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Eastern Michigan University

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## Eastern Hosts Western in First Conference Game at Home

Tuesday, Jan. 14, 2014 » 7:07 p.m. » Convocation Center (8,784) » Ypsilanti, Mich.



1/13/2014 3:15:00 PM

**YPSILANTI, Mich. (EMUEagles.com)** -- The Eastern Michigan University men's basketball team will return to the Convocation Center after spending five of its last six games on the road, including a pair of Mid-American Conference matchups. Eastern will host cross-state rival Western Michigan University, Tuesday, Jan. 11, after starting the conference slate 1-1. Game time is scheduled for 7 p.m. at the Convo and it will be one-of-three televised games that the Green and White will appear in over the next two weeks.

**A QUICK RECAP:** The Eagles are just two games into the 2013-14 Mid-American Conference season and they have already seen the ups and downs that conference play brings along with it. Eastern opened MAC play with a difficult road victory, topping Bowling Green, 56-51, Jan. 8. Following its win over the Falcons, Eastern traveled to upstate New York to take on another MAC East Division opponent, Buffalo. The Eagles dropped the contest at Alumni Arena, 76-66, falling to 1-1 on the young conference season.

**FINDING THE GAME AT HOME:** The Eagles' contest with the Broncos will hit the airwaves of 89.1 FM (WEMU). In addition to the WEMU broadcast, the game will be televised on Time Warner Cable Sports, while also being available on ESPN3 and the WatchESPN app. Comcast Michigan will also carry the broadcast.

Veteran "Voice of the Eagles" Chad Bush will serve as EMU's play-by-play announcer for the WEMU broadcast,

while [Sean Hostetter](#) will handle the analyst duties for the Tuesday evening contest, while Micahel Reghi and Tony White will be on the television broadcast for Time Warner Cable.

**ALL-TIME AGAINST THE BRONCOS:** The Eagles are behind in the series with Western Michigan, 56-44. Since taking over the EMU basketball program, [Rob Murphy](#) has seen WMU on five difference occasions, winning three of them, including a win on the road that clinched the Eagles their first ever MAC West Division title in 2011-12.

In the last matchup between these two teams, they squared off at Quicken Loans Arena in a quarterfinal matchup of the 2013 FirstEnergy Mid-American Conference Men's Basketball Tournament. Western topped EMU, 70-55. EMU made 22-of-57 from the field for a 38.6 percent clip behind [Daylen Harrison's](#) 14 points. [Da'Shonte Riley](#) grabbed 10 rebounds for the Green and White while also tallying eight points. The Eagles made five-of-eight threes in the first half, but did not make one in the second half, missing all seven of their attempts. Eastern also converted 6-of-11 from the charity stripe.

**MURPHY VERSUS THE MAC:** Third-year Head Men's Basketball Coach [Rob Murphy](#) holds a 17-17 all-time record against Mid-American Conference opponents in his third MAC season. The Detroit, Mich. native won the MAC-West Division Title in 2011-12 during his first season as the head man at EMU, before going 7-9 last season. Murphy and his squads have seen most of their success against teams from their own divisions, going 12-8, while they are just 5-9 against the East Division which Murphy looks to improve during the 2013-14 season.

**FREE ONES STARTING TO FALL:** After shooting 64.1 percent from the free throw line in the first 12 games of the season, the Green and White has started to get the feel from the charity stripe. Since the 12th game of the year, Eastern is knocking down 74 percent of their free ones, including a season-best 83.3 percent (15-of-18) in their road loss at Buffalo, Jan. 11.

**GLENN GETS BIG FOR THE FIRST WEEK OF MAC PLAY:** Redshirt-senior forward [Glenn Bryant](#) is one of the more exciting players to watch during non-conference play, but the Detroit, Mich. native has turned it up to another level for Mid-American Conference play. In the opening week of conference play, Bryant is posting 14 points and nine rebounds a game. On the season, Bryant is only posting 10.9 points and 5.7 rebounds per contest.

