

Men's Hockey Shuts Down UW-Stout

By: Kevin Meinholz, Sports Information Director

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EAU CLAIRE, Wis. (UWECBlugolds.com) - The UW-Eau Claire men's hockey team defeated I-94 rival UW-Stout 3-0 in a Northern Collegiate Hockey Association (NCHA) contest at Hobbs Ice Center tonight.

The win is the first time the Blugolds have defeated Stout since December 5, 2003 when they won 2-1 in Menomonie. Coming in to tonight, the Blue Devils were 13-0-1 over the last six years against the Blugolds. The shutout was also only the second in program history against UW-Stout with the last one coming in 1982, also a 3-0 victory.

The Blugolds improve to 3-5-2 on the season and 1-2-2 in NCHA play. Stout drops to 4-5-2 overall and 2-3-2 in the conference. Stout has now lost three consecutive contests.

Three different Blugolds put the puck in the net in three different periods tonight. All goals were even-strength.

Nate Smith (Sr.-Clayton, Wis.) got the Blugolds on the board at 4:26 in the first with a goal coming from the blue line while **Joe Freund** (Fr.-Ayr, Ontario/Southwood) and **Isaiah Bennis** (Fr.-Eau Claire, Wis./Memorial) were credited with assists on the eventual game-winner.

In the second period at 3:17, **Ross Janecyk** (Jr.-Grand Rapids, Mich./Catholic Central) scored his second goal of the season on assists from **Nicholas Kugali** (Sr.-Pittsburgh, Pa./Mount Lebanon) and Bennis.

Nic Weight (So.-Eagle River, Wis./Northland Pines) pushed the Blugolds' lead to three as he scored with four and a half minutes left in game. **Brant Marple** (Sr.-Apple Valley, Minn./Eastview) and **Joe Bluhm** (Sr.-Red Wing, Minn.) each recorded assists on the goal.

The Blugolds controlled both the first and second periods as they outshot Stout 11-5 and 17-4, respectively. The Blue Devils outshot Eau Claire in the third 15-11 but the Blugolds finished with 39 shots total to Stout's 24.

Stout was not without opportunities tonight as the Blugolds had one five-minute penalty in the second period while the Blue Devils had a two more men on the ice in the third period because of two Eau Claire penalties. However, the Blugolds held strong and did not allow a power-play goal, the fifth time this season they were able to hold opponents without one.

Brandon Stephenson (Fr.-Saline, Mich.) picked up the win for the Blugolds between the pipes as he stopped all 24 Blue Devil shots. The win was the first in his collegiate career. Tom Lescovich was in the goal for the entire game for Stout and stopped 36 shots while allowing three goals.

Tomorrow the Blugolds will try and sweep the weekend series when they travel to Menomonie to take on the Blue Devils. The puck is set to drop at 7:30 p.m. at Dunn County Ice Arena.