

Men's Basketball Drops WIAC Contest To La Crosse

Posted: Saturday, January 26, 2008

EAU CLAIRE, Wis. - The UW-Eau Claire men's basketball team fell under .500 in the conference after tonight's 72-65 loss to UW-La Crosse.

Both squads are 4-5 in the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC) and the Blugolds have lost four of their past six to conference opponents. Eau Claire is 10-8 overall and La Crosse stands at 9-9.

The early lead went to the Blugolds, but it was never much. At 17:13, Eau Claire opened up a 6-2 lead before Chris Fehrenbach's three knocked it back down to one. The margin hovered between one and three points until **Geoff Probst** (So.-Moose Lake, MN) made a free throw at 13:29 to make it 13-9. The Eagles took their first lead of the game within the minute on a 5-0 run.

The contest went back and forth for the next several minutes with the biggest lead being a three-point Blugold one at 9:19 after a **Dan Beyer** (Sr.-Waukesha/Catholic Memorial) bucket. For the next three minutes, La Crosse went on an 11-0 run and made the score 30-22 Eagles. They would finish the half just as strong and went into the locker room up 39-31.

Both teams shot pretty well in the half, with Eau Claire going 65.0 percent and La Crosse shooting 60.9 percent. The Blugolds connected on 4-of-7 free throws while the Eagles sank 8-of-11.

La Crosse would hold a comfortable lead for most of the second half, but Eau Claire made it close at a couple points. Probst and Beyer combined for eight points in the first three minutes and got within four at 17:20. A 7-0 Eagle spurt made it 50-39, the biggest lead of the day.

The margin stayed between seven and 10 points until the Blugolds put together a 7-0 run at 10:45. **Dan Mullen** (Jr.-St. Paul, MN/Tartan) layed one in on a fastbreak to make the scoreboard read 58-55 at 9:20. It was also a three-point lead at 8:23 and 4:53. A 6-0 run for La Crosse between 4:27 and 2:30 took care of business as the Eagles wrapped up the 72-65 game.

Both teams' shooting percentage dropped off in the second half. Eau Claire outshot the visitors 53.3 percent-to-50.0 percent and outscored them by a point in the final half. The Blugolds did not take a single free throw while La Crosse went 8-of-15.

For the game, Eau Claire topped La Crosse in shooting percentage (58.0 percent-to-55.6 percent), rebounds (25-to-24) and in assists (18-to-5). The Eagles won the turnover battle 12-to-7. They also shot 6-for-14 (42.9 percent) on threes and 16-for-26 (61.5 percent) from the line, compared to 3-for-15 (20.0 percent) and 4-for-7 (57.1 percent) for Eau Claire.

Beyer had a superb game, totaling 25 points and eight boards, both team-highs. He is now five shy of 1,000 career points. Probst put up 11 points and **Jacob Schlub** (So.-Catawba/Phillips) posted 10. Tony Mane was La Crosse's leading scorer at 21, with Brandon Brown second at 14.

The Blugolds have lost five of the past six to La Crosse and are 101-67 all-time versus them.

Eau Claire will stay at home for its next game, a matchup against UW-Superior at 7 p.m. on Wednesday.

Eau Claire-La Crosse Box Score

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