

# Football Comeback Falls Just Short To Saint John's

*Posted: Saturday, September 3, 2005*

EAU CLAIRE -- After a half-hour delay due to lightning, UW-Eau Claire and St. John's made the Clearwater Bowl, and each team's season opener, one worth waiting through the elements with the Johnnies winning 35-28.

St. John's got off to a quick start with two touchdowns on their first two possessions using a balanced offensive attack. The Blugolds struck back with a 66-yard bomb to **Tony Hull** (*So.-Blaine, MN/Spring Lake Park*) from **Jesse Krzyzanowski** (*Sr.-Thorp*) to make the score 14-7. The Johnnies answered with a 63-yard drive to put the halftime score at 21-7 in favor of St. John's.

In the second half, the Johnnies scored touchdowns on their first two possessions, the latter coming off an interception.

Down 35-7, the Blugolds mounted their crazy comeback.

Late in the third quarter, St. John's picked off Eau Claire deep in Johnnie territory to stop a Blugold drive. The Eau Claire defense forced St. John's to go three-and-out. On the ensuing punt the Blugolds special teams rushed in and blocked the punt in the end zone. The ball was recovered **Jake Siegert** (*So.-Onalaska*) for a touchdown.

Forcing a Johnnie punt on their next possession, **Chris Hull** (*So.-Blaine, MN/Spring Lake Park*) rushed through the middle to block a punt which was recovered for a touchdown by Tony Hull making the score 35-21.

The special teams were not done, however, as they brought Eau Claire back into the game. With 2:46 left in the game, a third punt was blocked and was recovered near the goal. The offense punched it in on a 1-yard run by **Joe Gast** (*Sr.-Waconia, MN*), making it 35-28.

St. John's marched down to the Eau Claire 45 on the next possession, but the drive stalled and the Johnnies lost possession on downs. This set the stage for a thriller of finish with 45 seconds left and the Blugolds on their own 45. Through Krzyzanowski's passes and a 15-yard personal foul on the Johnnies, Eau Claire was able to march to St. John's 26. Unfortunately, three incompletions forced a 4th and 10, which the Blugolds failed to convert and thus giving the Johnnies the ball with 8 seconds left and the ball game.

The St. John's offense compiled 28 first downs, 215 passing yards, 214 rushing yards and a total of 429 offensive yards. Krzyzanowski passed for 237 in his first career start. The Johnnie defense held the Blugolds to 5 rushing yards on 28 attempts. Big plays on special teams and a great grab by Tony Hull made for the dramatic comeback.

UW-Eau Claire next takes the gridiron 1:00 p.m. next Saturday at Carson Park when they face Illinois Wesleyan.

Eau Claire-St. John's Box Score

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