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Eastern Hosts Rochester in Non-Conference Finale

Saturday, Jan. 4, 2014 » 2:06 p.m. » Convocation Center (8,784) » Ypsilanti, Mich.

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YPSILANTI, Mich. (EMUEagles.com) - The Eastern Michigan University men's basketball team looks to finish the non-conference slate with a victory Saturday, Jan. 4, when it welcomes Rochester College to the Convocation Center. It will be the fourth-straight year that the Green and White will host the Warriors. The contest is scheduled for 2 p.m. in Ypsilanti and will finish the non-conference portion of the season before EMU starts Mid-American Conference play at Bowling Green Wednesday, Jan. 8.

READY FOR MAC PLAY: After completing the non-conference portion of the 2013-14 schedule, Eastern Michigan will hit the road for three of its first four non-conference games. EMU first will take on the Falcons of Bowling Green Wednesday, Jan. 8, before heading to upstate New York, Jan. 11, for a matchup with Buffalo. EMU then returns home Tuesday, Jan. 14, for its first televised home game with cross-state rival Western Michigan before hitting the road again. Following the game with WMU, the Eagles make the short jaunt north to Central
Michigan for its second-straight in-state rivalry game Saturday, Jan. 18, at McGuirk Arena.

**FINDING THE GAME AT HOME:** The Eagles' contest with the Warriors will hit the airwaves of 89.1 FM (WEMU). In addition to the WEMU broadcast, the game will be streamed live on Eagle All-Access. Eagle All-Access is a live internet streaming service provided by EMU with subscriptions starting at just $6.95.

Veteran "Voice of the Eagles" Chad Bush will serve as EMU's play-by-play announcer for the WEMU and Eagle All-Access broadcasts, while Sean Hostetter will handle the analyst duties for the Saturday game.

**ALL-TIME AGAINST THE WARRIORS:** The Eagles own the series with the Warriors, winning all five of the contests between these two squads. The last meeting between these two teams came in the 2012-13 campaign. It was the first game on the schedule for the Eagles, as they dominated the Nov. 9 matchup, 66-52.

Last season, three Eagles reached double digits as senior Derek Thompson led the way with 14 points followed by 12 points each from Daylen Harrison and Raven Lee. Rochester's Drew Maynard led all scorers with 27 points. EMU's bench proved to be a huge factor throughout the contest outscoring the opponent 35-2. The Green and White shot 49.0 percent from the floor while the Warriors shot 40.4 percent during the game. The Eagles also dominated the boards grabbing 39 rebounds compared to Rochester's 22, leading to 14 second chance points.

**ALWAYS 48:** In three-straight seasons playing Syracuse University at the Carrier Dome, the Green and White has never been able to surpass the 48 point mark. In fact, the Eagles have scored the exact same amount, 48, in all three losses to the Orange. In 2011-12 Eastern dropped a 84-48 decision, while also falling by the same exact score in 2012-13. This year, EMU fell 70-48 at the Carrier Dome, again managing just 48 points in upstate New York.

**BRYANT CONTINUES SUCCESS AT CUSE:** Senior Glenn Bryant has shown that he plays his best against stiff competition, especially when traveling to the Carrier Dome for games against the Syracuse Orange. In two games against the Atlantic Coast Conference foe, Bryant has posted 16 and 19 points. The Detroit, Mich. native fought for a double-double last season, Dec. 3, 2012, with 16 points and 10 rebounds, while he posted 19 points and eight rebounds this season, Dec. 31, at the Carrier Dome. Overall at Syracuse, Bryant averages 17.5 points and nine rebounds when squaring off the national powerhouse.

**LEE FROM DOWNTOWN:** Redshirt freshman Raven Lee made his presence known at Syracuse, Dec. 31, when he put on a shooting clinic from beyond the arc. The Detroit, Mich. native was 4-for-5 from three-point land with most of his triples ranging as far as the NBA three-point line distance (23 feet and nine inches). Lee's only performance that ousts his stellar
shooting against the Orange came in a contest where he put up 38 points, going 5-for-5 from three-point land against UT-Arlington, Nov. 14, at the Convocation Center.

**AT THE TOP OF THE MAC:** The Eagles are leading the esteemed Mid-American Conference in multiple categories this season. EMU posts the best field goal percentage defense (38.1 percent) and most blocked shots (6.8 bpg). EMU ranks second in turnover margin (+4.3), steals (8.4 spg), third in three-point field goal percentage (30.3 percent), scoring defense (67.1 ppg) and fourth in assists (13.1 apg), three-point field goal percentage defense (30.8 percent) and assist/turnover ratio (1.0).

