

Men's Basketball Takes down Finlandia 88-67

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HANCOCK, Mich. (UWECBlugolds.com) - The UW-Eau Claire men's basketball team defeated Finlandia University (Mich.) 88-67 at the Paavo Nurmi Center today.

While the game remained close nearly the entire first half, the Blugolds used a 15-3 run near the end of the first to take a nine-point lead with less than a minute to play. In the opening half, the lead changed six times and was tied at two other points before the Blugolds went on to take a commanding lead.

The Blugolds found themselves up by seven points at halftime but Finlandia once again pressured Eau Claire and cut the lead to just three after hitting two baskets to open the second half.

After the 19-minute mark in the second, however, it was all Eau Claire and outscored the Lions 46-28 the rest of the way. The Blugolds used a 22-6 run over a five-minute stretch to help in the 21-point win.

The Blugolds scored 28 points from free throws today, their most free throws made since November 23, 2007 when they also had 28 in an 87-67 win over Hamline University (Minn.).

From the floor, Eau Claire finished shooting 29-for-58 (50 percent) while Finlandia was 21-for-58 (36.2 percent). Eau Claire also outrebounded the Lions 43-33, and despite committing more turnovers than the Lions (18-16), scored 21 points off the turnovers compared to 13 points for Finlandia.

Ivan Franklin (Sr.-Stillwater, Minn./Stillwater/UM-Duluth) had 21 points to lead all scorers, a career-high, while **James Pfitzinger** (Jr.-West St. Paul, Minn./Academy Of Holy Angels/St. Norbert) recorded a double-double with 11-points and a career-high 11 rebounds. **Nick Craggs** (So.-Kimberly, Wis./Kimberly/UW-Whitewater) also had a double-double with 10 points and a career-high 10 rebounds. **Amadou Fofana** (Sr.-Appleton, Wis./West) came away with 15 points.

Eau Claire is now 9-10 on the season while Finlandia is 6-15 overall.

The Blugolds will be back in conference action Wednesday when they host UW-River Falls at 7 p.m. in Zorn Arena.