Men's Hockey Kicks off Season Friday

By: Kevin Meinholz, Sports Information Director
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EAU CLAIRE, Wis. (UWECBlugolds.com) - The UW-Eau Claire men's hockey team will kick off the 2009-10 season Friday (Oct. 30) against Marian University at Hobbs Ice Center at 7 p.m.

There are 28 Blugolds on this year's squad, 15 returning letterwinners and 13 newcomers. This year's roster includes nine seniors, three juniors, four sophomores and 12 freshmen. The returners accounted for 45 of the Blugolds' 85 goals last season (53 percent).

Among the returners is **Joe Bluhm** *(Sr.-Red Wing, Minn.)*, who led the Blugolds a season ago with 14 goals and finished third on the team with 20 points. Bluhm, who will serve as a team captain this year along with **Brant Marple** *(Sr.-Apple Valley, Minn./Eastview)* and **John Kearns** *(Jr.-Park Ridge, Ill./Maine South)*, earned All-WIAC honorable mention recognition last season.

Eau Claire also returns Marple and **D.J. Clark** *(Sr.-Blaine, Minn./Spring Lake Park)*. Both picked up more than 15 points last year. Marple was fifth on the team with 18 points (four goals, 14 assists) while Clark was sixth with 16 points (seven goals, nine assists).

In goal this season once again will be three-time letterwinner **Tyler Brigl** *(Sr.-Eagan, Minn./Eastview)*. Last year, Brigl played 1,418 minutes of Eau Claire's total 1,625 minutes and finished with a .901 save percentage. He allowed 59 goals, a 2.50 goals against average.

After Friday, the Blugolds will play away the following night before coming home for four more contests the following two weekends. After that, Eau Claire will play seven games at home the rest of the year, including a stretch of five between January 15 and 29.