

## Women's Basketball Ends Season at Whitewater in WIAC Semifinals

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WHITEWATER, Wis. (UWECBlugolds.com) - In a closely contested battle, the UW-Eau Claire women's basketball team came up just short, falling 73-68 to UW-Whitewater at Kachel Gymnasium in a Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Tournament Semifinal game tonight.

The game was a rematch of last year's WIAC semifinal where the Blugolds defeated the Warhawks 61-34. The Warhawks now move on to the WIAC Tournament Final and will host UW-Stevens Point, which defeated UW-Stout 82-74 tonight, on Saturday. The winner will automatically qualify for the NCAA Division III Tournament.

The Warhawks held the advantage most of the first half but the Blugolds took the lead with just over two minutes to go in the half after a **Hannah Mesick** (*Jr.-Chatfield, Minn.*) layup and held a 38-37 lead going into the locker room.

Eau Claire kept the lead for more than the first four minutes of the second half but then the teams went back and forth almost the rest of the way. While Whitewater went up by as much as five points midway through the half, the Blugolds took back the lead and maintained the advantage with just over two and a half minutes to play.

Over the final two and a half minutes, however, the Blugolds managed just three more points while the Warhawks scored eight to beat the Blugolds for the second time this year.

The difference tonight came down to the Blugolds' turnovers, which has been a problem most of the season. The Blugolds committed 28 turnovers tonight, above their season average of 21.56. Whitewater came up with 26 points off the turnovers while Eau Claire scored just six points off seven Whitewater miscues.

The Blugolds did well in the paint, scoring 34 points to Whitewater's six while Eau Claire pulled down 42 rebounds to Whitewater's 24. In the Blugolds' other game at Whitewater this season, the Warhawks outrebounded the Blugolds 39-30.

Mesick had 10 rebounds to lead the game and finished with her 11th double-double of the season as she also scored 15 points. She finished the season just two points shy of the 1,000-point mark for her career. Mesick also tied for a game-high with three assists.

**Sarah Bingea** (*Fr.-Delano, Minn.*) reached a career-high with 20 points to lead Eau Claire and pulled down eight rebounds. **Ellen Plendl** (*So.-Chippewa Falls, Wis./McDonell*) also had eight rebounds while scoring 13 points.

**Jodi Lindner** (*Sr.-Neillsville, Wis.*) wrapped up her career as a Blugold scoring five points, pulling down three rebounds and recording two assists. **Ali Gillberg** (*Sr.-Drummond, Wis.*) also completed her career tonight.

The Blugolds end the season with a 10-17 record while Whitewater improves to 20-6.