

# Men's Basketball Upsets Pioneers In WIAC Playoffs

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PLATTEVILLE, Wis. - Less than a week after the same UW-Platteville Pioneers beat the UW-Eau Claire men's basketball team by 17, the Blugolds rode **Geoff Probst's** (So. -Moose Lake, MN) 28 points in an 84-80 upset over the second-seeded Pioneers.

Eau Claire, seeded seventh in the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC) playoffs, will now travel to UW-Stevens Point on Wednesday to face the third-seeded Pointers. Eighth-ranked Stevens Point needed overtime to beat the sixth-seeded UW-La Crosse squad by a 74-66 score.

Appropriately, a Probst three started the Eau Claire scoring tonight. It was one of a season-high five he'd make on the evening. By 16:14, Eau Claire had built an 11-0 lead. Platteville, ranked 19th in the nation, started scoring at this point and got it within single digits, but by 12:27 it was an 18-point margin. An 8-0 Pioneer run brought it down to 10 at 10:03.

Platteville slowly chipped away at the lead and a Mike Shaw three made the score 33-28 at 6:09. A 6-2 Pioneer burst got the margin to one, but Eau Claire ended the half on an 11-2 run and went to the locker room up 46-36.

The Blugolds were on fire from the floor, making 63.3 percent of their shots compared to 50.0 percent for Platteville. Eau Claire went 5-of-9 (55.6 percent) from long range while the Pioneers went 3-of-5 (60.0 percent). The home team outdid the Blugolds from the line, making 9-of-13 (69.2 percent) as Eau Claire went 3-of-6 (50.0 percent).

A 9-2 Pioneer run started the second half and it made the scoreboard read 48-45 Eau Claire. The Blugolds would up the lead to six before Platteville began chipping away again. This time they got it to 55-54 but did not take the lead. Eau Claire steadily increased its lead and made the margin 12 at 9:33 with a **Dan Beyer** (Sr.-Waukesha/Catholic Memorial) layup.

At 7:50, Platteville was down by 10. The Pioneers began a 14-4 run to make the score 74-73 Eau Claire. Probst made a layup at 2:55 before Platteville made a couple free throws. Probst answered that with a clutch trey to put the Blugolds up by four. A three from Platteville's Shaw brought the lead back down to one. With 26 seconds left, Platteville had to foul. Beyer made a pair from the line while Probst added a fastbreak layup and a free throw. Platteville did sink a bucket with no time remaining to make the score 84-80.

Eau Claire again outshot Platteville in the second half 53.8 percent-to-51.9 percent. The Pioneers outscored the Blugolds 44-38 in the half while making 5-of-11 (45.5 percent) threes and 11-of-12 (91.7 percent) free throws. Eau Claire had numbers of 50.0 percent (4-of-8) from long range and 66.7 percent (6-of-9) from the line.

For the game, the Blugolds made 58.9 percent of their shots. Platteville put in 51.0 percent of its shots from the floor while outdoing Eau Claire from the line with 80.0 percent (20-of-25) compared to the Blugolds' 60.0 percent (9-of-15). Eau Claire did slightly better on threes with a 52.9 percentage (9-of-17). Platteville made 8-of-16 for 50.0 percent. It's the second-most threes Eau Claire has made this season. The Pioneers actually outrebounded Eau Claire 30-to-21, but the Blugolds took care of the ball. They turned it over just four times compared to 11 for Platteville. The 21 boards are the least Eau Claire has had all year, but so are the four turnovers.

Probst tied his season-high with 28 points. He went 5-of-7 (71.4 percent) from behind the arc. He also tied **Ryan Shea** (Fr.-Duluth, MN/East) for the team lead in boards with six. Shea and Beyer each contributed 17 points. Probst also had three blocks.

Four Pioneers were in double-figures, including Jeff Skemp (21), Shaw (14), Nick Allen (12) and Charlie Lohoff (11). Skemp, who was second in the WIAC for boards, also had 17 rebounds, a WIAC tourney record.

This is the first time since 2003 that the Blugolds advance to the semifinals. That year they beat UW-River

Falls 68-65 before losing 81-69 to UW-Whitewater. Eau Claire has not had good luck against Wednesday's opponent. They lost 57-44 on Jan. 23 and 89-68 on Feb. 13.

Tip-off is set for 7 p.m. in Stevens Point on Wednesday.

Eau Claire-Platteville Box Score

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