

Volleyball Moves To Second Round With Exciting Sweep

Posted: Tuesday, November 1, 2005

EAU CLAIRE - The UW-Eau Claire volleyball team survives its first playoff challenge with a thrilling three-game sweep over UW-Stout. The finals were 30-28, 30-27, and 30-24 here at the McPhee Physical Education Center.

The first match proved to be a tight back-and-forth battle with both teams going through some early jitters. The game experienced many ties with the last being 28-28. Point 29 then was originally awarded to the Blue Devils, but the call was reversed when the officials ruled a Stout player touched the net. The home team hit .324 in the opening win while the visitors hit .150.

Stout was in the lead for much of the second game and generally was ahead by around two points throughout. Eau Claire remained resilient and hung in. Down 19-24, the Blugolds mounted an 11-3 run to claim the victory by three points. Eau Claire's percentage in game two was .088 versus the .152 of Stout.

Eau Claire then took the lead through most of the finale. The team came out strong and kept ahead of the opponent for most of the game. **Jessica Groh** (*Jr.-Eau Claire/North*) spiked in the final point to move Eau Claire to the next round. The Blugolds hit .265 and the Blue Devils hit .386.

The 2005 All-WIAC team members, **Molly Menard** (*Sr.-Eau Claire/Memorial*) and **Jenny Wolter** (*Sr.-Osceola*), were first and second in kills. Menard had 16 and Wolter contributed 12. **Carly Freiborg** (*Jr.-Sacred Heart, MN/Renville County West*), who earned an All-WIAC honorable mention, had the most assists at 39. WIAC All-Defensive team member **Shanna Berger** (*Jr.-Baldwin/Baldwin-Woodville*) tallied 14 digs. The squad was outblocked 9.0 to 7.0.

Eau Claire sits at 27-3. The 1987-1988 team only lost three games throughout the season. Barring a national championship, this team would have the second fewest losses in Eau Claire history behind the 1987-88 team. The last time the team won over 26 games was the 32 in 1997-1998. This season also marks the best winning percentage since the 39-5 season of 1988-1989.

The crew now moves on to face UW-Oshkosh on Friday at UW-Whitewater in the WIAC Final Four. A win will move the team one step closer to an automatic NCAA tournament spot. Tuesday voting results put Oshkosh eighth in the Division III Coaches Top 25 Poll. Eau Claire moved up to 13th in the rankings. The match starts at 5:00.

Eau Claire-Stout Box Score

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