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Creighton Announces Two Additions to Staff

Mike Hart and Jacob Kirkendall to remain a part of the football staff



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YPSILANTI, Mich. (EMUEagles.com) — Eastern Michigan University Head Football Coach [Chris Creighton](#) has announced a pair of additions to his coaching staff. [Mike Hart](#) remains on staff as the running backs coach while [Jacob Kirkendall](#) will continue as the director of football operations.

"It was obvious from our first meeting that Coach Hart had invested a lot into this program and cares about it deeply," said Creighton. "He wants to be at Eastern and after getting to know him I whole-heartedly wanted him to stay. He has all of the qualities that make a great college coach and those who know him well say he is an even better man. I am extremely excited and thankful that Mike is going to remain an Eagle."

"[Jacob Kirkendall](#)'s reputation as the Director of Football Operations is as good as it gets," added Creighton. "He has served this program now for six years and does an outstanding job. His work ethic, organization and connections on campus have made this program better through the years and will help elevate Eastern Michigan Football as we begin to close the gap."

Hart enters his third season as the running backs coach at EMU and his fourth year overall in Ypsilanti. The University of Michigan football program's all-time leading rusher spent the 2011 campaign as the Eagles' offensive

quality control assistant.

During the 2013 campaign, Hart oversaw an EMU rushing attack that racked up 1,896 yards on the ground, the 12th-most in EMU history. Individually, running back [Bronson Hill](#) ranked 31st nationally in rushing, surpassing the 1,000-yard mark for the first time in his career. A third team All-Mid-American Conference selection, Hill became the first EMU running back to rush for over 1,000 yards in a season since 2003.

In helping the Green and White offense during the 2012 season, EMU rushed for 1,960 yards and 13 touchdowns on 448 carries for the 61st-best ground attack in the nation. The performance marked the third consecutive season that the Eagles had rushed for more than 1,900 yards.

Additionally, Hill was also selected the National Running Back of the Week by the College Football Performance Awards, as he turned in the best single-game rushing performance in the Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) with 283 yards gained on 28 rushes to go along with an EMU record-tying four touchdown runs against the University of Toledo, Oct. 13. His rushing effort is the second best in school history, trailing only Larry Radcliff's 291 rushing yards, Oct. 16, 1971, at home against Eastern Kentucky.

In 2011, Eastern Michigan rushed for 2,620 yards and 16 touchdowns on 575 carries for the 14th-best ground attack in the nation. The total was the second most in program history, trailing only the 1987 team that captured the Mid-American Conference title by running the ball 610 times for a total of 2,701 yards.

Prior to coming to EMU, the 27-year-old Hart spent three seasons in the National Football League (NFL) on the roster of the Indianapolis Colts. A sixth-round draft choice in 2008, Hart carried the ball a total of 71 times in 21 games through three injury-plagued seasons as a Colt. He gained 185 yards in seven games during the 2010 season.

Prior to the NFL, Hart set school records for carries (1,015) and rushing yards (5,040) at Michigan between 2004-07. A four-year starter for the Wolverines, Hart's 41 career touchdowns rank third in U-M history. Additionally, he ranks fourth all-time in the Big Ten Conference in career rushes and yards gained, while ranking 11th in touchdowns.

A 2006 and 2007 Doak Walker Award finalist, Hart finished fifth in Heisman Trophy voting in 2006. He broke on to the national scene in 2004, setting school freshman rushing records with 282 carries for 1,455 yards and nine touchdowns. The totals ranked as the second highest single-season rushing total by a freshman in Big Ten history. He became just the third "true" freshman in conference history to lead the league in rushing, joining Ron Dayne (Wisconsin, 1996) and Darrel Thompson (Minnesota, 1986).

A native of Syracuse, N.Y., Hart graduated from Onondaga Central High School in 2004. While playing for the Tigers, he set the national career record for rushing touchdowns (204) and finished second in career rushing yards (11,045). Onondaga Central went 46–1 and won three state championships during Hart's career.

Meanwhile, Kirkendall begins in his seventh year as the director of football operations for the Eastern Michigan University football team. His primary responsibilities include coordinating travel arrangements, high school recruiting visits, camps, speaking engagements and community outreach programs.

The 29-year-old Kirkendall spent the 2007 campaign as the director of football operations/video coordinator at Dartmouth College.

A native of Lucas, Ohio, Kirkendall graduated from Ohio University in 2007 with a degree in sport management.

As a senior at Ohio, he interned as the assistant director of operations and video coordinator for the football team that won the 2006 Mid-American Conference East Division championship.

In 2005, Kirkendall was the videographer for Ohio University football and assisted the director of football operations. Throughout his undergraduate career he was also the office assistant in the Recreation and Sports Sciences Department.