

# Tourney Time! Eau Claire Battles Oshkosh Tuesday

*Posted: Sunday, February 20, 2005*

The sixth-seeded UW-Eau Claire men's basketball team heads to third-seeded UW-Oshkosh this Tuesday for the first round of the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Tournament. The Blugolds have not won at Oshkosh since 1995, a span of 10 straight games.

Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Men's Basketball Tournament Tuesday, February 22; Thursday, February 24; Saturday, February 26

First Round Games - Tuesday, February 22, 7:00 p.m.

#8 River Falls (8-16, 4-12) at #1 Platteville (18-6, 13-3)

#5 Stout (13-10, 8-8) at #4 Whitewater (17-8, 8-8)

#6 Eau Claire (13-12, 6-10) at #3 Oshkosh (18-7, 11-5)

#7 Superior (14-11, 5-11) at #2 Stevens Point (21-3, 13-3)

Semifinals - Thursday, February 24

Winner of River Falls-Platteville game vs. winner of Stout-Whitewater game, 7 p.m. at highest seed.

Winner of Eau Claire-Oshkosh game vs. winner of Superior-Stevens Point game, 7 p.m. at highest seed.

Championship - Saturday, February 26

Semifinal winners, 3 or 7 p.m.

Eau Claire vs. Oshkosh Tuesday, February 22 - 7 pm Kolf Sports Center, Oshkosh Tickets

Adults - \$6

Seniors - \$3

Youths - \$3

Students - \$3

This is the seventh year of the WIAC men's basketball tournament and the second time in the last three seasons that Eau Claire has carried the No. 6 seed into tournament play. The No. 1 seed has claimed the championship only three times in the six-year history of the tournament. Platteville won it all with the No. 1 seed in the inaugural tournament in 1999, Stevens Point with the top seed the following year, and Oshkosh with the No. 1 seed in 2002. No team has ever won the tourney that came in with the No. 3 seed.

1999: #1 Platteville beat #6 Stout, 90-88 (OT)

2000: #1 Stevens Point beat #2 Eau Claire, 59-56 (OT)

2001: #4 Eau Claire beat #6 Oshkosh, 76-63

2002: #1 Oshkosh beat #3 Whitewater, 70-69

2003: #4 Oshkosh beat #2 Whitewater, 68-63

2004: #2 Stevens Point beat #4 Platteville, 68-50

Eau Claire is the No. 6 seed for the second time in tournament history. The Blugolds previously were

1999: #3

2000: #2

2001: #4

2002: DNQ

2003: #6

2004: #8

2005: #6

The Blugolds will battle the Titans for the third time this season after each team won its home game against the other during the regular season. The Blugolds were victorious in the first meeting between the two teams on December 7, winning 64-54 at Zorn Arena. Eau Claire came from 10 points down in the second half to top the Titans, who were ranked 14th in the country coming into the game. The Blugolds went down 40-30 following a Titan three point play with 12:58 remaining in the game but Eau Claire responded with 18 unanswered points to turn a 10 point deficit into an eight point lead. Casey Drake led the Blugolds with 23 points while Buck Smith posted his first career double-double with 11 points and 10 rebounds. Jim Capelle did all he could for the Titans, leading the team with 18 points.

The story was different in Oshkosh on February 16, as the Blugolds dropped their 10th straight game at the Kolf Sports Center. The Titans won the game 67-60 as the game was played extremely close the entire way. The Blugolds led the game 45-44 with 8:33 left to play but Oshkosh used a 10-2 run to take a lead it would never relinquish. Capelle had a huge game as he led the Titans with 21 points and 11 rebounds while also posting three steals. Drake again led the Blugolds with 25 points while Dan Archambault added 20 points