

Volleyball Holds Off Superior, Advances In WIAC Tourney

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EAU CLAIRE, Wis. - The third-seeded UW-Eau Claire volleyball team bounced sixth-seeded UW-Superior from the conference tourney today in a hard-fought 3-1 match.

The scores went 30-28, 27-30, 30-26, and 30-28. This is the third straight year Eau Claire has advanced past the first round. Superior has never made it to the second round.

In game one, Eau Claire got off to an 11-6 start before a Superior timeout. The Yellowjackets came back to tie it 18-18 and the two teams went back and forth. Eau Claire had a three-point lead at 26-23 and held onto its small cushion during a 30-28 win. Both teams hit well with Eau Claire at .415 and Superior at .344.

The second game went to the Yellowjackets early as they pulled to a 15-10 lead. The five-point lead would tie for the biggest of the day. The Blugolds stormed back to tie it at 16. They then kept swapping points until Superior took a 28-25 lead. They held on to win by three. The Yellowjackets outhit the Blugolds .130-to-.098.

Game 3 had the biggest final score differential at four points. The game was close early with both teams going on a surge. As the game wore on, the Blugolds put some ground between them and Superior with scores of 25-20 and 27-22. Superior got within two at 28-26, but Eau Claire held on and took a 2-1 lead in games. This time Eau Claire had a better hitting percentage at .237-to-.158.

Eau Claire got off to a 7-3 start in the final game, but the Yellowjackets tied it. Eau Claire then took a one-point lead for awhile before Superior went up by a point, even at 22-21. The Blugolds went on a 4-1 run to make it 25-23. They built the lead to 29-25 before Superior scored three straight. However, Eau Claire finished off the Yellowjackets to move on. Both teams hit at .100 or lower, with the Blugolds posting a .100 average and the Yellowjackets tallying .089.

Abby Freiborg (Jr.-Sacred Heart, MN/Renville County West) led the team in kills with 22, most for any Blugold this season. Three others were in double-digits with **Nikki Peterson** (Sr.-North St. Paul, MN/North) collecting 13, **Danielle Lucia** (Fr.-St. Cloud, MN/Apollo) smashing 11, and **Katie Fox** (Jr.-Chippewa Falls/Chi-Hi) totaling 10. **Emily Haese** (Jr.-Mishicot) had 67 assists in the match, which is also the most for any Blugold this year.

The offense had 73 kills to Superior's 54 and 70 assists to 52 for the visitors. Eau Claire also outhit Superior for the entire match .190-to-.163.

Both teams showed strong efforts on defense. **Heather Harnell** (Sr.-Minnetonka, MN) went down for 20 digs while three others were in double-digits. Freiborg followed her with 19 while Haese and **Cary Rasmussen** (So.-Sparta) had 15 and 14, respectively. The digs went 89-to-77 in Eau Claire's favor while Superior doubled up the Blugolds in blocks at 10.0-to-5.0.

The second game snapped a 27-game winning streak over the Yellowjackets that stretched back to 2002. The 25 straight victorious matches is still alive and dates back to 1994.

The Blugolds will now play seventh-seeded UW-Platteville at 5 p.m. on Friday in Whitewater.

Eau Claire-Superior Box Score

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