

Blugold Women Advance To Final Of Thanksgiving Showcase

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EAU CLAIRE - **Michelle Burns** (So. -Eau Claire/North) scored 18 points and pulled 14 rebounds to lead the UW-Eau Claire women's basketball team into the championship game of the 14th annual Thanksgiving Showcase with a 60-48 triumph over the College of St. Scholastica at Zorn Arena Friday night.

The Blugolds will bid for their 13th Showcase title when they take on Luther College of Decorah, Iowa at 8 p.m. Saturday in the championship showdown. The Norse reached the final with a convincing 83-51 victory over Gustavus Adolphus of St. Peter, Minnesota. St. Scholastica and Gustavus will battle for third place honors in a 6 p.m. contest. The doors will open at 5 p.m. Tickets are \$6 for adults, \$5 for UWEC faculty and staff, \$4 for seniors and \$3 for youths and visiting students.

The Blugolds scored the first seven points against St. Scholastica and never relinquished the lead although the Duluth-based school scored eight straight points to trim the deficit to a single point at 14-13. Another seven-point run put the Blugolds up 21-13 with 2:50 to go in the first half and they settled for a 24-19 lead at intermission.

The Saints scored the first bucket of the second half but that was as close as they would get as the Blugolds gradually pulled away and built a 17-point margin (53-36) with 4:44 remaining.

The Blugolds shot a dismal 1-for-13 from beyond the arc but were 23-43 inside the three-point line to finish with a shooting percentage of 42.9 compared to 31.4 for St. Scholastica. The Blugolds also controlled the boards by a 41-33 margin and made three fewer turnovers than the Saints.

In addition to Burns' stellar effort, freshman **Brittanni Hakanson** (*Wheeler/Boyceville*) came off the bench to scored 12 points with seven rebounds, two steals and an assist in 28 minutes of playing time.

The victory snapped a two-game losing streak by the Blugolds and brought them to the .500 level for the season at 2-2. St. Scholastica dropped to 1-2 for the season.

Luther, which remained unbeaten in three starts, used a 19-2 run to bolt from a 20-20 tie and break the game open against Gustavus. The Gusties came within 11 early in the second half but Luther steadily pulled away to its biggest lead at the final buzzer. Senior center Anne Straate scored 21 points to lead Luther which had seven players score six or more points. Luther outscored Gustavus, 44-32, in the paint and that allowed the Norse to shoot 60.7 percent from the field while Gustavus managed just 34.5 percent in losing for the first time after a season-opening victory.

Eau Claire-St. Scholastica Box Score

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