

## Men's Swimming & Diving Records Loss in Season Opener

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MANKATO, Minn. (UWECBlugolds.com) - The UW-Eau Claire men's swimming & diving team dropped its first event of the season with a 153.5-140.5 loss to Division II team Minnesota State University-Mankato tonight.

Though the Mavericks claimed the overall victory, the Blugolds earned eight wins and a total of 22 top-three finishes in the 15-event competition.

The Blugolds swept the top three places in the 1,000-yard freestyle. **Ben Epperly** (*Fr.-Schaumburg, Ill.*) earned top honors with a time of 10:30.14 followed closely by teammates **Ben Macalalad** (*Sr.-Wausau, Wis./East*) and **Nick Madrinich** (*So.-Chaska, Minn.*). Macalalad and Epperly also finished second and third, respectively, in the 500-yard freestyle.

**Alex Plaetzer** (*Jr.-Rochester, Minn./John Marshall*), **Jonathan Poppele** (*Jr.-Maple Grove, Minn./Wayzata*) and **Corey Groshens** (*So.-St. Louis Park, Minn./Hopkins*) each won two events on the night. Plaetzer claimed firsts in the 50 and 100-yard fly events (24.76 and 55.61) and Groshens brought home wins in the 50 and 100-yard breaststroke events (28.08 and 1:01.60). Poppele earned victories in the 100-yard individual medley (56.75) and the 100-yard backstroke (56.24). He also tied for second in the 50-yard backstroke event.

The Blugolds notched another win in the diving competition, as **Elliot Campbell** (*Fr.-Eau Claire, Wis./Memorial*) recorded a 210.80 score in the three-meter dive for first place. Campbell also finished third in the one-meter dive while teammate **Nick Badilla** (*So.-Appleton, Wis./North*) earned second and third in the respective one and three-meter competitions.

In the team events, the Blugolds nabbed two second places and one third place finish. In the 200-yard medley relay, the quartet of Poppele, Plaetzer, Groshens and Macalalad swam a 1:41.47 to grab the second spot. In the 200-yard free relay, the team of Groshens, **Alex Card** (*Fr.-Prior Lake, Minn.*), Plaetzer and **Nick Mehring** (*Sr.-Eagan, Minn./Eastview*) nabbed second with a time of 1:29.85.

Next on the Blugolds' schedule is an Oct. 30 triangular against UW-Stevens Point and St. Cloud State University (Minn.). The event, hosted by Point, will begin at 1 p.m.