Men's Swimming and Diving Picks Up First Victory of Season

By: Ashley Hofer, Sports Information Student
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EAU CLAIRE, Wis. (UWECBlugolds.com) - After falling in its first two events, the UW-Eau Claire men's swimming & diving team earned the season's first win in dominating fashion by tallying a 102-44 victory over UW-Oshkosh today at the McPhee Physical Education Center.

The Eau Claire team put down the best times in 11 of the 16 events and recorded 35 top-three finishes on the day.

Jonathan Poppele *(Jr.-Maple Grove, Minn./Wayzata)*, **Corey Groshens** *(So.-St. Louis Park, Minn./Hopkins)*, and **Ben Epperly** *(Fr.-Schaumburg, Ill.)* all recorded multiple victories in the blowout win.

Poppele raced to first in the 100 and 200-yard backstroke competitions with times of 57.94 and 2:05.73. He earned a third win on the night by completing the 400-yard individual medley in 4:39.31 to lead the field.

Groshens led the swimmers in the 100 and 200-yard breaststroke races, recording finishes of 1:02.33 and 2:16.78 minutes. Fellow Blugolds also finished second and third in both events.

Epperly earned his dual victories in the 1,650-yard freestyle with a time of 17:27.28 and the 500-yard freestyle, finishing in 5:13.47. As was the case in many events, the Blugold swimmers swept the top-three positions in both the 500 and 1,650-yard freestyle races.

Other top-placing Blugolds included **Ben Macalalad** *(Sr.-Wausau, Wis./East)*, whose 1:52.16 time earned him the win in the 200-yard freestyle event. **Alex Plaetzer** *(Jr.-Rochester, Minn./John Marshall)* also nabbed first place in the 50-yard freestyle.

In the diving competitions, lone Blugold diver **Nick Badilla** *(So.-Appleton, Wis./North)* picked up a second place finish in the one-meter event with a score of 239.70 and just missed the top three with a fourth place dive in the three-meter competition. The Blugold teams also showed strength at the competition, claiming the top two spots in the 800-yard freestyle relay and the first three places in the 400-yard medley relay.

Next Friday, Eau Claire looks to capture another home victory when it hosts UW-River Falls in the McPhee Physical Education Center. Competition will begin at 6 p.m.