

Volleyball Moves on in NCAA Championship

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OSHKOSH, Wis. (UWECBlugolds.com) - The UW-Eau Claire women's volleyball team moved on to the second round of the 2009 NCAA Division III Championship with a 3-0 victory over St. Olaf College (Minn.) at Kolf Sports Center tonight.

The 16th-ranked Blugolds played the 20th-ranked St. Olaf Oles close in the first two sets before winning by seven points in the third.

While the Blugolds got up 14-9 in the first set, St. Olaf battled back to get within one point at 21-20 in favor of the Blugolds. Eau Claire then went on to score three points but the Oles once again went on a streak to tie it up at 24-24. The Blugolds scored the next two to take the set 26-24. The Blugolds hit just .050 percent while St. Olaf finished with a .167 hitting percentage.

The second set was much of the same as the teams went back and forth. The set was tied three times, the last time at 21-21. Eau Claire allowed just one St. Olaf point after that and finished with a 25-22 victory.

After St. Olaf got up 6-5 in the third set, the Blugolds went on a 10-1 run to take the lead at 15-7. The Oles could not recover as they hit -.034 and the Blugolds went on to take the 25-18 win. Eau Claire hit .462 in the final set.

Emily Zupon (Jr.-Antigo, Wis.) led Eau Claire with 13 kills while St. Olaf's Kim Smisek led the match with 15. **Lindsey Smith** (Sr.-Maple Lake, Minn.) had 12 digs to lead the Blugolds. **Amanda Lessner** (Jr.-Watertown, Wis.) finished with 16 assists and **Emily Neave** (Fr.-Salem, Wis./Westosha Central) had 14.

In their 12th NCAA post-season appearance and fifth straight, the Blugolds now hold an 11-11 all-time record. Eau Claire improved to 31-7 overall with the win tonight and St. Olaf finished its season at 27-5.

Eau Claire will play again tomorrow at 7 p.m. in the second round of the regional. The Blugolds will face No. 1 seed UW-Oshkosh, which defeated St. Norbert College 3-0 (25-8, 25-9, 25-11) in the regionals' final match tonight.