Individually, Da'Shonte Riley tied for the lead in blocks, averaging 3.2 per contest, while Glenn Bryant is fourth, turning away 3.2 per game. Karrington Ward's 14.2 points per game is tied for the seventh-best in the MAC, and Bryant is hitting 60.8 percent of his shots which is the second highest percentage in the conference. Additionally, Mike Talley has an assist/turnover ratio of 2.5, which is the second-best in the MAC.

**NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION:** After recording a 7-5 record during the 2013 portion of this year'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.

**THROW IT DOWN BIG FELLA:** Glenn Bryant has become known around Eastern Michigan for his high flying acrobatics on the floor. Against Syracuse, the redshirt-senior threw down four alley-oop dunks against the No. 2 team in the country. Bryant is averaging 10.5 points this season, many of which come by way of the slam dunk.

**65 OR BUST:** The Eagles seem to have found a magic number that they need to strive for this season. The Eagles are 7-0 when they score 65-or-more points this season. In their five losses they have not been able to eclipse that mark. Eastern scored 63 versus Kentucky, 57 in the setback to UMass, 64 in the game with Purdue, 59 in their loss to Duke and a season-low 48 points in a setback at Syracuse.

**DON'T GET COMFORTABLE:** Although they have returned back to the Convocation Center, the Eagles will not get comfortable back in Ypsilanti. EMU will have to hit the road again for three of its next four games. First EMU will head to Bowling Green and Buffalo, before hosting Western Michigan. After the game with WMU, the Green and White will again be on the move, taking on Central Michigan at McGuirk Arena.

**ON THE ROAD THIS YEAR:** Eastern Michigan has really struggled in games on the road this season. Overall, the Eagles are 1-4 away from Ypsilanti and is averaging just 63.0 points per
contest, while allowing 76.2. At home, the Eagles score 74.3 points per game and allow just 60.6.

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 11.6 points per contest, while Lee scores 11 points per tilt.

A BLOCK A DAY: Senior center Da'Shonte Riley has played in 65 career games for the Green and White. During that time, he has accumulated 134 blocks, which ranks as the third-most in EMU history. In 65 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 73.8 percent of the games he has appeared in for EMU.

A LONG DECEMBER: Head Coach Rob Murphy has not had much luck in the month of December since taking over the reins of the men's basketball team at EMU. So far this season, the third-year head coach is 2-4. In all three seasons as the head man, Murphy's teams have struggled, posting just a 5-13 record over the past three seasons. In 2011-12 Murphy managed a 1-6 record in the final month of the calendar year, while he went just 2-4 last season.

HAPPY AT HOME: The Eagles have enjoyed much success within the friendly confines of the Convocation Center this season. With a 6-1 record, EMU has shot 46.8 percent from the floor, while hitting 42.2 percent of its shots from three-point land. Eastern is scoring 74.3 points per contest, while holding its opponents to 60.6 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 28-10 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. In its first 12 games, EMU has blocked 81 shots and they average 6.8 per contest which is tied for the ninth-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 38 blocks already this season. The Detroit, Mich. native is also earning his spot in the EMU record books. The seven-footer has blocked 134 shots in his career, good for the third-most in Eastern Michigan history. He is 33 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. 16 spot in the country with his 3.2 per game this season.

Glenn Bryant has been no slouch at turning away the opposition. He is averaging 2.3 blocks per contest, good enough to be tied for the 53rd-most in the nation. His 69 career blocks have him tied with Calvin Warner 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 8-29 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.

A WIN ON THE ROAD: Wins on the road are hard to come by at the NCAA Division I ranks. The Eagles did just that Saturday, Dec. 21, with their victory at Oakland. It was EMU's first road win of the year and the first time it defeated Oakland at the O'rena since Nov. 14, 2009.

CHECK THE SPECIALTY STATS: The Eagles are averaging 27.8 points per game in the paint, 24.5 points off the bench, 17.7 points per game off turnovers, 10.2 second-chance points and 9.8 fast break points per game.

BENCH WORK: The Eagles' bench is providing 24.5 points per game through the first 12 contests. Those 24.5 points per game account for 35.2 percent of the Green and White's scoring this season.

DEEP GREEN SEA: Head Coach Rob Murphy has the luxury of being "too deep". Murphy has 10 players that he feels could start on any given day for the Green and White. So far this season, the Detroit, Mich. native has played 10 different student-athletes for at least 10 minutes per game, including eight that have seen at least 14 minutes of action per contest.

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. After eight games this season, the Eagles are averaging 69.6 points on the offensive side, while allowing just 67.1 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.