

Men's Basketball Takes Care Of La Crosse

Posted: Saturday, December 11, 2004

LA CROSSE - The UW-Eau Claire men's basketball team shot 52.9 percent from the floor en route to a 69-55 victory over UW-La Crosse here today at Mitchell Hall.

The Blugolds improve to 5-3 on the season and 3-1 in Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference play while the Eagles fall to 2-7 overall and 0-3 in the WIAC.

Eau Claire immediately stole the momentum in the first half, opening the game on a 20-8 run. **Casey Drake** (Sr.-Rhineland) had nine points during the run, including a three-pointer to put the Blugolds up by 10. While the Blugolds never trailed throughout the game, the Eagles did comeback and slowly chiseled into the Eau Claire advantage. La Crosse scored the final four points of the first half and the Blugolds went to the locker room with a slight 30-25 advantage.

Eau Claire shot 54.2 percent from the floor in the first half while holding the Eagles to just 34.6 percent. La Crosse did hit all five of its free throw attempts in the opening 20 minutes.

The Eagles came as close as two points in the second half at 37-35 with 14:46 remaining in the game. The Blugolds quickly pulled away, however, using a 14-1 run to turn a four-point advantage into a 17-point lead. Eau Claire went up by as many as 21 before ending the game with the 69-55 win.

Drake led all scorers with 20 points while also posting a game-best seven rebounds. **Dan Archambault** (Sr.-Oshkosh/West) and **Buck Smith** (Jr.-Superior) each contributed 10 points while **Will Jefferson** (Sr.-Wausau/East) and **Tyler Birkel** (Jr.-Spring Valley) scored eight points apiece. Drake, Archambault and Jefferson each tied for the team lead with four assists.

The Eagles did not have a player reach double-digit scoring, as the team shot a collective 38.9 percent from the floor. They hit just 5-of-10 from the charity stripe and 1-of-8 from downtown in the second half.

The Blugolds will go back to work on Wednesday, December 22 when they battle Finlandia at neutral Rhineland. The game is set for 7:00 p.m.

Eau Claire-La Crosse Box Score

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