

## Men's Basketball Routed by Ranked Stevens Point

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STEVENS POINT, Wis. (UWECBlugolds.com) - The UW-Eau Claire men's basketball team was challenged tonight, as No. 12 UW-Stevens Point clipped the Blugolds 92-37 at Bennett Court.

Facing a high-powered offense – the Pointers averaged an impressive 76.6 points per game – the Blugold defense had difficulties keeping Stevens Point in check. Eau Claire had some bright spots – it was a perfect 6-for-6 from the free throw line – but the Pointers went on double digit scoring streaks that put them up by 32 points at the end of the first period.

But whereas the first half could have extinguished Eau Claire's hopes, the Blugolds came out fighting in the second. **Nick Craggs** (So.-Kimberly, Wis./Kimberly/UW-Whitewater) immediately nailed a three pointer and layups from **Ivan Franklin** (Sr.-Stillwater, Minn./Stillwater/UM-Duluth) and **John Mielke** (So.-Appleton, Wis./East) helped keep Eau Claire at the Pointers' pace.

While Stevens Point did break out more unstoppable runs that led to a 55 point lead at the final buzzer, the Blugolds overall improved in the second half. The team increased its shooting percentage by nearly 30 percentage points (40.0 compared to 12.5 percent) and came close to doubling its point total (24 points opposed to 13).

In the end, Craggs led the Blugold scoring, tallying nine points and snatching two steals. **Paul Franklin** (Fr.-Stillwater, Minn.) added another seven points and Mielke nabbed a team-high five rebounds. Between the two halves, Eau Claire averaged 26.5 percent (13-for-49) from the field while the Pointers averaged 56.9 percent (33-for-58).

The loss drops the Blugolds to an even 8-8 overall and 3-5 in the WIAC. Stevens Point improves to 6-2 in the conference.

The Blugolds look to rebound from the defeat with a road game against UW-La Crosse this Saturday. Game time is set for 3 p.m.