

Women's Basketball Moves On To Second Round

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BLOOMINGTON, Ill. - In the first round of the 2009 NCAA Division III Tournament, the ninth-ranked UW-Eau Claire women's basketball team recorded a 62-50 victory over the 22nd-ranked DePauw University Tigers tonight at the Shirk Center on the campus of Illinois Wesleyan University.

The Blugolds, who faced the Tigers for the first time ever tonight, improve to 24-5 on the season. DePauw, which won the national title two years ago, ends its season with a 22-6 mark. The Blugolds will now play host Illinois Wesleyan in the second round of the tournament Saturday at 7 p.m. The Blugolds have never faced the Titans before. Illinois Wesleyan, which is ranked first in the country and is 28-0 this year, beat Ohio Wesleyan 80-51 Friday night to move on.

Behind exceptional play of the Blugolds' post players, the team never trailed the entire way and led by as much as 20 at one point in the second period. **Hannah Mesick** (So.-*Chatfield, Minn.*) led the game with 18 points and **Ellen Plendl** (Fr.-*Chippewa Falls, Wis./McDonell*) led the Blugolds with a career-high 11 rebounds. She also added nine points.

As a team the Blugolds finished with 50 rebounds, 14 on the offensive end, while DePauw had 36. Tonight was only the third time all season the Tigers had been outrebounded. Coming into the game they led with a +12.8 margin, which leads NCAA Division III.

"The difference for us a lot of times was that if we could get those rebounds, we were able to get out and run," head coach Tonja Englund said.

The Blugolds came out shooting tonight and jumped out to a 7-0 lead before DePauw hit its first basket at 15:18. Three minutes later the Blugolds found themselves up 10 at 15-5 but a 13-3 run over the next four minutes tied the game up. From then on, the Blugolds regained control and were able to take a six-point lead into halftime.

Coming out of the locker room the Blugolds were able to continue to increase their lead, allowing the Tigers just five points through the first 10 minutes. Eau Claire took its largest lead of the game at 12:17 when they went up by 20 at 45-25. DePauw was not finished, however and with just under five minutes left, cut the Blugolds' lead back to 10. But strong play by both Mesick and Plendl helped lift the Blugolds' lead back to 17 and eventually the Blugolds finished with the 12-point victory. In the last five minutes of the game the duo teamed up for five rebounds and scored six of the Blugolds' final 11 points.

On the night Eau Claire finished shooting 42.9 percent (21-for-49) from the floor and 17-for-21 (81 percent) from the charity stripe. **Heidi Arciszewski** (Sr.-*Thorp, Wis.*), who finished the game with 15 points, went 2-for-2 from the line, her 11th perfect night of the season from the line. DePauw was only able to come away with 25.8 percent shooting from the floor behind 17-for-66 shooting. Three pointers help keep them in the game but finished shooting only 8-for-31 from beyond the arc. The Tigers also went 8-for-13 from the free throw line, all of which came in the second half.

The Blugolds committed 19 turnovers while DePauw finished with 13. Coming into the game, DePauw was 14-0 when committing fewer turnovers than its opponent. The Tigers turned the Blugolds' turnovers into 23 points while Eau Claire only scored 10 off turnovers.

Eau Claire-DePauw Box Score

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