

# Men's Basketball Toppled by River Falls

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RIVER FALLS, Wis. (UWECBlugolds.com) - The UW-Eau Claire men's basketball team saw a three-game win streak come to a close tonight as UW-River Falls won 75-51, handing the Blugolds their first conference loss of the year.

Though the Blugolds got off to a shaky start with a seven-point deficit, a layup from **Ivan Franklin** (Sr.-Stillwater, Minn./Stillwater/UM-Duluth) at 16:58 got Eau Claire on the board and set the stage for what was initially a close competition. By 13:09, **Marcus Ruh's** (So.-Green Bay, Wis./Bay Port) successful three-point shot gave Eau Claire the single-point advantage.

Swapping the lead a total of six times in the first period, the Blugolds held the Falcons in check until the midpoint of the game. Down by eight points heading into the second, Eau Claire had a chance to bridge the gap. But River Falls started streaking, scoring sets of nine and 10 unanswered points in the closing minutes to sink the Blugolds. Eau Claire couldn't halt the stream of scores, and River Falls ended the game with a 24-point, 75-51 final margin.

The Falcons' 75 points is the most the Blugold defense has allowed this season, while Eau Claire's 51 points is the lowest total the offense has accumulated in its eight games. Tonight, the Blugolds were outshot 38.2 percent (21-55) by River Falls' 55.4 percent (31-56). Each team nabbed six points from free throws, but a difference maker may have been the Falcons' 35 points from the bench compared to the Blugolds' eight.

Ruh again led the Blugolds in scoring, adding 18 to the scoreboard. Franklin also surpassed the double digit boundary, putting up 11 points. **James Pfitzinger** (Jr.-West St. Paul, Minn./Academy Of Holy Angels/St. Norbert) led the team in rebounds, picking up seven total.

The loss is the Blugolds' first conference defeat of the season, giving the team a new record of 5-3 and 2-1 in the WIAC. River Falls improves to an undefeated 3-0 in conference competition.

The Blugolds will regroup to face conference foe UW-Stout this Saturday in Zorn Arena. Game time is scheduled for 3 p.m.