

Men's Basketball Hangs with No. 8 Pointers but Falls in the End

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EAU CLAIRE, Wis. (UWECBlugolds.com) - While the UW-Eau Claire men's basketball team hung right with eighth-ranked UW-Stevens Point for nearly three-quarters of tonight's game at Zorn Arena, the Blugolds ended up falling 83-70.

The game was a back and forth battle with the lead changing hands 10 times while it was tied 10 other times.

The Blugolds fought hard and outshot the Pointers 53.8 percent (14-for-26) to 45.2 percent (14-for-31) and led by as much as two points in the opening half. Eau Claire led as late as the 17:28 mark in the second half and it was not until the midway point in the second when the Pointers began to control the game.

Eau Claire was down by just one point more than seven minutes into the second half but the Pointers were able to steadily build their lead. Stevens Point finished outscoring the Blugolds 33-21 over the final 12:30 to help in the 13-point victory.

Overall, the teams were nearly even in a number of categories. Stevens Point made only three more field goals than the Blugolds and finished 53.3 percent from the floor to the Blugolds' 52.7 percent. But the Pointers scored five more points from the free throw line (12-7) and outrebounded Eau Claire 32-26.

Leading four Blugolds in double-figures tonight was **Nick Craggs** (So.-Kimberly, Wis./Kimberly/UW-Whitewater) with 17 while **Amadou Fofana** (Sr.-Appleton, Wis./West) added 16. **Marcus Ruh** (So.-Green Bay, Wis./Bay Port) had 15 and **Ivan Franklin** (Sr.-Stillwater, Minn./Stillwater/UM-Duluth) finished with 10. Only two other Blugolds scored points, however. Craggs and Fofana both led Eau Claire with five rebounds each.

While **Jordan Petersen** (So.-Strum, Wis./Eleva-Strum) was the only starter to not score any points, he finished with 10 assists, the most a Blugold has achieved since November 16, 2007 when Zack Ryan had 12 against Grinnell College. The Blugolds' school record is 17 assists, set in 1982.

With the loss, the Blugolds are now 9-13 overall and 3-10 in the WIAC. Stevens Point improves to 19-3 on the season and 11-2 in conference play and has won seven in a row.

The Blugolds will end the regular season with three games on the road, the first game being played this Saturday at UW-Whitewater. Tipoff is set for 3 p.m.