

Women's Basketball Defeats Ranked Luther

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DECORAH, Iowa - The UW-Eau Claire women's basketball team opened up its 2007-08 season with a 62-53 win against ninth-ranked Luther College today.

The Blugolds are currently ranked 20th in the USA Today ESPN Coaches Poll and are expected to finish first in the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC) this year. Last season the Blugolds started with a loss to ranked Baldwin-Wallace College and finished the season with a record of 19-9. They finished third in the WIAC behind UW-Stout and UW-Whitewater.

This was also the first game for Luther. Luther is expected to finish second in the Iowa Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (IIAC).

The Blugolds fell behind early while Luther extended their lead to eight in the middle of the first half. **Michelle Burns** (Sr.-Eau Claire, WI/North) took over and scored the next two baskets to cut the lead to four. **Heidi Arciszewski** (Jr.-Thorp, WI) then added a jumper and two free throws to tie the game. A three by **Rachel Mueggenborg** (Sr.-West Salem, WI) put the Blugolds up by three. The game remained close until the Blugolds went on a run to go up by seven. **Amanda Zenner** (Sr.-Medford, WI), **Kali Houselog** (Sr.-Neeah, WI/St. Mary Central), and **Brittanni Hakanson** (Jr.-Wheeler, WI/Boyceville) each added baskets to put the Blugolds up. Luther then had a good end of the half run to close the half at 27-25 in favor of the Blugolds.

Eau Claire shot 36.7% from the field while 40% from three-point land. Luther shot 50% from the field but had seven free throws compared to Eau Claire's three. Heidi Arciszewski had nine points in the first half.

The second half remained close at the start. The Blugolds didn't go up by more than four points. Luther took the lead on a three by Jill Eicher with 16:58 left in the half. Luther added to that lead, until a three pointer from Rachel Mueggenborg. The Eau Claire guards took over with Heather Witt having a few steals and fastbreak points. Mueggenborg also added a few foul shots. The Blugolds kept adding to their lead with great defense stops. The lead grew to 13 with 8:07 left in the half. Luther tapped into that lead with a few foul shots and points in the paint. The Blugolds' lead diminished to three, but Brittanni Hakanson added a basket in the paint and **Heather Witt** (Jr.-Kendall, WI/Royall) and Heidi Arciszewski made their free throws to keep the Blugolds up.

The ending score was 62-53 with the Blugolds winning. The Blugolds outscored Luther 35-28 in the second half. The Blugolds shot 52% from the field and added eight free throws. Luther shot a poor 29% from the field, but had 13 free throws in the second half. Luther's Blair Ernst and Ashley TeKippe each had 17 points.

Heidi Arciszewski led the Blugolds with 15 points. Michelle Burns added 11 and Brittanni Hakanson chipped in 10. Arciszewski also lead the team in rebounds with seven. Hakanson had four offensive rebounds and three steals. Heather Witt was a defensive specialist with three steals and two blocks.

The Blugolds have a game at St. Norbert on Tuesday, November 20 before opening up their home season with the Thanksgiving Showcase next Friday. The game against St. Norbert starts at 7 p.m.

Eau Claire-Luther Box Score

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