

Men's Hockey Starts New Year Well

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WINONA, Minn. (UWECBlugolds.com) - After losing two straight games to UW-Stevens Point at the end of 2009, the UW-Eau Claire men's hockey team got back on track in 2010 with a 4-2 win tonight against St. Mary's University.

Joe Freund (Fr.-Ayr, Ontario/Southwood) was first to get the Blugolds on the board in the first period with a power-play goal at 16:21 with assists from **Joe Bluhm** (Sr.-Red Wing, Minn.) and **Tyler Romasco** (So.-Perry, Ohio) to give the away team the lead. However, St. Mary's responded with a goal of its own at 19:12 to end the first period.

The second period yielded two goals for the Blugolds as **Isaiah Bennis** (Fr.-Eau Claire, Wis./Memorial) scored a power-play goal at 15:31 with assists from **D.J. Clark** (Sr.-Blaine, Minn./Spring Lake Park) and **Brant Marple** (Sr.-Apple Valley, Minn./Eastview). Bluhm followed with an even-strength goal at 17:34 with the assist from **John Kearns** (Jr.-Park Ridge, Ill./Maine South) to give Eau Claire the 3-1 lead.

St. Mary's began to mount a comeback in the third period as they found the back of the Blugold net at 11:15, but Eau Claire's **Bryce Wilcox** (Fr.-Roschester, Minn./Century) sealed the deal for the Blugolds with a final goal at 19:21 to give them the 4-2 win.

Eau Claire outshot St. Mary's 41-24 in the game and edged the Cardinals' in penalties, recording eight for 16 minutes to St. Mary's 11 for 22 minutes. Eau Claire was 2-for-5 on power plays, while St. Mary's finished 0-for-3.

Tyler Brigl (Sr.-Eagan, Minn./Eastview) picked up the win tonight, playing all 60 minutes, allowing two goals and collecting 22 saves.

The Blugolds improve to 4-7-3 on the season while St. Mary's drops to 1-10-1.

Coming up next for the Blugolds will be a trip to St. Paul, Minn., tomorrow to take on the University of St. Thomas. The match-up is slated to begin at 7 p.m.