

Men's Hockey Drops A Close Battle In Last Regular Season Home Game

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EAU CLAIRE, Wis. - After a long fought battle, the 14th-ranked UW-Eau Claire men's hockey team lost a close one to Northern Collegiate Hockey Association rival and seventh-ranked UW-Stout 3-1 tonight at Hobbs Ice Center.

The Blugolds, who won their previous game 7-1 against Lake Forest, drop to 13-7-1 overall this season and 3-6-1 in NCHA play. UW-Stout, which is 6-2-2 in the NCHA, improves to 14-5-2 overall on the season after tying its past two games. In the all-time series against the Blue Devils, the Blugolds drop to 24-27-2 after falling to them earlier this season 2-0.

The first goal of the game came at 8:07 into the first period after the Blue Devils' Andy Sternberg found the back of the Blugold net with an even-strength goal to put Stout up 1-0. Stout's Jake Gullickson persisted and scored an even-strength insurance goal for the Blue Devils at 10:14 to put them up two goals. With 14 seconds left in the first period, **Joe Bluhm** (*Jr.-Red Wing, Minn.*) hooked up with **Jesse Vesel** (*Sr.-Hibbing, Minn.*) and **Andrew Johnson** (*Sr.-Andover, Minn./Anoka*) to score an even-strength goal and put the Blugolds on the board, cutting the Blue Devils' lead to one.

The second period proved to be scoreless for both teams, but 19 seconds into the third period, Stout's Joel Gaulrapp scored to give the Blue Devils another two-goal lead. Eau Claire battled throughout the third period but came up short, losing to the seventh-ranked neighbor Blue Devils.

The Blugolds had 37 shots on the night while the Blue Devils had 39 shots. It was only the second time this season the Blugolds have been outshot.

Tyler Brigl (*Jr.-Apple Valley, Minn./Eastview*) picked up the loss between the pipes for the Blugolds, recording 36 saves on the night and playing the entire game. The Blue Devils' Matt Koenig, who earned NCHA player of the week this week, picked up the win and also ended up with 36 saves.

The Blugolds will head to River Falls tomorrow to take on UW-River Falls. The puck is set to drop at 7 p.m.

Eau Claire-Stout Box Score

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