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## Eagles Fall Just Short of Boilermakers, 69-64, at Mackey Arena

Despite Karrington Ward's 25 point performance, EMU falls Saturday afternoon

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**WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. (EMUEagles.com)** – After a slow start offensively, the Eastern Michigan University men's basketball team came up just short versus Purdue University, 69-64, Saturday, Dec. 7. It was the Eagles (5-3) third loss in a row, while the Boilermakers (8-2) recorded their third-straight victory in front of 13,079 people at Mackey Arena.

<u>Karrington Ward</u> (Lockport, Ill.-Lockport Township (Moraine Valley C.C.)) was an offensive juggernaut in the EMU loss, pouring in 25 points on 9-of-16 shooting, while knocking down a career-high four three-pointers. Ward also corralled eight rebounds in the contest. <u>Glenn Bryant</u> (Detroit, Mich.-Oak Hill Academy (Arkansas)) was one carom shy of his first doubledouble of the season after recording 11 points and a season-best nine boards. <u>Raven Lee</u> (Detroit, Mich.-Romulus) contributed nine points and five rebounds, while <u>Darell Combs</u>

(Chicago, Ill.-Thornwood (Blinn)) added seven points of his own. As a team, the Green and White went 21-of-50 (42.0 percent) from the floor, while connecting on 7-of-21 (33.3 percent) of its three-point opportunities. Eastern Michigan got its free throw shooting in order versus the Big Ten opponent, going 15-of-21 (71.4 percent), just one-of-two games that EMU has shot over 70 percent from the free throw line.

The Eagles out-rebounded Purdue, 39-32, while the Boilermakers hit 20-of-50 shots in the game, including six from downtown. Bryson Scott led PU's offensive attack with 16 points, including a 10-of-13 performance from the charity stripe, while Kendall Stephens posted 13 points, knocking down three triples. Purdue won the turnover battle, 20-14, which led to the eventual loss that the Eagles suffered.

Stephens knocked down a three-ball to start the scoring at the 16:51 mark in the first 20 minutes, putting Purdue up three to start the game. A Terone Johnson jumper in the paint gave the Boilermakers a quick 5-0 lead, before *Mike Talley* (**Detroit, Mich.-Melvindale ABT** (**Duquesne**)) broke the seal for EMU with a dribble-drive move to the hole. Following the Eagles first basket, Eastern and Purdue traded buckets until the Green and White knotted things up at 14 apiece with 8:16 remaining in the first half.

Johnson converted a fast-break layup with 8:09 on the clock to put the Boilermakers up two, 16-14, but on the next trip down the floor, Ward knocked down a three-ball from the wing, giving Eastern its first lead of the game, 17-16, with 7:26 left in the half. The lead did not last as Stephens came back firing with a triple of his own, putting Purdue back on top by two with just under seven minutes left in the game. Purdue and EMU went back-and-forth until an 8-0 run gave the Boilermakers its largest lead of the of the half, 29-20. Eastern fought back to bring it within six heading into the locker room at the half, 35-29.

The Eagles shot 43.5 percent in the first half after going 10-for-23 from the floor and 3-for-9 from downtown. EMU got off to a good start at the free throw line, knocking down 6-of-8 attempts in the first half. Ward led the offensive attack in the first half with a 5-for-9 shooting performance, hitting 2-of-4 shots from beyond the arc and caroming four rebounds. Combs added five points, while Bryant and Lee each contributed four. The Boilermakers hit 12-of-28 shots in the opening half, good for a 42.9 percent clip, but were only able to knock down 7-of-14 attempts from the charity stripe.

After Talley opened up the scoring in the second half to bring Eastern within four, 35-31, Purdue scored seven-straight, extending the Eagles' deficit to 11, 42-31. However, after trading a pair of buckets, the Eagles went on an 11-1 run, capped off by a dunk from <u>Karrington Ward</u> that brought EMU to within one point with 10:53 remaining in the contest.

Directly following the Ward flush, Basil Smotherman returned with a layup to push Purdue back to a three-point lead. EMU and the Boilermakers played offense back-and-forth but a three-ball from Terone Johnson pushed Purdue back up four with 5:15 left in the contest. Following another converted bucket from the Boilermakers, Ward knocked down another three-pointer to bring EMU within two at the 3:57 mark. However, the Eagles came no closer than that down the stretch as the Boilermakers outscored the Green and White by three in the final four minutes of

play to finish the game with a score of 69-64.

Eastern is off until Tuesday, Dec. 10, when they return to the Convocation Center for a game with the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay. Tip-off is scheduled for 7 p.m. in Ypsilanti, Mich. as the Phoenix come into the contest ranked No. 14 in the current CollegeInsider.com Mid-Major Poll.