**TRIPLE TROUBLE:** Eastern Michigan has seen its three-point shooting percentage drop significantly over the past six games. Since EMU's win over Green Bay, Dec. 10, 2013, the Green and White has not shot better than 28.6 percent from beyond the arc, and have shot 23.4 percent from three-point land over the six game span.

**GIVE ME SOME MORE #MACTION:** Heading into the 2013-14 season, it was announced that the Mid-American Conference would be expanding its regular season. Instead of the previous 16-game schedule, the member institutions will now play an 18-game conference slate. In order to fill those extra two games, each team will another pair of cross-divisional contests. EMU's two extra games will be filled by Bowling Green and the 2013 MAC Tournament Champion, Akron.

**THE QUICKEST HE'S GOTTEN TO 10:** With a win in the Eagles' game with Western Michigan, EMU Head Coach [Rob Murphy](#) would get his 10th win of the year much quicker than his first two seasons as the head man. In 2011-12 it took 21 games to get the 10th, while it took 20 last season.

**AT THE TOP OF THE MAC:** The Eagles are near the top of the esteemed Mid-American Conference in multiple categories this season. EMU posts the best field goal percentage defense (37.5 percent) and most steals (8.5 spg). EMU ranks third in blocked shots (6.2 bpg) three-point field goal percentage defense (29.0 percent), turnover margin (+2.7) and fourth in scoring defense (65.7 ppg).

Individually, [Da'Shonte Riley](#) is tied for second in blocks, averaging three per contest, while [Glenn Bryant](#) is sixth, turning away 1.9 per game. [Karrington Ward's](#) 13.8 points per game is the 11th-best in the MAC, and Bryant is hitting 60.2 percent of his shots which is the third highest percentage in the conference. Additionally, [Mike Talley](#) has an assist/turnover ratio of 2.0, which is the fourth-best in the MAC.

**COMFY ON ANY FLOOR:** Detroit, Mich. native [Glenn Bryant](#) has shown that he can play at any gym across the country throughout his career. The senior is averaging 12.3 points away from Ypsilanti this season, while holding a 64.7percent field goal percentage. Conversely, during home games the 6-foot-8 forward posts 9.6 points per contest, while knocking down 53.3 percent of his field goal attempts.

**NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION:** After recording a 7-5 record during the 2013 portion of this season's schedule, Head Coach [Rob Murphy](#) hopes to post a much better record in the month of January than he did in the 2012-13 campaign. Last season's squad managed just a 3-5 record during the first month of the season last year. He is off to a 2-1 start after topping Rochester, 92-54, on Jan. 4, and defeating Bowling Green, 56-51, Jan. 8. His lone loss came to Buffalo, Jan. 11, in a 76-66 final.

**TALLEY FINDS HIS GROOVE:** After averaging just 6.5 points per game through the first eight games this season, [Mike Talley](#) has found his step offensively. Since that mark, the transfer has been posting 13.1 points per game in seven contests, including a pair of 20-plus point performances.

**DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE:** Redshirt-freshman guard [Raven Lee](#) has shown some up-and-down play during the 2013-14 season. Lee scored in doubled figures in four out of the first five games this season, including a 38-point outburst against UT-Arlington, Nov. 23. Since that performance, the Detroit, Mich. native has not eclipsed the 20-point mark and has been in double figures just four times in 10 games.

**ON THE ROAD THIS YEAR:** Eastern Michigan has really struggled in games on the road this season. Overall, the Eagles are 2-5 away from Ypsilanti and are averaging just 62.4 points per contest, while allowing 72.6.

Individually, we have seen a dropoff in offensive production in EMU's two top-scorers away from home. Both [Karrington Ward](#) and [Raven Lee](#) average over 15 points per game inside the Convocation Center. However, when on the road, Ward notches just 11.1 points per contest, while Lee scores 7.0 points per tilt.

**A BLOCK A DAY:** Senior center [Da'Shonte Riley](#) has played in 68 career games for the Green and White. During that time, he has accumulated 141 blocks, which ranks as the third-most in EMU history. In 68 career games, the Detroit, Mich. native has swatted at least one shot in all but 17 contests. This season, he has recorded a block in all but three games, while he missed out in eight games last season and six during the 2011-12 season. Overall, he has managed to stuff the opponent at least once in 75 percent of the games he has appeared in for EMU.

