

## Men's Basketball Hosts Pioneers In Home Opener

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EAU CLAIRE, Wis. - The UW-Eau Claire men's basketball team will have its first home game of the year and only home game before Christmas break on Wednesday when the UW-Platteville Pioneers come to Zorn Arena.

The Blugolds started off the season with two losses, but have reeled off four straight wins to improve to 4-2. Three of Eau Claire's victories came by 16 or more points. The first loss of the year was a 137-132 game to Grinnell College (IA), which set the single-game scoring record for Eau Claire. Among the many broken records from that game, 41 Blugold assists also breaks the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC) mark. **Dan Beyer** (Sr.-Waukesha/Catholic Memorial) also made 15-of-15, which ties for fourth in the NCAA record books for most makes without a miss. Their first conference game was Saturday, a 72-63 victory over UW-Stout.

Eau Claire averages 83.3 points per game, second-most in the conference. Opponents are held to 74.7 and are shooting 39.6 percent, making the Blugolds' defense second-best in that mark. Eau Claire shoots 51.8 percent, meanwhile. The team is outshooting foes 37.1 percent-to-30.7 percent from long range, but opponents outdo the Blugolds at the line 77.7 percent-to-65.7 percent. Eau Claire holds the rebounding margin by 3.2, but is barely losing in turnovers by 0.3. The 19.7 Blugold assists per game are highest among WIAC competitors.

Beyer leads the team in scoring with 18.7 points per game. **Ryan Shea** (Fr.-Duluth, MN/East) has 16.0 points per game behind him. Beyer's eight boards per contest lead the WIAC, with 77 percent of those coming on the defensive end. He helps give Eau Claire a WIAC-best 28.7 defensive boards per matchup. Shea has the most free throws and best percentage for Eau Claire, at 87.1 percent. His nine steals are also tops. **Dan Mullen** (Jr.-St. Paul, MN/Tartan) leads from behind the arc, knocking down 10-of-17 for 58.8 percent, second in the WIAC. For assists, **Zack Ryan** (Sr.-Lake Elmo, MN/Tartan) and Beyer are best with 22 and 21, respectively.

Platteville is 4-1 this year with a win over UW-Superior in its lone WIAC game. All wins have come by more than 11 points. The loss was an 87-76 game to 12th-ranked Washington University (MO).

The Pioneers are averaging 77.2 points per game while opponents score 61.4. The large differential is in large part due to a 75-23 win over Beloit College in the first game of the season. The Pioneers also outshoot opponents from the floor (49.8 percent-to-42.5 percent), from the line (77.7 percent-to-65.3 percent) and from long range (39.5 percent-to-36.5 percent). They're up 7.4 in rebounds per game and 4.0 in turnovers. The defense's 10.4 steals per game lead the WIAC.

Curt Hanson has been the leading scorer with 15.6 points per game, but three others average in double-digits. They include Jeff Skemp (12.4), Mike Shaw (12.0) and Josh Langenfeld (10.0). Skemp has the best shooting percentage of the group with 70.7 percent. He also leads in rebounds at 7.0 per game. Hanson is 18-of-35 (51.4 percent) on threes and a perfect 10-for-10 from the line, though Shaw is 17-for-20 and Langenfeld is 20-for-24. Langenfeld's 17 assists and Hanson's 10 steals are most.

Eau Claire holds the all-time series 60-43 but has lost five of the past six.

The home opener begins at 7 p.m. on Wednesday in Zorn Arena.