

Women's Basketball Loses Close Battle against Oshkosh

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EAU CLAIRE, Wis. (UWECBlugolds.com) - Despite holding a lead with less than six minutes to play, the UW-Eau Claire women's basketball team could not hold on and fell 62-53 to UW-Oshkosh at Zorn Arena tonight.

The Titans led the majority of the night and got up on the Blugolds by as much as eight points in the first half. Eau Claire did hold a lead as late as 12:01 in the first but a 12-4 run by the Titans pushed their lead to eight points and went into halftime up five (28-23).

Eau Claire came out strong in the second half and got within one point with **Nicole Christianson** (*Jr.-Chetek, Wis.*) scoring on a layup and **Ellen Plendl** (*Jr.-Chippewa Falls, Wis./McDonell*) nailing a jumper. But the Titans used a 5-1 run to get back up by five before the Blugolds continued to chip away at the lead.

The Blugolds used a 17-6 run that went until nearly the eight-minute mark and were up by six points (45-39), their largest lead of the night. While Eau Claire looked to have the upper hand, Oshkosh outscored the Blugolds 23-8 down the stretch. The Titans also held Eau Claire scoreless over the final minute and a half, using a 7-0 run at the end to win by nine.

The difference in tonight's contest came at the free throw line, where the Titans were 20-for-22 and the Blugolds finished 9-for-15. The Titans also outrebounded the Blugolds 30-21 and outshot them from the floor.

One bright spot was the Blugolds committed only eight turnovers, the fewest since a December 30, 2009 contest at Pacific Lutheran (Wash.) when they had seven.

Christianson led Eau Claire tonight with 18 points while **Hannah Mesick** (*Sr.-Chatfield, Minn.*) finished with 13. Mesick also led the game with six rebounds.

Eau Claire drops to 11-8 on the season and 5-5 in the WIAC. Oshkosh is now 10-9 overall and 5-5 in the conference.

The Blugolds will get the weekend off and will next play at UW-River Falls on Wednesday, February 2. Tipoff is set for 7 p.m.