**A GOOD START:** After going 8-5 in non-conference action while playing one of the toughest schedules that Eastern has seen in its history, the Green and White are heading into Mid-American Conference play with its most wins since the 2009-10 season when they won eight non-conference tilts. That team finished the non-conference schedule with an 8-6 record, while going 17-15 on the season and 8-8 in MAC play.

**HAPPY AT HOME:** The Eagles have enjoyed much success within the friendly confines of the Convocation Center this season. With a 7-1 record, EMU has shot 48.6 percent from the floor, while hitting 39.6 percent of its shots from three-point land. Eastern is scoring 76.5 points per contest, while holding its opponents to 59.8 points per game.

Under Head Coach [Rob Murphy](#), the EMU basketball team has been comfortable opening up the season inside the friendly confines of the Convocation Center. Throughout the past three seasons since Murphy has taken over the EMU program, he holds a 29-10 record inside the Convocation Center.

**SEND IN THE SWAT TEAM:** Eastern Michigan's defensive prowess is what has allowed the team to be successful the last few years. That stealthy defense includes their shot blocking ability. To this point, EMU has blocked 93 shots and they average 6.2 per contest which is the 21st-best in the country.

[Da'Shonte Riley](#) has led that defensive block party. The senior who transferred from Syracuse just two seasons ago has racked up 45 blocks already this season. The Detroit, Mich. native is also earning his spot in the EMU record books. The seven-footer has blocked 141 shots in his career, good for the third-most in Eastern Michigan history. He is 26 shy of [Jamell Harris](#), while he trails the all-time leader Theron Wilson by a wide margin. Wilson finished his career with 257 rejections. Riley, however, has only played just over one and a half seasons for the Green and White, while Wilson appeared on the EMU roster for four seasons (1992-96). Riley tied in the No. 20 spot in the country with his three per game this season.

[Glenn Bryant](#) has been no slouch at turning away the opposition. He is averaging 1.9 blocks per contest. His 71 career blocks have him as the ninth-best shot blocker in EMU history.

**ROAD WOES:** Since [Rob Murphy](#) took over as the head coach of the Eagles, the team has struggled on the road. Overall, Murphy's teams are 9-30 on the road in his first three seasons. In non-conference play, the Green and White holds a 3-18 record away from the Convocation Center.

**CHECK THE SPECIALTY STATS:** The Eagles are averaging 29.6 points per game in the paint, 23.5 points off the bench, 17.3 points per game off turnovers, 9.9 second-chance points and 11.3 fast break points per game.

**DEFYING MURPHY'S LAW:** Although defense has been Head Coach [Rob Murphy](#)'s philosophy since he stepped foot on the campus of Eastern Michigan, the 2013-14 basketball team seems to be showing the third-year head coach that it might be able to win games on the offensive side of the ball as well. Since coming to Ypsilanti, Murphy's squads have averaged 53.2 and 56.6 points per game, respectively. On the other side of the ball, Murphy's Eagles have allowed just 58.7 and 59.1 points per contest in those two seasons. Throughout this season, the Eagles are averaging 69.9 points on the offensive side, while allowing just 65.7 points on the defensive side. It seems as though these Eagles are embracing the defensive philosophy while exploding on the other side of the court as well.

**AGAINST MICHIGAN SCHOOLS:** In their 117-year history, the Eagles have squared off with all six current NCAA Division I institutions, seeing Central Michigan the most times. Overall, the Green and White hold a 164-274 record against those teams, which include Central Michigan, Detroit, Michigan, Michigan State, Oakland and Western Michigan.

**DROPPIN' DIMES:** The Eagles had struggled the last few seasons to find the open man, but 2013-14 has been a different story. The Green and White is averaging 12.4 assists per game this season, compared to last season when they notched 10.7 per tilt. Missing a true point guard the last two seasons, it seems [Mike Talley](#) has emerged as the 2013-14 floor general for EMU dishing out 3.9 assists per game, while [Darell Combs](#) posts 1.9 and [Raven Lee](#) averages 1.7.