

Men's Hockey Unable to get Past Stevens Point

By: Kevin Meinholz, Sports Information Director

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EAU CLAIRE, Wis. (UWECBlugolds.com) - The UW-Eau Claire men's hockey team played catch-up all night as it fell 4-3 to conference rival UW-Stevens Point at Hobbs Ice Center tonight.

While Eau Claire outshot the Pointers 10-5 in the first period, neither team was able to find the back of the net.

In the second period, the Pointers scored three even-strength goals at 4:39, 12:55 and 14:57.

But the Blugolds would not go into the locker room without as goal as **Ross Janecyk** (Jr.-Grand Rapids, Mich./Catholic Central) ended the Blugolds' scoring drought at 15:57 with assists from **Kurt Weston** (Fr.-Roseau, Minn.) and **Nicholas Kuqali** (Sr.-Pittsburgh, Pa./Mount Lebanon) to make the score 3-1 in favor of the Pointers.

The Blugolds began mounting a comeback as **Nic Weight** (So.-Eagle River, Wis./Northland Pines) scored a power-play goal at 4:40 in the third with assists from **Brant Marple** (Sr.-Apple Valley, Minn./Eastview) and Weston to bring Eau Claire within one.

Stevens Point answered with a goal of its own at 5:31 to push its lead back to two. However, the Blugolds once again came within one goal as **Joe Bluhm** (Sr.-Red Wing, Minn.) scored an even-strength goal at 9:45 with assists from **Eric O'Hearn** (Fr.-Traverse City, Mich./Central) and **John Kearns** (Jr.-Park Ridge, Ill./Maine South), but Eau Claire failed to score any more as the final score ended 4-3 in favor of UW-Stevens Point

The Blugolds outshot the Pointers on the night 41-29, including 20-6 in the third period. It was the third game in a row where Eau Claire outshot its opponent but lost. The Blugolds capitalized off one of their seven power play attempts, while Stevens Point failed to convert on four opportunities.

Brandon Stephenson (Fr.-Saline, Mich.) played 59 minutes and 14 seconds in the goal for Eau Claire and stopped 25 shots while Nick Graves made 38 saves for the Pointers, playing all 60 minutes.

Eau Claire drops to 6-11-3 on the season and 2-8-3 in the Northern Collegiate Hockey Association (NCHA) while UW-Stevens Point improves to 10-10-1 overall and 5-9-0 in NCHA play.

The Blugolds will hit the road for their next four games, beginning with St. Norbert College tomorrow at 7 p.m. The Blugolds' last win came against the Green Knights on January 16.