

Men's Hockey Rips through Ranked Falcons

Posted: Saturday, February 2, 2008

EAU CLAIRE, Wis. - The UW-Eau Claire men's hockey team faced the sixth-ranked team in the nation tonight, but the team posted its biggest win of the year with a 5-0 shutout over UW-River Falls.

The Blugolds improve to 5-6-0 in the Northern Collegiate Hockey Association (NCHA) and 9-13-0 overall. It was the third time Eau Claire blanked a team this season. River Falls drops to 6-4-1 in conference games and 14-5-3 for the season.

The Blugolds struck for a pair of goals in the first period, with **John Kearns** (*Fr.-Park Ridge, IL*) putting in the first one at 12:15. **Joe Bluhm** (*So.-Red Wing, MN*) and **Andrew Johnson** (*Jr.-Andover, MN/Anoka*) assisted on the advantage goal. At 16:43, **Tyler Weigel** (*So.-Madison/Oregon*) followed with an even-strength goal as **Dan Fina** (*Jr.-Fontana/Glenbard South, IL*) teamed with **Greg Petersen** (*Jr.-Maple Grove, MN/Totino-Grace*) to tally assists. Eau Claire doubled up River Falls in shots that period 18-to-9.

The middle period came also came with a duo of Blugold goals. Johnson took the first one while shorthanded and found net at 10:20. About six and a half minutes later, **Jesse Vesel** (*Jr.-Hibbing, MN*) scored on a power play while **Dan Decato** (*Fr.-Verona*) and Petersen fed him the puck.

The final goal of the night came at the 8:28 mark in the third when **Nate Smith** (*So.-Clayton*) took passes from **Ben Bosworth** (*Jr.-Hudson*) and Petersen to light the lamp. The score came with both sides even. Petersen's three assists are most for any player in one game this season.

Eau Claire put up 40 shots over River Falls' 27, which made for 27 **Tyler Brigl** (*So.-Eagan, MN*) saves. River Falls started out the game with Stephen Ritter in net, but Tyler Owens came in for the third and made 11 stops. Ritter had 24.

The Falcons had eight penalties and Eau Claire took advantage, going 2-for-7. The Blugolds were whistled seven times, but kept the visitors to 0-for-6 on the advantage.

The Blugolds look to take this momentum into next weekend when it faces UW-Superior on Friday and St. Scholastica (MN) on Saturday. Both are at home and are at 7 p.m.

Eau Claire-River Falls Box Score

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