

Volleyball Swept In Close WIAC Tournament Championship

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WHITEWATER - The third-seeded UW-Eau Claire volleyball team continued this playoff's trend of close, nail-biting matches with a loss to fifth-seeded UW-Platteville, having scores of 30-32, 25-30, and 31-33.

The Pioneers clinched an automatic berth into the NCAA Division III National Tournament. The Blugolds would have to be selected by a committee.

Eau Claire hit .185 with 17 kills in game one. The opponents had 16 kills and 11 errors to make for a .088 percentage, but hung on in the extra-point affair. The second game saw the Blugolds improving to .191 and connecting for 15 kills. The 17 kill and .239 percentage second game for the Pointers was the most in both categories for the team today. Eau Claire topped out at 23 kills and a .200 average for the final game. Platteville had 16 kills again and a .204 hitting percentage in the thrilling finish.

Jenny Wolter (Sr.-Osceola) had the most kills at 16. **Molly Menard** (Sr.-Eau Claire/Memorial) put up 15. **Shanna Berger** (Jr.-Baldwin/Baldwin-Woodville) added an amazing 26 digs through the sweep. **Carly Freiborg** (Jr.-Sacred Heart, MN/Renville County West) was the leader in assists with 45. The five blocks by **Jessica Groh** (Jr.-Eau Claire/North) was the most, as well.

The teams were close in many categories, as the score would indicate. Platteville had 10.0 total blocks while Eau Claire had 9.0. The Blugolds actually had more kills and a higher hitting percentage, but the Pointers overcame both. Eau Claire had 55 kills to Platteville's 49. Eau Claire hit .193 and the opponents hit .172. This is the second year in a row that Platteville has sent Eau Claire out of the playoffs.

The Blugolds conclude the season with a 28-4 record. The team was 6-2 in conference play. The four losses are the second fewest in school history. The last time Eau Claire posted over 28 wins was in 1997-98 when that squad had 32.

Platteville had a 28-7 year and will continue to the national tourney. The third-place matchup ended in five games with second-seeded UW-Oshkosh winning over top-seeded UW-Whitewater. The scores were 30-32, 30-26, 30-28, 15-30, and 15-13. The Whitewater record this year is 35-4 while the Oshkosh record is 36-4.

In order for the team to make it to the national tournament, it would have to be selected by the committee. It will face competition in the conference for a berth, however, as Oshkosh and Whitewater shared the conference crown with better overall and WIAC records than the Blugolds.

WIAC Tournament Championship Results

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