

# Comeback Bid Falls Short For Women's Basketball

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STEVENS POINT, Wis. - Facing first-place and seventh-ranked UW-Stevens Point, the sixth-ranked UW-Eau Claire women's basketball team came up short in an attempt to hand the Pointers their first conference loss of the season, 66-60 tonight at Berg Gym.

With the loss, the Blugolds drop to 14-2 overall and 6-2 in the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference. The Pointers remain perfect in the WIAC with an 8-0 record and move to 16-1 overall. The Blugolds will now begin the second half of the conference season beginning on Saturday.

The first half saw the lead change several times, with Stevens Point taking a 31-26 lead into halftime. Eau Claire shot 50 percent from the field in the first, and was seven of 10 from the free throw line.

A key factor in the contest was a 14 point deficit the Pointers created with 16:01 to go. As they've done all season, Eau Claire continued to fight and pulled within two points with 2:11 left in the game on a **Hannah Mesick** (So.-Chatfield, Minn.) layup. The late scoring push is something **Head Coach Tonja Englund** would have liked to see throughout the game.

"I like the fight we showed, but I feel if we would have played like that the entire game, we would have come away with the win," said Englund.

Looking to take their first lead of the second half, the Blugolds aggressive play found themselves on the wrong end of foul calls, sending Stevens Point to the free throw line late. Able to convert on nine of 12 free throws down the stretch, the Pointers managed to seal the six point victory.

Mesick led Eau Claire with a game-high 21 points on eight of 11 shooting from the field. Mesick also pulled down a team-high seven rebounds. **Heidi Arciszewski** (Sr.-Thorp, Wis.) pitched in with 18 points, including an eight for eight night from the charity stripe. **Missy Fremstad** (Sr.-Osseo, Wis./Osseo-Fairchild) recorded 10 points and four assists, while playing the entire 40 minutes for the Blugolds.

Stevens Point used a balanced offensive attack, with six players scoring at least seven points. Janell Van Gomple led the charge with 16 points and six rebounds.

Englund said the second half of the conference season will be extremely competitive, with three of the best teams in the nation (Eau Claire, Stevens Point & No. 3 UW-Whitewater) vying for the top spot in the WIAC.

Next up for the Blugolds is UW-La Crosse on Saturday. Eau Claire beat the Eagles earlier this season at Zorn Arena, 66-52. The women will be the second game of a doubleheader with the men. The women's game will start at 5 p.m. at Mitchell Hall in La Crosse.

Eau Claire-Stevens Point Box Score

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