

Men's Hockey Can?T Hold On At Stout

Posted: Friday, February 20, 2009

MENOMONIE, Wis. - While the UW-Eau Claire men's hockey team held a lead for almost the entire contest, a late surge by third-ranked UW-Stout left the Blugolds on the short end, falling 5-3 to the Blue Devils in game one of the Northern Collegiate Hockey Association quarterfinals at the Dunn County Ice Arena tonight.

The Blugolds found themselves up 3-1 at the beginning of the third period. **Greg Petersen** (Sr.-Maple Grove, Minn./Totino-Grace) struck first for Eau Claire on a power-play with an assist from **Joe Bluhm** (Jr.-Red Wing, Minn.) at 10:08 in the first to give the Blugolds the 1-0 lead.

Stout then answered to tie the game half way through the second, but it took Eau Claire less than six minutes to find the back of the net once again to regain the lead.

Skylar Christoffersen (Jr.-Langley, B.C./Brookswood) added the Blugolds' second goal on assists from **Nic Weight** (Fr.-Eagle River, Wis. /Northland Pines) and **Dan Fina** (Sr.-Fontana, Wis./Glenbard South).

Only two minutes into the final period, Christoffersen pushed the Blugolds' lead back to two with help from **DJ Clark** (Jr.-Blaine, Minn./Spring Lake Park).

But the Blue Devils would not let the Blugolds off and scored four goals in the final 16 minutes. Jeff Wheeler found the back of the net for back-to-back goals, the second one coming short-handed, to tie the game up.

Just over two minutes after Wheeler's second goal, Joel Gaulrapp scored to give Stout the one-goal lead. Nine minutes later he added an insurance goal, unassisted, to help the Blue Devils defeat Eau Claire 5-3.

Despite the loss, the three goals scored by Eau Claire are the most at Stout since February 11, 2005 when the Blugolds fell short 5-4. The Blugolds now fall to 13-12-1 while the Blue Devils improve to 19-5-2.

Stout outshot Eau Claire 34-31 tonight, but the Blugolds finished with more shots in both the second and third periods. **Tyler Brigl** (Jr.-Eagan, Minn.) played all 60 minutes between the pipes for Eau Claire and picked up 29 saves. Matt Koenig played all but four seconds in-net for Stout and recorded 28 saves.

The Blugolds will now have their work cut out for them as they must win twice tomorrow to advance to the NCHA semifinals. If the Blugolds can pull off the upset tomorrow night, they will play a 20-minute mini-game following the conclusion of regular game. The puck is set to drop at 7:30 p.m. at the Dunn County Ice Arena.

Eau Claire-Stout Box Score

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