

Men's Basketball Closes Up Season At Home

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EAU CLAIRE, Wis. - The UW-Eau Claire men's basketball team looks to take the sixth seed this Saturday as the regular season finishes against UW-Stout at Zorn Arena.

The Blugolds are 5-10 in the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC) and 11-13 overall. UW-La Crosse is 6-10 and doesn't play this weekend, but Eau Claire would lose the head-to-head tiebreaker to them. UW-Superior, currently 5-10, will take the sixth seed if they win on Saturday against No. 20 UW-Oshkosh. They also hold the tiebreaker over Eau Claire. Same goes if both teams lose. If Eau Claire wins and Superior loses, then the Blugolds are the sixth seed.

This weekend's opponent is looking to just make it into the tournament. They are 3-12 in the conference and 9-15 overall. UW-River Falls is 3-12 also and the teams split the season series, making the other tiebreakers come into effect. The Falcons play No. 7 UW-Whitewater this weekend.

The Blugolds average 72.6 points per game while opponents score a little more at 73.5. Opposing squads also have Eau Claire in free throw shooting (71.2 percent-to-65.5 percent) and in treys (37.7 percent-to-32.9 percent). Eau Claire does have them on the floor 50.8 percent-to-46.1 percent. The team wins the rebounding margin and loses the turnover battle by 1.5 in each. Eau Claire is good at finding the right man, as the team's 15.13 assists per game are second in the WIAC.

Dan Beyer (*Sr.-Waukesha/Catholic Memorial*) is the team leader with 18.8 points and 7.3 boards per game. He ranks first in the conference for scoring, second in defensive boards (5.54) and third in rebounding and field goal percentage (62.1 percent),

Ryan Shea (*Fr.-Duluth, MN/East*) and **Geoff Probst** (*So.-Moose Lake, MN*) also hit double-digits with 13.2 and 10.8 points per game. Shea helps out defensively with team-leading 51 steals and 15 blocks. That adds up to 2.13 steals per game, second best among WIAC players. His 3.0 assists per game also lead Eau Claire.

Stout has had a tougher time with opponents this year. The Blue Devils score 70.9 points per game but give up 79.6. That makes for the worst scoring defense and worst scoring margin in the WIAC. Opponents outdo them from the floor (48.9 percent-to-44.0 percent), from the line (73.0 percent-to-68.9 percent) and from behind the arc (40.0 percent-to-36.2 percent). They also come up short in rebounds and turnovers by 1.0 and 1.2. Oddly enough, however, their 12.08 offensive boards per game are the WIAC's best. Stout's 7.83 steals per game are second in the conference, as are their 7.88 treys per contest.

There are two main scorers for the Blue Devils - Miles Webb (18.5 per game) and Jerrel Enerson-Matthews (12.7). Miles only trails Beyer for the WIAC scoring title and is also tied for second in offensive boards with 2.25 per game. Miles is tied with Eric Heisler for the team lead in rebounds at 5.3. Heisler's 19 blocks are most. Alex Mason provides the most assists and steals per game with 3.1 and 1.9, though Enerson-Matthews is close in both at 3.0 and 1.8.

These two teams met very early in the season on Dec. 1. Eau Claire won the matchup 72-63 to make the all-time record 109-62-1.

This game, which is also Senior Night, will take place at 5 p.m. in Zorn Arena. The playoffs begin on Feb. 25.