up well this season, contributing 13.49 assists per contest, second-most in the conference. Jacque Ray's 1.39 blocks per game and Rosenbaum's 1.27 also are tops for the Titans, as well as second and third in conference rankings. Schmidt has been solid on defense, with 5.59 blocks per game. She ranks second in the conference for that category.

The match starts at 7 p.m. on Friday in Oshkosh.