

Men's Hockey Announces Team Award Winners

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EAU CLAIRE, Wis. - UW-Eau Claire men's hockey head coach Matt Loen announced the team award winners for the 2007-08 season recently at the team's end-of-year banquet.

The Jeff Jaraczewski Award, given to the team's Most Valuable Player, was presented to left wing **Sean Garrity** (*Sr.-North St. Paul, MN*) for the second year in a row. Garrity received All-Northern Collegiate Hockey Association (NCHA) honorable mention recognition and All-Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC) first team honors this season. Garrity led the team with 26 points, scoring 11 goals and picking up 15 assists. He also tied for most power play goals on the team with four. While Garrity was a senior this season, he received a medical hardship earlier in his career so he will be back as a fifth year senior next season.

The Richard G. O'Brien Award, presented to honor work ethic both on and off the ice, was given to right wing **Andrew Johnson** (*So.-Andover, MN/Anoka*) for the second consecutive season. This year Johnson was named an All-NCHA honorable mention selection and was honored as an All-NCHA Academic Team member. Johnson led the team with 13 goals, including three power play goals, and was second on the team with 19 points.

The Most Dedicated Player Award was presented to defenseman **Nicholas Kuquali** (*So.-Pittsburgh, Pa./Mt. Lebanon*). Kuquali appeared in all 28 games for the Blugolds this season. He picked up three assists during the season.

The Wallace G. Akervik Memorial Award, given to the freshman of the year, was presented to defenseman **John Kearns** (*Fr.-Park Ridge, Ill.*). Kearns appeared in 23 of 28 games for Eau Claire this season, scoring two goals, including one on a power play, and four assists for six total points. He was named to the WIAC's All-Sportsmanship Team, which honors individuals who display exemplary sportsmanship throughout the season.

Eau Claire finished the season with an overall record of 11-16-1 including a 6-7-1 count in the NCHA. The 11 overall wins were the most by an Eau Claire team since the 2003-04 season when the Blugolds went 14-12-1. The team's NCHA record was good enough for the Blugolds to finish in fifth place in the conference. In the NCHA playoffs, the Blugolds won their first-round series against Superior and then lost to Stout in overtime of the semifinals. Prior to the 2007-08 first-round playoff series victory, the Blugolds had never won a series since joining the NCHA.

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