

Football Upsets Ninth-Ranked Johnnies in Overtime

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EAU CLAIRE, Wis. (UWECBlugolds.com) - The UW-Eau Claire football team upset ninth-ranked St. John's University (Minn.) with a 23-20 overtime victory at Carson Park today.

While the Blugolds trailed a majority of the night, **Joel Sweeney** (*Fr.-Tomah, Wis.*) scored a touchdown with just over two minutes to go to put the Blugolds on top 17-10. However, St. John's tied the game back up with six seconds left in the game after a 10-play, 81-yard drive that lasted less than two minutes.

In the overtime period, the Blugolds shut down the Johnnie offense, allowing them to gain just two yards. St. John's settled for a 40-yard field goal to go up 20-17.

The Blugolds then took over and moved the ball 10 yards in their first two plays but the Johnnie defense held strong and forced the Blugolds to make a decision on fourth-and-one. The Blugolds opted to go for it and converted after a four-yard run by Sweeney. The next play, with just two yards to the end zone, Sweeney took the ball right up the middle to score the winning touchdown.

All the scoring in tonight's game came in the even quarters with St. John's scoring 10 in the second quarter and seven in the fourth. The Blugolds scored three in the second quarter with a **Brandon Raciborski** (*Sr.-Eau Claire, Wis./Memorial*) field goal and 14 in the fourth quarter. Matt Olson scored the Blugolds other touchdown at 4:52 in the fourth.

The Blugolds were not without other scoring opportunities tonight. Earlier in the fourth quarter, Blugold quarterback **Austin Neu** (*So.-Iron Ridge, Wis./Hustisford*) hit **Jesse Linsmeyer** (*Jr.-Cameron, Wis.*) for an 80-yard pass, tying for the 17th longest pass play in school history, to get the Blugolds down to St. John's eight. Unfortunately, Neu was picked off on the following play.

Eau Claire outgained St. John's 349-282. The Blugolds had 219 passing yards to St. John's 138 but the Johnnies outgained the Blugolds on the ground 144-130.

Sweeney led the game with 90 rushing yards while he also had 27 receiving yards. **David Goodman** (*Jr.-Neenah, Wis.*) caught five passes for 77 yards and Linsmeyer had 83 yards receiving from two passes. Neu finished with 219 yards on 14-for-24 passing.

Andy Neumann (*Jr.-Germantown, Wis.*) led the Blugolds with eight tackles while **Dan Mahaffey** (*Sr.-Madison, Wis./Memorial*) and **Brad Nierenhausen** (*Sr.-Cottage Grove, Minn./Park*) each picked up a sack. The Blugolds also forced three fumbles tonight.

The win over the Johnnies was the first since 2004 when Eau Claire won 30-28 at St. John's. The last overtime game the teams played in was in 2002 at Carson Park and the Blugolds came out on top 28-21. Eau Claire is now 5-7 all-time against the Johnnies and 9-7 all-time in overtime contests.

The Blugolds will be off next weekend and will return to action with their first game on the road Sept. 25 in Naperville, Ill. against North Central College. Action will get underway at 1 p.m.