

# Volleyball Falls To Cinderella Platteville In WIAC Semifinal

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WHITEWATER, Wis. - The UW-Eau Claire volleyball team was knocked out before the championship for the first time in three years today after a 3-1 loss to UW-Platteville.

The scores were 30-32, 28-30, 30-27, and 24-30 as seventh-seeded Platteville pulled off its second upset of the tournament. Besides the third-seeded Blugolds, the Pioneers won round one in four games over second-seeded UW-Oshkosh, ranked ninth in the nation.

The Blugolds will now have to fight for third place tomorrow against the loser of the match between No. 7 UW-Whitewater and No. 17 UW-La Crosse. Eau Claire made it to and lost in the championship each of the past two years. Now Platteville will have a chance at the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC) Tournament championship. No seven seed has ever won the tourney

Today, Eau Claire actually hit better overall by a .206-to-.120 margin and won the battle in every game but one. In the first game, the Blugolds nabbed 20 kills in a .232 effort, but Platteville prevailed while hitting .192. In game two the Pioneers again squeaked one out while outhitting Eau Claire .216-to-.208. In the game that the Blugolds won, Platteville was held to -.054 while Eau Claire managed .127. The final game saw the Blugolds with a .260 percentage, but the Pioneers won by four while pacing at a .143 clip.

**Abby Freiborg** (Jr.-Sacred Heart, MN/Renville County West) and **Rachel Ver Voort** (Fr.-Madison/Middleton) tied for the lead in kills with 17 apiece. **Nikki Peterson** (Sr.-North St. Paul, MN/North) had 13 behind them and **Danielle Lucia** (Fr.-St. Cloud, MN/Apollo) had 10. **Emily Haese** (Jr.-Mishicot) contributed 54 assists as Eau Claire outdid the Pioneers in both assists (58-to-48) and in kills (65-to-57).

On defense, Freiborg had 30 digs, second-most for one Eau Claire match this season and most for a four-game match. As a team, the 119 total digs were most for a match this year and outpaced Platteville's 111. **Heather Harnell** (Sr.-Minnetonka, MN) totaled 17, **Lindsey Smith** (So.-Maple Lake, MN) collected 16, Haese added 14, Ver Voort tallied 13 and **Cary Rasmussen** (So.-Sparta) notched 11 during a superb defensive effort.

This was the third time in four years that Platteville ended Eau Claire's WIAC tournament run. In 2005, the Pioneers defeated Eau Claire in the championship and in 2004, the team beat the Blugolds in the first round. The Pioneers were seeded fifth in 2005, which is the highest seed ever to win the tournament.

Eau Claire, which has never won the WIAC tourney, will now have to be selected to play in the national tournament. The Blugolds will battle for third tomorrow, with the match beginning at noon in Whitewater.

Eau Claire-Platteville Box Score

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