

Men's Basketball Set to Open Season

By: Kevin Meinholz, Sports Information Director

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EAU CLAIRE, Wis. (UWECBlugolds.com) - The UW-Eau Claire men's basketball team is set to open the 2009-10 season Sunday when they travel to Duluth, Minn. for a game against the College of St. Scholastica. Tipoff is scheduled for 3 p.m.

This season the Blugolds welcome back 12 returning letterwinners, including three starters. Eau Claire has five seniors, two juniors, five sophomores and five freshmen on this year's squad.

Geoff Probst (Sr.-Moose Lake, Minn.) and **Colin Boone** (Sr.-Eau Claire, Wis./Memorial) started all 26 games a season ago and are back this year to lead the team as captains. Probst was third on the team last year with 10.1 points per game and was second on the team averaging 6.0 rebounds per game. Boone finished the season last year averaging 9.1 points per game, fourth on the team, while pulling down 3.1 rebounds per contest.

Josh Prince (So.-Chippewa Falls, Wis./Chi-Hi) is the other returning starter from last season. He recorded 19 starts, including 13 of the Blugolds' final 14 games. Prince was fifth on the team with 7.4 points per game and was second with 38 steals.

In all, the Blugolds return eight of their top 10 scorers and a total of 60 percent of last year's scoring and 54 percent of its rebounding. All the returners have seen action in at least six collegiate games.

Eau Claire will look to improve over last year's finish as the team has been steadily improving over the last few years. During the 2006-07 season, the Blugolds went 3-13 in conference play and followed that with a 5-11 record in 2007-08. Last season, the Blugolds recorded an 8-8 record and took fifth place in the conference, their best finish since the 2000-01 season when they took third. Overall, Eau Claire finished with a 15-11 mark last year, its best record since the 2002-03 season.

Head Coach Terry Gibbons is in his 15th year leading the Blugolds. The experienced squad will also have an experienced group of assistants with Keith Muchow entering his eighth year with the team, Bill Macozek entering his 12th and Rich Roginski entering his second. Also helping out the Blugolds this season will be John Ellenson.

The Blugolds' will be tested early as they will be on the road for the first couple weeks of the season. Their first home game will be December 5, starting a stretch of five games at Zorn Arena. After that stretch, the Blugolds will have six more home games and eight on the road.